SOCIO-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE: A CASE STUDY OF ZIMBABWE POSTS (ZIMPOST), 2010–2020

Faith C. Kambarami-Zengeni

Supervisor: Professor Gilton Klerck

Department of Sociology

February 2022

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a PhD in Sociology at Rhodes University

ABSTRACT

Postal organisations play an important role in the provision of basic communication services. In Zimbabwe, post offices have a large physical distribution network of over 240 post offices country-wide to make communication services accessible to the populace. However, e-substitution has threatened mail business significantly. Postal operators globally are experiencing declining mail volumes in the face of advanced information and communication technologies. The overall goal of this thesis was to undertake a socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as broad ideal types to explain how industry evolves in different phases of capitalism. National politics and economics play an integral role in how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism assumed at ZimPost. Studies on these broad organising types have mainly focused on private sector organisations. However, this thesis argues that these analytical paradigms are also valid in public sector organisations, but they will unfold differently given the context in which change is experienced. Using a qualitative approach, the study established that the 1980s and 1990s can best be described as the 'golden years' of postal services in Zimbabwe, characterised by mass production and mass consumption of postal products and services. At that time the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation enjoyed a monopoly of postal services in the country. The stable market share, competitive salaries for postal workers, increased unionisation and a fairly stable economy enabled a Fordist regime of accumulation to develop. The cycle broke down when the mode of regulation was weakened by national economic and political changes towards the late 1990s. PTC started to experience a decline in the consumption of postal products. The decline was also attributed to increased competition from smaller private courier operators that could provide specialised services to a market with changing needs. With increased competition, the advancement of information, and communication technologies, mail volumes dwindled. This period can best be described as the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. In the year 2000, the government unbundled the posts and telecommunications corporation to create four companies including Zimbabwe Posts. This was perceived as one of the most radical organisational changes in the history of postal services in Zimbabwe. More organisational changes took place at ZimPost that can best be described as characteristics of post-Fordism. These changes were attempts by ZimPost to remain relevant in light of the economic, political and technological changes taking place in the country. The postal operator introduced customised products in the form of agency services, supported by increased use of information and communication technologies in the

post office. Organisational changes at ZimPost were shaped mainly by the economic and political environment in which they took place. Organisational change is complex, changes do not follow a linear pattern, they are processual.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CASWUZ	Communication and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe
CIC	Communication Information Centres
EU	European Union
GNU	Government of National Unity
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NSSA	National Social Security Agency
OD	Organisational Development
PAPU	Pan African Postal Union
POSB	People's Own Savings Bank
POTRAZ	Postal and Telecommunications Authority of Zimbabwe
PTC	Posts and Telecommunications Corporation
SAPOA	Southern African Postal Union
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WB	World Bank
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZIMPOST	Zimbabwe Posts (Private) Limited
ZINARA	Zimbabwe National Road Administration

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Globalisation, innovative and sophisticated technologies, changing labour-force, increased competition, and lately the Covid-19 pandemic are just some of the few forces that are contributing to the need for organisational change. Organisations are compelled to make significant investments in change initiatives as a way of adapting to the changing context (Errida & Lotfi, 2021). Organisational change is at the centre of important organisational phenomena such as career development, strategic management, teamwork, and the rise and fall of industries (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). Organisational change involves being able to 'articulate what makes organisations what they are and to suggest how we may shape and reshape them' (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004: xi).

Organisational change remains an important and topical area of study for industrial and economic sociologists given the ubiquitous nature of change, and the fact that organisational change initiatives have a high failure rate estimated at between 50 percent and 70 percent (Mosadeghrad, 2014). In addition, some studies have questioned the extent to which organisational change approaches used in the private sector apply to public sector organisations (Erakovic, 2006; Cunningham & Kempling, 2009; Voet, 2013; Alford & Greve, 2017). Given these factors, this study seeks to explore a socio-historical analysis of organisational change in a public postal organisation (ZimPost) using the broad organisational principles of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism.

Postal organisations play an important socio-economic role in the provision of basic communication services (UPU, 2020). Post offices employ over 5,5 million workers globally, and their effect on economies is significant (UPU, 2020). Over the years, the very existence of postal organisations has come under threat as radical changes such as globalisation, liberalisation, deregulation, the opening up of competition and technological innovations have challenged the sustainability of post offices (Bojovic, Kujacic & Macura, 2014:1194). International and regional bodies that coordinate postal policies amongst member countries such as the Universal Postal Union and the Pan African Postal Union, have recommended the need for postal organisations to change their business models if they are to remain relevant in a rapidly-changing environment.

The imperative need for organisational change within the postal sector presents fascinating dynamics from a sociological and historical standpoint that this thesis seeks to analyse. This thesis grapples with questions of how change is conceptualised by organisational members, managers, trade union leaders, policy makers and other interest groups in the change process, and how postal organisations have evolved across space and time. To achieve this, ZimPost was selected as the case study to explore a socio-historical analysis of organisational change over the period from 2010 to 2020, using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories. This period was chosen for the study as it was characterised by significant, economic and political, changes in Zimbabwe, which made the operational environment challenging to implement and manage organisational transformation.

To make sense of organisational changes that were experienced at ZimPost, the central argument of this study is twofold. First this study frames the evolution of postal services in the following periods: Taylorism; Fordism; the crisis of Fordism; and post-Fordism to illustrate how ZimPost has transitioned through these production systems. Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism are common and widely used concepts in making sense of the different types of industrial organisational design. For example, post-Fordist analyses have preoccupied academic discussions about the 'nature of the South African labour process and accumulation regime' (Kraak, 1996:39). Racial-Fordism has been adopted as an important and relevant analytical category to explain a 'post war combination of Apartheid and import substitution industrialisation which together represented a limited Fordist scheme' (Kraak, 1996: 40). One of the most important contributors to this debate is regulation theorist Steve Gelb, who characterised South Africa as a 'system of Racial-Fordism –a racially constructed variant of Fordism' (Kraak, 1996:40; see also Makhulu, 2016).

However, in my thesis, I want to establish the more specific ways in which Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism have evolved in Zimbabwe and more specifically at ZimPost. In the case of ZimPost, the central argument that this thesis adopts is that politics and economics have a key influence on how organisations, in particular public sector organisations evolve. National politics and economics qualify the forms that Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism assume at ZimPost. Secondly, studies on Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism have focused on private sector organisations. However, this thesis argues that these analytical paradigms are also valid in public sector organisations, but they will unfold differently, given the profit motive is not a key variable like it is in private organisations. Public organisations are in

some ways protected from the market by the State, whereas private sector organisations face the full brunt of the market. These dynamics form the central argument of the thesis.

In addition, the study also adopts the Processual Perspective. This study is premised on the assumption that 'change is complex and at times chaotic' (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008, cited in Dawson, 2014:64). The Processual perspective illustrates how organisational changes unfold over a period of time and do not follow a predictable, linear pattern. This theoretical approach ties in with the perspective that Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism do not follow a linear or prescribed pattern and are not always distinct from each other. It can be argued that 'there has been no clear historical break between Fordism and post-Fordism' (Hall, 1988 cited in Ritzer, 2011:304). Whilst some elements of post-Fordism are evident, it is also clear that some elements of Fordism continue to persist in contemporary society (Ritzer, 2011).

In addition, this thesis recognises that there are a whole range of factors that determine the ways in which Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve and the scope of this study cannot exhaust all the factors. However, in my study, I perceive human resource management strategies and technology as key or pertinent factors that provide a deeper understanding of the transitions from Taylorism into Fordism, the crisis of Fordism and ways out of Fordism, one of them being post-Fordism at ZimPost.

As highlighted earlier, national politics and economics play an important role in how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve. In the period under review, the government implemented a number of economic policies for the socio- economic transformation of Zimbabwe (Chitongo, Chikunya & Marango, 2020). The economic blueprints were: Short-Term Emergency Recovery Programme II (2010-2012); Medium-Term Plan (2011-2015); Zimbabwe Agenda for Socio-Economic Transformation (2013-2018) and the Transitional Stabilisation Programme (October 2018 to December 2020). The Short-Term Emergency Recovery Programme (2010-2012) developed by the coalition government and the introduction of a multi-currency regime had a positive impact on the economy (Zimbabwe Infrastructure Report, 2019). Positive economic changes included a decline in inflation rates, removal of price distortions and a rise in exports (Chitongo, Chikunya & Marango, 2020). Zimbabwe's inflation declined to single digits at 5 percent by the end of 2010 and capacity utilisation in manufacturing improved from 10 percent to 40 percent (Sibanda & Makwata, 2017).

However, these positive developments were short-lived. After the removal of the coalition government in 2013, economic policies implemented by the ruling ZANU-PF government, did not yield positive results (Chitongo, Chikunya & Marango, 2020). The government promised several economic changes targeted at revitalising Zimbabwe's poor performing economy. These included a clamp down on corruption, economic growth through improved trade and investment, a commitment to deal with external debt and compensation of white farmers affected by the land reform programme (Noyes, 2020). However, a number of economic reforms remain unresolved or partially implemented including corruption, land reform and privatisation of state enterprises (Noyes, 2020). It is therefore naïve to be convinced that the State is committed to fighting corruption because it has a 'long history of not confronting this issue comprehensively; parastatals have long been used as part of ZANU-PF's patronage network in the public sector' (Raftopoulos, 2014:93).

In 2019, Zimbabwe's economy once again plunged into a recession characterised by hyper-inflation, the worst drought in a decade, and Cyclone Idai (World Bank, 2021). The government abandoned use of the multi-currency regime and introduced the Real Time Gross Settlement dollar (RTGS) (Gruzd & Lalbahadur, 2020). Officially, RTGS dollar and Bond cash were valued to be equal to one USD. However, there has been a widening gap between the informal exchange rate and the official rate determined by government. This has caused price distortions on the market with citizens paying different prices in USD, RTGS and bond notes (Chitiyo et al., 2019). The RTGS currency and the ensuing devaluation 'cut salaries and purchasing power by at least tenfold meaning that Zimbabweans savings accounts have largely been wiped out' (Noyes, 2020:17). Businesses that depend on inputs acquired from other countries have been unable to pay for the inputs due to foreign currency shortages (Chitiyo et al., 2019). Power generation declined by 20 percent in 2019 (World Bank, 2021). The repressed economy had a significant impact on organisations as it 'reduced productivity, increased the cost of production and weakened economic activity' (World Bank, 2021:1).

Furthermore, the decline in economic growth was attributed to structural deficits inherited from the previous decade (UN, 2021; Zimbabwe Infrastructure Report, 2019). These structural deficits include high rates of youth unemployment, liquidity shortages, 'a negative country-risk premium arising from high levels of public debt, declining international capital inflows (including remittances), infrastructure bottlenecks and multinational company closures' (Zimbabwe Infrastructure Report, 2019:4). Personal consumption was constrained by a sharp decline of real income as food prices soared due to hyperinflation (World Bank,

2021). These economic challenges were further compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. In the June-July period of 2020, 90 percent of organisations indicated that they faced liquidity and cash flow challenges due to the Covid-19 imposed lockdowns (World Bank, 2021). In addition, 28 percent of organisations of various sizes reported that they needed loans to remain operating (World Bank, 2021).

Apart from economic changes, Zimbabwe experienced significant political changes in the period selected for the study. From an unprecedented power sharing agreement between ZANU-PF and MDC in 2009, to a military takeover that resulted in the subsequent resignation of former President, Robert Mugabe in 2017 and the inauguration of the second president since independence in 2018. A change in government also meant a shift in economic policies as the relationship between 'politics and the economy is inextricably linked in Zimbabwe' (Noyes, 2020:25). For example, the outcome of the 2013 elections revealed the 'long-term legacy of ZANU-PF's coercive politics constructed through a radical nationalist discourse, but also the changes in the social structure of the country as a result of the reconfiguration of Zimbabwe's political economy since the late 1990s' (Raftopoulos, 2014:91).

Deep economic challenges confronting the country forced the government to adopt a 'more conciliatory tone' as it sought to re-engage the international community for economic support (Raftopoulos, 2014:91). After the military takeover in 2017 and subsequent elections, President Mnangagwa promised to make widespread changes in government to resuscitate the country's economy by implementing policies that attract foreign investment (Institute for Peace and Security Studies, 2018). The economic crisis continues to prevail in post November 2017 Zimbabwe (Helliker & Murisa, 2020). Zimbabwe continues to experience poor economic performance characterised by widespread poverty, high levels of unemployment, 'incoherent currency management practices, deindustrialisation, company closures, limited utilisation of factory capacity and collapse of basic infrastructure' (Helliker & Murisa, 2020:7-8).

In January 2018, President Mnangagwa announced the government's commitment to privatise some of its 107 state-owned enterprises. Whilst the privatisation of state-owned enterprises is not a new practice in Zimbabwe, the government as part of its plan to rebuild and transform Zimbabwe to an Upper-Middle Income Economy by 2030, embarked on a programme to privatise state-owned enterprises. ZimPost was selected as one of the several

state-owned enterprises to undergo partial privatisation. Under partial privatisation, the government considers the option of using the stock exchange to foster an ownership agreement between the government and the public (Government of Zimbabwe, 2018). However, there has been little or meaningful progress in the privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Many of the state-owned enterprises are either 'defunct or bankrupt' (Noyes, 2020:21). For example, in July 2018, state-owned enterprises and parastatals 'owed taxes of USD 491 million' (Noyes, 2020:21).

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The postal sector has been undergoing a paradigm shift in recent times, from a relic of the industrial era to a facilitator of communication in an era of global Internet connectivity (Anson & Helble, 2014). In many African countries, official postal services originated with missionaries and colonial administrators. For example, in Kenya, missionaries would send letters to their countries of origin through 'native runners', who would deliver mail to the coast for onward transmission (Khator, 2013). In Zimbabwe, as with many public services, posts and telecommunications were originally designed to serve the needs of the white settler populace (Zwizwai et al., 1994).

The history of the postal service dates back to 255BC, and the first known postal document was discovered in Egypt (UPU, 1999). Prior to 255BC, postal services were found in many countries as letters were delivered by messengers providing the service to emperors and kings (UPU, 1999; Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). In Asia and Europe, postal services were initially designed to only address the needs of royals (Scher, 2001). The notion of a formal postal service designed to deliver mail, gradually developed in various European countries as their economies expanded (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). In the 15th century, the privileges enjoyed by monarchies were extended to elites in society, such as merchants and bankers, who could afford postal services (Scher. 2001:2; Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). However, during the 15th and 16th centuries, monarchies restricted and at times prohibited the delivery of mail to foreign countries in a bid to 'consolidate their authority' (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:1). Consequently, postal services were made a 'monopoly' of the state (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:1).

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the exchange of mail was facilitated through agreements made between countries (UPU, 1999). However, over time the network of agreements became so difficult to manage that there was need to make the process less

complex (UPU, 1999). Therefore, in 1840 Great Britain instigated a number of significant reforms in the national post office, which included affordable and easy to use postage charges (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008; UPU, 1999). In addition, a 'prepaid' postage system was introduced where standard rates would be charged for all postal items in spite of the location where the postal item was coming from or where it would be delivered (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:1).

These reforms revolutionised the postal system as they made the service more accessible to the general public (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). The changes made by the British postal service were quickly implemented by other countries (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008), especially its colonies. This resulted in a massive boom of mail volumes as the service was much cheaper and this facilitated the formation of an advanced, universal postal network (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). By the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a global postal network had been created and 'private carrier operations were consolidated into national postal systems, whose services were inexpensive, profitable and self-sustaining' (Scher, 2001:2; see also Finger, et al, 2005). In 1874, an international regulatory body was established to govern postal operations amongst nations called the Universal Postal Union.

Over time, the demand for faster and innovative services saw mail users shifting from traditional hard copy distribution models to a variety of new ways to digitally communicate, advertise, or transact (Crew & Kleindorfer, 2005, 2011; UPU, 2002). Alternative technologies resulted in mail substitution recurring in the postal sector (UPU, 2002). Apart from advanced technologies, increased competition, in the form of private courier companies in the 1980s, and declining mail raised the need for public postal administrations to change and operate more efficiently like commercial entities and not as government bureaucracies. It is against this background that this thesis seeks to trace the socio-historical dynamics of organisational change at ZimPost.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to Stouten & Rousseau (2018), contemporary organisations have struggled to implement meaningful and lasting changes. In addition, there has been an over-reliance on popular organisational change models without an exploration of other ways of conceptualising change (Stouten & Rousseau 2018). Popular organisational change models have mainly focused on managing change and adapting to change; however, they have been largely criticised for being rationalist and ahistorical in nature. In recent years, there have

been calls for a historical approach to organisational change studies (Kipping & Usdiken, 2014). The importance of a historical orientation in the study of organisations has been documented in a number of studies (Kipping & Usdiken, 2014; Wadhwani *et al.,* 2018; Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele, 2016; Usdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011, Brunninge, 2009; Usdiken & Kieser, 2004).

Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele (2016) highlight important gaps in organisational change research arguing that history plays a critical role in organisational change studies, particularly understanding the complex and political nature of change. Furthermore, processual studies are critical of organisational change models stating that they are 'ahistorical, aprocessual and acontextual in character' (Pettigrew, 1987 cited in Vinger, 2004:197). The processual perspective recognises that organisational change cannot be limited to a model that prescribes rational and sequential steps to achieve lasting change in an organisation. Rather organisational change should be seen as a process where unintended and at times unexpected, outcomes can take place (Dawson, 2014). The processual perspective advocates for longitudinal qualitative research in the study of organisational change. This thesis seeks to address an ahistorical and aprocessual gap in organisational research by incorporating a historical lens in the analysis of organisational change at ZimPost.

In addition, there is a dearth of literature on postal organisations, particularly in developing countries. Most of the studies focus on Europe, and address issues on postal economics neglecting other areas of study such as organisational change, and the organisational change models that may be relevant or suitable for developing countries like Zimbabwe. In general, studies on postal organisations are dated and few, and this thesis seeks to add to the debates and strategies that developing countries can utilise in organisational change initiatives. This thesis demonstrates the relevance of sociology in addressing contemporary organisational challenges. This topic is original and relevant to the challenges that postal organisations are experiencing in light of the changes taking place globally such as advanced technology, liberalisation and declining mail volumes. This study brings attention to postal organisations, perceived as a relic of the past and often obscured from organisational change research. Postal organisations, particularly in developing countries are experiencing significant challenges in sustaining their operations. This thesis sheds light on some of the struggles public postal operators experience in the change process.

1.4. GOALS OF THE RESEARCH

The overall goal of the research is to undertake a socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as broad ideal types to explain how industry evolves in different phases of capitalism.

The specific goals of the thesis are to:

(a) Trace the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost over the period from 2010 to 2020.

(b) Examine the dynamics of organisational change within ZimPost in three broad areas, which are human resources management, information and communication technologies and type of work from 2010 to 2020.

(c) Conceptualise the drivers of change at ZimPost over the period from 2010 to 2020.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research methodology adopted for the thesis. The research methodology was determined by the nature of the topic, goals of the thesis and the theoretical framework that informed the study. This study combines a sociological and historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost for the period 2010 to 2020. A research design involves the 'philosophical assumptions the researcher brings to the study; procedures of inquiry; and specific research methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation' (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:42). A research design is a map that informs the inquiry process. More specifically, 'research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:53).

To achieve the goals of the research stated in Section 1.4. this study draws on the qualitative research design. Yin (2016:9) outlines five distinguishing features of qualitative research. These are studying people's lives in their natural settings; understanding phenomena through the lenses of the participants in a study; examining the context in which the behaviour occurs; combining insights from past studies and new forms of thinking; and acknowledging the importance of multiple forms of evidence than dependence on a single source.

The goals of the thesis are anchored on these five distinguishing features of qualitative research, to enable participants to provide rich historical accounts of their organisational change experiences in the work setting. In congruent with the theoretical framework and

research goals, the study utilises qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and documentary analysis to draw historical insights of organisational change at ZimPost in the period under review. It is imperative for this study to conceptualise change from the perspectives of ZimPost employees as outlined in the distinguishing features of qualitative research. The thesis aims to discover new insights on the unique features of organisational change at ZimPost as articulated in Section 1.1. of the thesis. More specifically, the study seeks to determine the unique ways in which Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism have unfolded at ZimPost in the organisational change process.

1.5.1. Ontological and Epistemological Standpoint: Social Constructivism

Ontology entails one's beliefs about the nature of reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:8). From an ontological standpoint, this study adopted a constructivist position. Constructivism is a 'belief that reality is subjective and contextual' (Leavy, 2014:82). Reality is believed to be socially constructed (Al-saadi, 2014). At the centre of constructivism, is comprehending the subjective nature of human experience (Guba & Lincoln, 1989 cited in Kivunja, Ahmed & Kuyini, 2017). The constructivist ontology seeks to study the context in which social actors 'live and work' to obtain a better understanding of the 'historical and cultural settings of the participants' (Creswell & Poth, 2018:64). From an ontological perspective, reality is context-specific and 'socially relative, therefore many realities can exist simultaneously' (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 cited in Leavy, 2014:85). Constructivism argues that social actors attach meaning to their experiences and these meanings are diverse, making the objective of the researcher to explore the complexity of viewpoints, rather than restricting the meanings to a limited number of categories (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The role of the researcher is to depend on the respondents' view or experiences of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Creswell (2018). In other words, the researcher examines the phenomena in question through the different lenses of the participants, to understand how they make sense of their situation whilst also focusing on 'interactions, contexts, environments and biographies' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018 :23).

Ontological assumptions determine how one perceives and studies research objects (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). For example, researchers in business studies for a long time held the ontological assumption that resistance to change was a significant impediment to organisations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). They were of a view that resistance to organisational change was some form of organisational misnomer and took place when organisational initiatives were not successful. Consequently, much of the research focus was

on how the behaviour could be eliminated, the categories of employees likely to resist change and the strategies managers could utilise to stop or avoid resistance to change (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). There has been a shift in these ontological assumptions with researchers also considering how resistance to organisational change can be beneficial to organisations rather than just focusing on eliminating the behaviour (Thomas & Hardy, 2011 cited in Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

Epistemology is the 'study of what can be counted as knowledge, where knowledge is located and how knowledge increases' (Fitzgerald, 2016:36). From an epistemological standpoint, interpretivism states that there are several interpretations of a particular event (Leavy, 2014). Therefore, the role of the researcher is to interpret findings. The purpose of interpretation is to 'make sense' of the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour or the world (Creswell & Poth, 2018:67). Since reality is socially constructed, it therefore implies that what we know is derived from interaction with others (Leavy, 2014). This study adopts the epistemological position that the process of acquiring knowledge is 'subjective and unique' (Al-Saadi, 2014:7). This implies that the researcher attaches meaning to their data through their own thinking and processing informed by interaction with respondents (Kivunja, Ahmed & Kuyini, 2017). In addition, the researcher constructs knowledge as an outcome of their own personal experiences within the natural setting in which the data is collected (Punch, 2005 cited in Kivunja, Ahmed & Kuyini, 2017).

By adopting the social constructivism philosophical position, I acknowledge that there are several and competing epistemological viewpoints in the acquisition of knowledge. Given the sociological and historical lens required in this study; the need to 'deepen our understanding of the socially embedded character of the interpretive processes that shape historical consciousness in organisations' (Wadhwani, Suddaby & Popp, 2018:1671), objectivist and positivist ontologies and epistemologies were determined to be inappropriate for this thesis. The constructivist and interpretivist methodology places value on the multiplicity of experiences from different categories of workers such as senior management, middle-level managers, skilled or technical workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers at ZimPost. Consequently, this thesis makes no claims to universal truths outside the experiences of the postal workers who participated in the study.

This study acknowledges the challenges of relativism and subjectivism associated with the interpretivist paradigm. In particular the implications of relativism, that one view is as good

as any other. Although this study focuses on the participants' interpretation of change, this thesis also recognises that these views are speaking to a common objective reality and some views will explain that reality better than others especially if they are about the same thing. This study is concerned with how ZimPost employees understood the different changes that occurred within the organisation. However, these views will also be compared with the objective conditions that exist for example, statistics on declining mail volumes and also my own experiences as being a former employee of ZimPost.

In addition, to limit these shortcomings, this thesis adopted the criterion of credibility to refer to 'the extent to which the data and data analysis are believable, trustworthy or authentic' (Guba, 1981 cited in Kivunja, Ahmed and Kuyini, 2017:34 see also Nowell et al., 2017). Credibility is a criterion best suited for the interpretivist design in preference to internal validity mostly adopted for a positivist approach. Credibility focuses on how the 'findings align with reality as constructed by the researcher and the research participants' (Guba, 1981; Merriam, 1998 cited in Kivunja, Ahmed and Kuyini, 2017:34). To achieve this, different data collection methods were used such as interviews, document analysis and observation to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied.

1.5.2. Social Constructivism and the Processual Perspective

To obtain historical narratives and capture the lived experiences of postal workers over the years, the social constructivist methodology provided in-depth historical accounts of organisational changes at ZimPost. To attach meaning to the postal workers' experiences, the central methodological focus of processual research is on the in-depth nature of qualitative research rather than dependence on quantitative data (Dawson, 2003). The processual perspective argues that people's experiences of change 'can only be achieved through questions that examine the meanings and interpretations of people in their social context and over time' (Dawson, 2003, 85). Using a qualitative approach, I was able to gather historical accounts of the organisational changes that had taken place over the past decade and the contested nature of change, particularly where different interest groups exist.

1.5.3 Case Study Design

Creswell & Poth (2018:185) define a case study as a 'qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports.' The case can be a programme, a person, group or institution (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this thesis, a case study refers to the organisation

under study – namely, Zimbabwe Posts. In addition, Merriam & Tisdell, (2016:40) highlight that 'case studies can be historical, as in the history of an organisation or programme'. To analyse the socio-historical dynamics of organisational change at ZimPost for the period 2010 to 2020, the case study research design was selected as the most appropriate for the thesis. Fieldwork was conducted from May 2020 to February 2021.

Zimbabwe Posts (ZimPost) trading as (Zimbabwe Posts Pty Ltd) is a private company wholly owned by the government of Zimbabwe. ZimPost is the Designated Postal Operator for Zimbabwe with a universal service mandate. It was established through the enactment of the Postal and Telecommunications Act [Chapter 12:05] of 2000 which necessitated the unbundling of the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (PTC) into four separate companies. PTC was established by an Act of Parliament in July 1970. Prior to that postal and telecommunication services were administered as a government department under the Ministry of Posts. In the first quarter of 2020, ZimPost had a network of 219 postal outlets (142 in urban areas and 77 in rural areas), and a postal density of 66,539 (POTRAZ, 2020). This implies that there is one post office per 66,539 citizens, which is regarded as relatively high. In February 2020, ZimPost had a staff compliment of 769 employees (227 female employees and 542 male employees). Postal operations in Zimbabwe are regulated by the Postal and Telecommunications Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) which was established in February 2001. ZimPost is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Minister of ICT, Postal and Courier Services. The Postmaster-General is responsible for managing the operations of ZimPost and reports to the Board of Directors and the Minister.

Zimbabwe is a member of regional and international bodies that regulate and standardise postal operations. Zimbabwe is also a member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialised agency of the United Nations that facilitates postal cooperation at the international level. At regional level, Zimbabwe is a member of the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU). PAPU is a specialised agency that coordinates all postal developments in Africa. Zimbabwe is also a member of the Southern Africa Postal Operators Association (SAPOA), a regional body responsible for the postal sector.

Prior to 2000, the postal administration was regarded as a social service; however, after the unbundling, ZimPost was obliged to operate as a commercial entity, which should sustain itself while delivering on its universal service obligation. Since commercialisation, ZimPost has experienced a myriad of challenges. Firstly, the lack of capital injection. According to the

ZimPost Turnaround Strategy (2014-2018), the postal operator has not received any capital injection since the dollarisation of the Zimbabwean economy. In 2014, ZimPost had a funding gap of USD 9,791,813. Secondly, the ZimPost 2013 annual report indicates that the organisation continues to experience problems associated with technological substitution of the core product (letters).

Therefore, the five-year turnaround strategy developed by ZimPost aimed to realign and streamline its operations into a self-sustaining organisation. The strategic thrust of the organisation was to facilitate business growth through ICT-led product innovation and diversification, promotion of human-capital development through training; adoption of new technologies, and the introduction of e-government and e-commerce services. Central to the turnaround strategy is the concept of organisational change, where survival of the postal operator cannot be guaranteed in the face of technological developments that threaten the existence of the core product that is letters.

1.5.3 Sampling

Whilst ZimPost has over 200 post offices countrywide and a staff complement of 769 employees, two cities were purposively selected for the study. The two cities selected for the study were Harare and Bulawayo. ZimPost Head Office as well as the Central Sorting Office are located in the capital city of Zimbabwe, Harare. All executive staff members are based at the Head Office in Harare. Bulawayo is the second largest city in Zimbabwe and the location of the second major post office in the country. Bulawayo was also a convenient location for the study because I reside there. Therefore, it was easier for me to schedule appointments for interviews and make follow- up interviews with participants where necessary. Using a non-probability sampling technique suitable for qualitative research, a total of 31 ZimPost employees were purposively selected for the study. The sample size was determined by the data saturation point as no new themes or patterns were being provided beyond the 31 participants. Table 1. provides socio-demographic information of the participants. Institutional memory varied ranging from 38 years to one year. The sample was determined by the need to include all categories of workers comprising executive and senior managers, technical/skilled workers, semi-skilled workers and unskilled workers as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Socio-Demographic Information

	Pseudo Name	Sex	Age	Year of Commencement	Educational Qualification	Occupation	Date of Interview
1.	John	Male	55	1984	Master's Degree in Business Administration	Senior Manager	20/05/20
2.	Mambure	Male	42	2008	Master's Degree in Business Administration	Senior Manager	18/06/20
3.	Sarah	Female	39	2008	Master's Degree in Finance	Internal Auditor	21/05/20
4.	Mazimba	Male	53	1985	Higher National Diploma in Finance	Internal Auditor	21/05/20
5.	Tsamba	Male	52	1988	Bachelor of Commerce Degree in Management	Senior Manager	22/05/20
6.	Gloria	Female	47	1998	Secretarial Diploma	Postal Manager	27/05/20
7.	Faith	Female	47	1995	Master's Degree in Administration	Human Resources Officer	21/05/20
8.	Joshua	Male	58	1985	Sales and Marketing Course	Stocks Controller	21/05/20
9.	Takudzwa	Male	32	2008	Ordinary Level	Postman	26/05/20
10	Nikita	Female	56	1983	Ordinary Level	Administrator	04/06/20
11	Grace	Female	55	2006	Master's Degree in Public Administration	Executive Manager	24/02/21
12	General	Male	57	1982	Advanced Level	Administrator	21/05/20
13	Troski	Male	47	2014	Ordinary Level	Mail Clerk	22/05/20
14	Jeffreys	Male	55	2007	Master's Degree in Business	Executive Manager	23/12/20

					Administration		
15	Ntando	Female	30	2019	Diploma in Information Technology	Communication Information Centre Administrator	27/05/20
16	Derrick	Male	34	2008	Ordinary Level	Postman	26/05/20
17	Brian	Male	34	2008	Ordinary Level	Mail Clerk	26/05/20
18	Shalome	Female	45	2001	Certificate Bookkeeping and Accounting	Accounting Clerk	03/06/20
19	Chengetai	Female	40	2004	Bachelor of Business and Information Technology	Accounting Officer	18/06/20
20	Ndebele	Male	53	1987	Certificate in Management	Postal Manager	08/06/20
21	Bianca	Female	53	1991	Ordinary Level	Secretary	03/06/20
22	Lameck	Male	36	2009	Diploma in Marketing	Counter Clerk	05/01/21
23	Chipo	Female	26	2018	Certificate in Accounting	Counter Clerk	03/06/20
24	Tendai	Male	40	2007	Diploma in Accounting and Finance	Internal Auditor	03/06/20
25	Wayne	Male	33	2009	Ordinary Level	Postman	09/11/20
26	Linda	Female	41	2003	Diploma in Business Management	Administrator	12/08/20
27	Tonderai	Male	35	2007	Ordinary Level	Postman	09/11/20
28	Daniel	Male	36	2006	Ordinary Level	Mail Clerk	04/01/21
29	Shungu	Male	38	2008	Ordinary Level	Mail Clerk	05/01/21
30	Percy	Male	42	2005	Diploma in Management	Controller	09/11/20
31	Sandra	Female	40	2007	Diploma in Sales	Sales	12/08/20

					and Marketing	Representative	

1.6. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In January 2020, I submitted a formal request seeking permission to carry out my study at ZimPost. The formal request was also followed up by a telephone discussion providing the details of the study with the Postmaster-General (PMG). Having been a former employee of ZimPost, the PMG was supportive and excited about my study noting that it would also benefit the organisation. On the 18th of March 2020, I received formal permission to carry out the study at ZimPost from the Head of Human Resources.

Data were collected during the Covid-19 pandemic. I was concerned about exposing participants and myself to the coronavirus. Covid-19 prevention guidelines were followed during the face-to-face interviews. Interviews with postal workers based in Harare were conducted using the telephone and Zoom because of the restrictions on inter-city travel. In Bulawayo all interviews were conducted face-to-face, in the work setting. It was important for me to observe the postal workers in their work setting and see the workflow and any advanced technology that was being used to process and deliver mail. During fieldwork, I was warmly received by participants and would spend the day at post offices conducting interviews whenever a respondent had time and was willing to be interviewed.

1.6.1. In-Depth Interviews

Data was collected using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. An interview is defined as a process in which the researcher and respondent engage in a conversation based on questions related to a particular research study (DeMarrais, 2004, cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2018). More specifically, 31 interviews were conducted using (mostly) open-ended questions. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were effective in collecting historical narrations of postal workers' interpretation of organisational changes at ZimPost. Two semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants. The key informants provided in-depth knowledge in the broad areas of human resources management and ICT. The key informants are members of ZimPost who have vast experience in the subject matter.

Open-ended questions required participants to recall their lived experiences of past events in the organisation. I was very fortunate that ten of the postal workers interviewed joined the organisation before the unbundling of PTC took place. Therefore, they were able to share their experiences of organisational change which spanned decades. Interviews with former

PTC workers averaged between 45 to 70 minutes as they had more information to recall. Participants had the option of answering the interview questions in either English, Shona or Ndebele, which are the predominant languages in Zimbabwe. Since I am not well-versed in Ndebele, a translator was on standby to assist with interviews if any of the participants chose to speak in Ndebele. Most of the interviews were conducted in English, except for two participants who felt comfortable to speak in Shona, which is also my mother tongue. Since the interviews were conducted in a work setting, participants felt comfortable communicating in English, a language common in the workplace. Each interview was recorded, and participants gave consent to be recorded.

Each interview was conducted in private as I was assigned a room to ensure that participants would be able to freely express themselves. Other interviews were conducted in the participants' offices, a setting which they were accustomed to. As a former employee, participants felt at ease to narrate their experiences, even though I had not worked directly with them before. I used my former association with the organisation to create rapport with participants so that they could express themselves freely. To aid in the data collection process, three interview schedules for (postal workers, human resources management expert and IT specialist) were designed with open-ended questions that were crafted to get insight into (recollections) of past experiences. See Annex III, IV and V for the interview schedules that were used for the in-depth interviews.

1.6.2 Documentary Analysis

Documentary analysis is a 'systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents – both printed and electronic (computer-based and internet transmitted) material' (Bowen, 2009:27). This is an important data collection tool in qualitative research. Document analysis was an additional tool that I used to collect historical data from ZimPost and other institutions that could provide relevant historical information. I requested organisational documents for the period 2010 to 2020 such as annual reports, mid-term reports, strategic planning reports, policy documents that I could analyse to trace historical developments at ZimPost. Unfortunately, the organisation was hesitant to provide reports because ZimPost financials had not been audited by an accredited external auditor since 2013. I was only provided with one annual report (for 2013). The reason for the absence of audited reports was attributed to lack of funds to engage independent auditing companies.

Alternatively, I then obtained data from the UPU website which compiles postal statistics from all its member countries. Whilst my study was not quantitative, I needed statistics on the extent to which changes such as a decline in mail volumes had occurred in the period under review. I was also able to obtain quarterly reports from the POTRAZ website on Zimbabwe's mail and courier statistics. I also studied the UPU Reform Guide, Auditor General's reports, policy documents and reports to see the trends and the dynamics of change taking place in the postal sector. Reference was made to these reports in contextual chapters of the thesis (Chapters 3 and 4 and 5).

1.6.3 Observation

Observation has been long recognised as an important tool for data collection (Kawulich, 2012). Observation 'involves collecting data using one's senses, especially looking and listening in a systematic and meaningful way' (McKechnie, 2008, cited in Smit & Onwuegbuzie, 2018:1). As I was conducting my interviews and spending time in post offices, I also observed the daily business that postal workers were engaged in, tools used to perform work, the volume of customers and the buildings in which work was being conducted.

One of the goals of my study was to analyse the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of ICT, human resources management and type of work. I was able to observe the extent to which technology was being utilised in post offices. Unlike the public perception generally held that post offices are archaic and backward, I observed use of ICT in post offices. In each of the offices that interviews were conducted, I observed that each worker had a modern desktop computer to perform work. Use of computers was also observed in post offices with counter clerks using them to perform transactions. I observed that in some post offices, workers would experience network connectivity challenges, making it difficult to provide services to customers. More details of the observations are provided in Chapter 7 of the thesis.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis refers to 'summarising and organising data; and interpretation is finding or making meaning' (Trent & Cho, 2014:652 cited in Leavy, 2017:150). One of the most challenging aspects about qualitative research is making sense of the vast amounts of data collected during fieldwork. Therefore, it is critical to have a clear strategy about how to manage, analyse and interpret data. This study generally followed the data analysis and interpretation phases prescribed by (Leavy, 2017:150 see also Yin, 2016). The phases involve

data preparation and organisation, initial immersion, coding, categorising and theming and lastly interpretation.

To prepare and organise the data, the recorded in-depth interviews were transcribed. Each transcribed interview was stored electronically for easy access. The reports, and other policy documents were also organised in a separate folder. After that I then studied the interviews, and field notes. The data analysis process for my study started during fieldwork. As illustrated by Merriam & Tisdell, (2018) data collection and analysis are a simultaneous process that occur in and out of the field. To achieve this, I recorded voice notes of my thoughts, reflections and observations on my mobile device especially after a day of interviews. I also recorded the patterns that were beginning to develop and kept track of any unique insights that emerged from the interviews and observations.

After immersing myself in the data, I then started the coding process. Since I was doing it electronically, I used highlighters on MS Word to colour code the data according to the different aspects of organisational change narrated by the participants. For example, characteristics of Taylorism, Fordism or post-Fordism identified from the data were highlighted in different colour codes. This process was time consuming and required revisiting the interviews several times to be familiar with the information that the participants relayed.

After coding the data, I developed themes and sub-themes to make sense of the data and arrange them in a manner that illustrates the historical accounts of the different perspectives on organisational change that were unfolding. Thematic analysis is defined as 'identifying, analysing, organising, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, cited in Nowell *et al*., 2017 :1). I arranged the themes according to the historical period that they were assigned by participants so that I could understand the period in which certain organisational changes had occurred. In the empirical Chapters, 5, 6 and 7 the years were specified for certain organisational changes that took place for example, the establishment of standalone companies and staff rationalisation.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CHALLENGES

Research ethics are central in any research setting and before embarking on the process of data collection, permission to carry out the study was obtained from ZimPost. The formal communication granting me permission to carry out the study is attached as Appendix Six. Secondly, verbal and written informed consent was obtained from each participant as the

participants also had to consent to a voice recording during the interviews (see Appendix Five). During the approval stage of the proposal, the ethical implications of the study were reviewed internally by the Department of Sociology and the Higher Degrees Committee to ensure that they were above board.

To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used throughout the interviews. Voice recordings of the interviews were kept confidential and not shared with any ZimPost employees or management. Confidentiality was very important in the study as some participants were concerned that the recordings would be shared with management. To ensure confidentiality, interviews were conducted in a private setting, as I was assigned a room where I could conduct the interviews without participants being afraid to express themselves. For participants whose interviews were conducted over the telephone or Zoom platform, the consent form was shared in advance with the participant. Whilst interviews were conducted in the work setting, careful consideration was made to ensure that interviews would not interfere with the work duties of participants. Participants did not encounter any harm throughout the data collection process.

Several challenges were encountered throughout the data collection process. Firstly, this study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, some interviews had to be conducted over the phone and on Zoom to avoid exposing participants to the virus. Covid-19 prevention protocols were observed. Secondly, research conducted in a government bureaucracy is challenging as access to documents is difficult to obtain. As alluded to earlier, I only received one annual report, as there were concerns about unaudited reports. Whilst my study was not focused on financial reports, and it was communicated, the reports were not shared including statistics on staff compliment for the period under review. Thirdly, the study was conducted at a time when ZimPost workers were experiencing difficult working conditions such as delayed and low salaries. I sensed during the interviews that some participants felt that, as a former employee of ZimPost, I would be able relay the challenges that they were experiencing to management, which they probably felt were not able to share. They felt the need to be heard. Therefore, as a researcher I had to remind my participants that I was conducting the research for academic reasons only.

1.9. THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis comprises of ten chapters including this one. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework adopted for this thesis. The Processual Perspective is used in this study as an

analytical tool to examine the dynamics of organisational change. The perspective argues that organisational change should not be treated as a series of steps or a linear pattern. Alternatively, the processual perspective views organisational change as chaotic and complex. Furthermore, the theory advocates for a longitudinal approach to organisational change studies emphasising that change is a process and change tends to unfold over time.

Chapters three and four are contextual chapters of the thesis. Chapter three discusses literature on the central argument of the thesis. Using literature, chapter three explores how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism are conceptualised in literature. This is a critical chapter in the thesis as it will shed light on the key elements of Taylorism, Fordism, the crisis of Fordism and ways out of crisis such as post-Fordism that I will use in my analysis to examine the applicability of these organising principles with key findings from the case study. The chapter examines the flexible models that various countries are adopting as part of the reform process.

Chapter four discusses literature related to the second and third goals of the thesis which are to examine the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of human resources management and ICT and explore the drivers of organisational change at ZimPost. Management structures have changed from Taylorism to, Fordism and post-Fordism. The literature explores changes taking place in human resources management. The chapter also discusses literature on the dynamics of organisational change in ICT. Linking this discussion to the central argument of the thesis, the chapter explores how technology under Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism has evolved. The internal and external drivers of organisational change are also explored in this chapter.

Chapters five, six and seven are the empirical chapters of the thesis. Chapter five presents historical narratives of PTC employees before the organisation was unbundled. Whilst the focus of the thesis was for the period 2010 to 2020, this chapter provides a historical basis for the organisational changes that occurred at ZimPost. The chapter frames the changes that took place at PTC using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories. The chapter identifies the elements of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism that fit and those that do not align to these concepts. The role of national economics and politics in shaping Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism is analysed in this chapter.

Chapter six focuses on historical accounts of organisational changes that occurred in the period under review. This period was labelled by participants as the 'Turbulent Years' of

ZimPost with economic and political challenges influencing the way Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolved at ZimPost. The chapter explores how economic changes such as dollarisation and the subsequent abandonment of the multi-currency system, played a critical role in shaping organisational changes that were experienced at ZimPost.

Chapter seven delves into the dynamics of organisational changes in the broad areas of human resources management and ICT as recalled by ZimPost employees. The chapter also identifies the flexible business models that were adopted by ZimPost in response to global trends in the postal sector. However, the chapter also brings out how these elements, best explained as characteristics of post-Fordism, were also shaped by politics and competition for resources thereby developing some form of deformed post-Fordism at ZimPost. The chapter also shows the dynamics of change in human resources management whereby elements of Taylorism and Fordism such as centralised management continue to exist despite implementation of contemporary human resources practices and policies.

Chapters eight and nine provide an overall analysis of organisational changes at ZimPost drawing on case study evidence from chapters five, six and seven. Using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories, this chapter shows how these broad ideal types of economic categorisation are experienced in different ways depending on the political, economic and cultural context in which organisational change occurs. The chapter shows how organisations evolve in different phases of capitalism. Using the processual perspective, the chapter explores the context in which organisational change takes place, the politics and scope of change at ZimPost.

Using the broad organising principles of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as ideal types of explaining the interaction between the economy and society chapter nine analysis how human resources management, ICT and work organisation evolved at different stages of capitalism. This chapter explores how these three systems of organisation were qualified, hampered or encouraged under the particular circumstances that existed at ZimPost in the period under review.

Chapter ten provides a comprehensive conclusion of the thesis, reiterating the central argument, theoretical framework and how the goals of the study were achieved. The chapter also outlines the recommendations of the study that can potentially be adopted by ZimPost.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORISING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE: PROCESSUAL THEORY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a conceptualisation of organisational change, followed by a discussion on the importance of a historical approach in the analysis of organisational change. The chapter also briefly examines the contextual approach, which provides the foundation for the processual perspective. The remainder of the chapter dwells on an exploration of the processual perspective, providing the context in which the historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost will be undertaken. The processual perspective argues that organisational change should not be perceived as a series of sequential steps. Rather, change should be seen as a complex and messy process that unfolds over time. This perspective is anchored on the central argument of the thesis that Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism do not follow a linear pattern but unfold differently depending on the context in which change occurs. Furthermore, the processual perspective examines the politics, substance and context in which change occurs. This study argues that the context in which organisational change takes place shapes the type of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism that unfolds in an organisation. Therefore, national economics and politics play a critical role in this process.

2.2. DEFINING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Change has always been a key aspect of organisations and the rate of change as well as its magnitude is much greater in contemporary society (Burnes, 2004). Organisations are considered agents of change (Altman et al., 1985, cited in Shen, 2005). Organisational change is defined as 'a mode of social change that involves a sharp and simultaneous shift in strategy, structure, process, and distribution of organisational power' (Shen, 2005:3). Changes that can be implemented in an organisation can be many and these may include changes in regulatory frameworks, human capacity development, customer perceptions and organisational structures (Kanji & Moura, 2003).

Dawson (2003:11) defines organisational change as 'new ways of organising and working'. In other words, organisations need to develop innovative ways that can be used to manage employees and ensure that the products and solutions being offered by the organisation result in profit making (Dawson, 2003). Changes are often instigated by a need to improve

organisational effectiveness, particularly the organisation's ability to use resources effectively (Hayes 2002, cited in Ramanathan, 2008).

Focusing on different aspects of the organisation, Boddy (2011:416) defines organisational change as 'a deliberate attempt to improve organisational performance by changing one or more aspects of the organisation such as its technology, structure or business processes'. Here, organisational change is conceptualised as a reaction to an ever-changing environment. Pressure to change emanates from complex organisational environments that stress the need for organisations to adapt and innovate (Lewis, 2011). Other environmental factors that put pressure on organisations to change include the globalisation of economies and increased competition, liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation, and the development of the Internet and web-based technologies (Sharma, 2007:1).

Another aspect of organisational change is that it takes place at different levels within an organisation. In line with this perspective, Burnes (1996) defines organisational change as alterations that occur at the widest level of the organisation and at different levels such as individuals, groups and the organisation as a whole. Change is viewed as an expected part of humans and organisations, emanating from a need by individual members of society to develop, acquire knowledge and skills and alter certain aspects of their behaviour (Kezar, 2001).

However, Dawson (2003:16) argues that many definitions of organisational change raise conceptual challenges as they are wide and make it difficult to establish the 'defining characteristics of organisational change.' There are two main aspects of theories of organisational change that have been developed in an attempt to identify the key characteristics of change in organisations (Dawson, 2003). The first one focuses on change as being a process that takes place over a period of time, from a 'present state of organisation to a future state' (Beckhard & Harris, 1987, cited in Dawson, 2003:16). The second characteristic is premised on the 'scale and scope of change' (Dunphy & Stace, 1990, cited in Dawson, 2003:16). This raises questions as to whether the impact of change will result in quick transformation of the organisation or gradual change over a period of time (Dawson, 2003).

2.3. HISTORICAL APPROACH TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

To achieve the primary goal of the thesis outlined in Section 1.4.(a) which is to trace the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost in the past decade, the

discussion below shows the relevance of a historical approach in the study of organisational change. Organisational change studies have neglected the importance of longitudinal approaches, often perceiving change as an event and not process that unfolds over time. A historical lens is critical in achieving the goals of this thesis as it provides that platform for an examination of the evolution of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism at ZimPost.

Organisational change has long been recognised as an important aspect in the study of organisations leading to a plethora of studies that analyse what needs to be studied and how it should be done (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011). History is defined as the 'accumulation of past events and the documents, narratives and memories attached to them' (Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele, 2016:677). The importance of a historical perspective in the study of organisations has been documented in a number of studies (Kipping & Üsdiken, 2014; Wadhwani *et al*., 2018; Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele, 2016; Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011, Brunninge, 2009; Üsdiken & Kieser, 2004; Maclean, Harvey & Clegg, 2016; Coraiola, Foster & Suddaby, 2014; Suddaby & Foster, 2016; Coraiola, Barros, Maclean & Foster, 2021) Many organisational studies have been oblivious to a historical perspective 'despite increasing calls for greater engagement with history in studying organisations'(Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011:1). The lack of a historical lens in the study of organisational change makes it difficult to address questions such as when change has successfully occurred and where in multifaceted organisations to look for change (Suddaby & Foster, 2016).

Organisational change studies in the 1960s and 1970s were dominated by rationalist models aimed at equipping managers with the tools required for planned change (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011). The 1980s also saw the rise of more 'descriptive and analytically oriented approaches', which critiqued the rationalistic and linear models in earlier studies (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011). Some approaches were more inclined to the development of theories that describe the processes of organisational change whilst other approaches were primarily focused on reorganising and theorising the methodologies used in organisational change studies (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011). Unlike these authors, Pettigrew (1985) identified a gap in organisational change studies and argued for a processual theory that involved long-term analysis, a historical lens, power struggles and the context of change. Pettigrew was able to demonstrate in greater detail that organisational change does not follow the rational models dominant in organisational change literature.

According to Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele (2016) history plays a critical but mostly underspecified role in organisations. However, history in organisational studies has been used to examine 'how social actors interpret the past to forge organisational identities' (Wadhwani *et al.*, 2018:1667). Furthermore, a historical lens in organisational research has been used to redefine market categories, acquire a deeper understanding of products, start new industries and manage the view of change in organisations (Wadhwani et al., 2018). Usdiken, Kipping & Engwall, (2011) state that early processual theorists such as Pettigrew (1990) argued for longitudinal analysis in the study of organisational change. To strengthen the processual argument, Suddaby & Foster, (2016) claim that organisational change models share common misconceptions about history – for example, time has been perceived to be a constant, measurable and linear flow that takes place independently of human experience. In an attempt to bridge the gap between history and organisational studies, Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele, (2016) state that collective memory shapes our perception of past events and social institutions.

Another important aspect about a historical dimension in organisational research is the interpretation of history. According to Brunninge (2009:7),

> Members of an organisation do not act upon actual history of their organisation, but rather what they believe to be organisational history. These beliefs are socially constructed when organisational members collectively remember the past, discuss it and assign meaning to it. This interpretive perspective opens up for a dynamic view of organisational history and questions the determinism of historical trajectories.

Brunninge (2009) argues that if accounts of the past come through interpretation, then processes of change such as continuity and discontinuity are a matter of interpretation and reinterpretation over time. Brunninge (2009) suggests that when members of an organisation attach new meanings to their past it gives managers an opportunity to make use of history in the change process through making sense of past events. The ability to interpret history is a powerful tool that can be used by management to influence decision-making since members tend to place value on historical examples as a basis for taking action (Cohen & March, 1986 cited in Brunninge, 2009).

In terms of theory, Maclean *et al.* (2016) cited in Maclean *et al.,* (2021) suggest a typology of four different ways that history can be conceptualised in organisational studies. First, history as a form of evaluation, where it is used as a method of testing and refining theory and

debates. Such an approach recognises that theory testing 'can benefit from a greater focus on context and temporality' (Maclean *et al*., 2021:5). Theory testing and refining accepts that over time events may be open for 'reinterpretation and re-evaluation' showing that history is open to debate from time to time (Maclean *et al.*, 2021:5). Second, history as having the ability to analyse and derive meaning for the purposes of formulating theories that explain the process of change. To achieve this, historical findings can be used to probe theories (Maclean *et al.,* 2021). Third, the role of history as a form of conceptualising, to develop new 'theoretical constructs' (Maclean *et al*., 2021:5). Lastly, history used as a tool to narrate where history explains the origins and processes of change (Maclean *et al.,* 2021).

From a phenomenological perspective, history can be perceived as 'inherently performative' (Wadhwani *et al.,* 2018). This entails the actor's ability to attach meaning or interpret the past and how the actor experiences present events and future expectations (Wadhwani *et al*., 2018:1666). In organisations, interpretation of the past is used in three organisational processes that is to 'create and manage identity and identification, to create and manage strategic change and to create and manage power dependencies' (Wadhwani *et al.,* 2018:1667). Brunninge (2009) suggests that an interpretive view of history is not centred on stability but can be a driving force in the change process.

2.4. CONTEXTUALIST MOVEMENT

There has been a growing body of studies which seek to analyse change processes within a historical and organisational context. These studies encompass multiple disciplines, drawing from a diversity of methods and perspectives (Dawson, 1996). The contextualist framework was initiated by studies conducted by Andrew Pettigrew and others (Vinger, 2004). The framework suggests that organisational change research should encompass the 'continuous interplay between ideas about three factors that is context, process and content of change' (Vinger, 2004:189).

The contextualist approach provides the foundational basis for a processual approach to organisational change. According to Dawson (1994:57),

> Contextualist research views longitudinal research methodologies to be the most appropriate for studying the processes by which change infolds. Building on this work, a processual perspective is formulated which advocates that the context,

substance and the politics of change are all central to explanations of organisational transition.

Proponents of the contextualist framework argue that change should not be separated from the past, organisational or economic situations that led to the initiation of change. The process of change shows that change does not follow a linear, rational trajectory devoid of problems and obstacles (Vinger, 2004). The contextual framework is critical of organisational change models stating that the models are 'ahistorical, aprocessual and acontextual in character' (Pettigrew, 1987, cited in Vinger, 2004:197). Focusing on context, Pettigrew's (1987) framework is based on three main dimensions of the change strategy. Firstly, content which focuses on what the change entails, secondly process which looks at how the change was managed and finally context in which the strategy unfolds (Robert & Fulop, 2014).

Through an examination of the three dimensions proponents of contextual research advocate for the use of longitudinal qualitative data (Dawson, 1996). As highlighted in Section 1.5.2. longitudinal qualitative research is argued to be appropriate for the examination of change as a process and to 'overcome the problems associated with the aprocessual and apolitical contingency approaches' by organisational change theorists who tend to see, 'technology as being in a static state and having the impact of imposing itself on organisational behaviour' (Clark *et al*., 1988, cited in Dawson, 1996:63). Such an approach overlooks the processes through which change occurs and how it is reconstructed (Clark *et al.,* 1988 cited in Dawson, 1996). Dawson (1996:64) explains that in terms of grouping research studies, the contextualist approach encompasses studies that seek to fully incorporate the historical perspective with organisational studies and those which focus specifically on processual research (Dawson, 1996).

2.5. PROCESSUAL PERSPECTIVE

The processual perspective strengthens the central argument of this thesis as it focuses on a non- linear approach in the conceptualisation of change. Taylorism, Fordism, the crisis of Fordism, and ways out of Fordism such as post-Fordism, should be treated as non-linear concepts that unfold uniquely in each national context. This theoretical framework connects these key factors and point to a deeper analysis of political dynamics, substance and context of organisational change. The national economic and political context in which change is experienced shapes the dynamics of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism in every country. Boyer & Durand, (1997:4) note that debates on Fordism for example, need to take into

account the 'complexity of the coordination procedures needed to establish a production system' such as national politics, culture, education system, role of the state and international relations. Therefore, each country has its own unique organisational design inspired by different factors. A detailed discussion of the national political and economic factors that shaped organisational change in Zimbabwe is located in Section 1.1. of the thesis.

A wide variety of useful theories and models have been formulated to explain the process of change and innovation in organisations (Poole & Van de Ven, 2004). However, there was little room for a historical approach in earlier studies on organisational change dating back to the 1960s and 1970s (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011). During this period studies predominantly focused on the 'management' of change, open-systems approach, environmental interdependencies and the subsequent adaptationist perspectives (Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall, 2011:4). The main focus of these approaches became the pursuit for rationalistic models that would assist change agents, such as managers, with the tools required for planned change and organisational development initiatives.

Üsdiken, Kipping & Engwall (2011:4) argue that 'given this problem-solving focus accompanying empirical research turned out to be very much technique-oriented and ahistorical in character'. This study recognises the role of history in organisational change processes. As argued by Suddaby & Foster (2016:2),

> The degree to which we see the past as objective or subjective clearly influences how we understand change. There is an important but unarticulated relationship between how concrete we believe the past to be and the degree of agency that we introduce into our models of change.

The socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost will be informed by Patrick Dawson's processual perspective. This perspective is sensitive to

> The way people make sense and give sense to their experiences of change, to the way that these are in turn influenced by the context (and historical legacy) within which these changes take place (Buchanan & Dawson, 2007, cited in Dawson, 2013:64).

Secondly, this study recognises that 'there can never be a universal theory of organisational change' (Dawson, 2003: 11). Change includes a process or a shift into unforeseen

developments making it impossible to have a theory that exhausts all aspects of organisational change (Dawson, 2003).

In his foreword of the book, *Reshaping Change: A Processual Perspective* by Patrick Dawson, popular organisational change author, Bernard Burnes highlights the expansive nature of organisational change theories and models. He explains that over the past 100 years there have been a multitude of theories and models designed to comprehend and manage organisational change. The first attempt to proffer a systematic approach to organisational change was made by Frederick Taylor in his *Principles of Scientific Management*. Burnes explains that from the 1930s onwards, the Human Relations school critiqued Taylor's one-sided approach to human nature. In the 1940s, Kurt Lewin formulated one of the most renowned models of organisational change. Lewin is regarded as the 'intellectual father of contemporary theories of applied behavioural science, action research and planned change' (Burnes, 2004:978).

Through Lewin's work, the Organisational Development (OD) movement was created and became a dominant approach to organisational change. The OD approach was challenged in the early 1980s as many Western organisations were faced with a rapidly changing environment and perceived OD approaches as having nothing much to offer. There was a paradigm shift with organisations looking for new approaches that could address the rapidly changing business environment such as the Culture-Excellence approach, Japanese Management approach and the Organisational Learning approach (Burnes, 2004:87). A wide range of approaches emerged, which unlike OD approaches, put to the fore issues of power and politics acknowledging that change is 'messy, contentious, context-dependent and open-ended' (Burnes, cited in Dawson, 2003: xii).

One of the emerging approaches is the processual perspective formulated by Dawson (1996, 2003). According to Dawson (2003), this perspective was developed for researchers interested in examining the way organisational change unfolds over a period of time. As he explained,

> The processual framework I have developed is based on the assumption that companies continuously move in and out of many different states, often concurrently, during the history of one or a number of organisational change initiatives (Dawson, 2003:41).

31

Building on the contextual framework, the processual approach adopts the view that organisational change is a 'complex and dynamic process which should not be solidified or treated as a series of linear events' (Dawson, 1996:64). The approach is heavily critical of studies that account for organisational change in a rational, linear way (Dawson, 2003). Rational models of organisational change put emphasis on the 'controllability of change' (Collins, 1998:85). As argued by Boyer & Durand, (1997:3) organisational ideal types such as Taylorism and Fordism emerge from a 'process that is both contradictory and uncertain'.

Rational approaches assume that organisational change and management is premised on reason or logic (Collins, 1998). When planning and management of organisational change is perceived as a problem to be resolved logically, through planning. Planning in this case involves gathering all the necessary information that enables management to resolve organisational problems. Change models that prescribe 'steps to follow' to achieve change are described as rationalist and assume that the results of change are foreseeable (Burnes, 1996, cited in Collins, 1998:85). Furthermore, the processual perspective makes it clear that in practice it is often challenging to pinpoint the beginning and end of change.

The processual perspective is premised on the assumption that 'change is complex and at times chaotic' (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2008, cited in Dawson, 2014:64). Processual theory argues that organisational changes 'unfold over time in a messy and iterative manner' (Langley et al., 2013, cited in Palmer, Dunford & Buchanan, 2017:39). The processual perspective further highlights that radical and extensive change does not take place overnight and should not be treated as an event, it is a process that takes time (Dawson, 2005). The processual perspective acknowledges that, in the process of organisational change, unintended, unanticipated changes will happen and therefore change should not be oversimplified to a list of chronological steps (Dawson, 2014). The processual perspective, whilst critical of models and theories of organisational change that perceive change as linear, does not view the non-linear aspects of change as only being experienced in unstable environments nor does the perspective reject planned change (Dawson, 2003).

The processual perspective criticises the popular organisational approach derived from Kurt Lewin's (unfreeze, change and refreeze) model. Organisational change theorists such as Kanter (1983, cited in Dawson, 2005) argue that organisations are never in a static or frozen state, rather they are fluid with many interest groups and individuals. Furthermore, they argue that changes overlap in significant ways (Kanter, 1983, cited in Dawson, 2005). It is critical

to note that the processual perspective does not oppose the critical role played by planned change. However, it places emphasis on the need to consider the unintended twists and turns, overlooked and oversights that are essentially part of managing organisational change especially over a period of time (Dawson, 2003).

The processual perspective identifies organisational change as a shift from a present state to a future state; that is, the progression from point A to point B (Dawson, 2003). This process begins by members of an organisation identifying the need to change. This process involves identifying internal and external factors that prompt the need for change (Collins,1998). This is followed by the implementation of the change process. This entails refining or developing the strategy to be implemented in the change process. The role of managers in the implementation stage is to evaluate the change process and identify possible opportunities that may be realised. Given the chaotic nature of organisational change, the processual theory argues that, at this stage, unexpected results may arise and derail change initiatives (Collins, 1998).

Figure 1: Processual Perspective
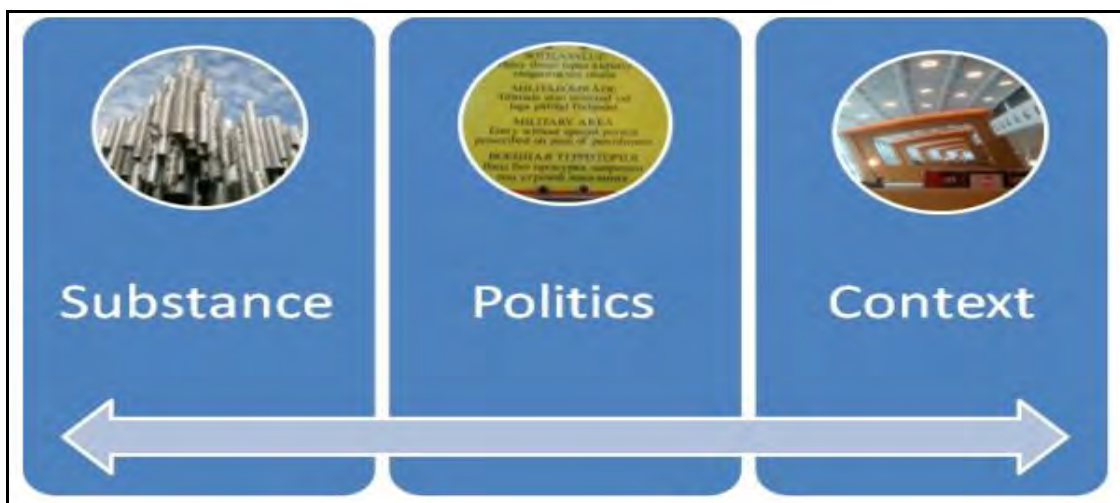
Source: Dawson (2014: 64).

The processual approach, as developed by Dawson (2003:7), consists of three main areas which are 'politics, context and substance of change'. The processual framework is concerned with the following: first, the 'political arenas in which decisions are made', how history is formulated, and how decisions are justified, which is also a political process (Dawson, 2003:12). Secondly, the opportunities and constraints experienced in the change process as well as scale and mode of change (substance). Lastly, the environment in which

change is taking place, internal factors as well and the 'history and culture of the organisation (context)' (Dawson, 2003:12). The goal of this thesis is to explore the dynamics of organisational change using Taylorism, Fordism and post Fordism as broad organisational ideal types. The evolution of these concepts is influenced by various factors especially the history and culture of the organisation in which change takes place.

2.5.1. Politics of Change

The politics of change entails political activities within and external to the organisation (Dawson, 2003). External actors refer to members outside the organisation with the power to influence and effect change within an organisation such as regulatory authorities, government ministries, competitors, regional and international bodies (Dawson, 2003). Internal actors refer to members within the organisation, for example trade union leaders, various organisational groups, shopfloor workers and supervisors amongst others. According to Dawson (2003), these individuals and groups have the power to influence decision-making at critical points in the process of organisational change. The role of these actors and groups is seen as powerful at different levels in consultations, negotiations and even resistance to the change process (Dawson, 2003).

Organisational politics is defined as:

> Efforts of organisational members to mobilise support for or against policies, rules, goals or other decisions in which the outcome will have some effect on them. Politics, therefore, is essentially the exercise of power (Robbins, 1987: 194, cited in Burnes, 2004:186).

The terms 'politics and 'power' are often used interchangeably (Drory & Romm, 1988, cited in Burnes, 2004). For Robbins (1987), cited in Burnes, (2004:186) power is the 'capacity to influence decisions whilst politics is the actual process of exerting this influence'. The power-politics perspective argues that organisations are often irrational entities (Burnes, 2004; Buchanan & Badham, 2020). Organisations are also political arenas and decision making is influenced by tactics calculated to serve the interests of particular individuals or groups (Buchanan & Badham, 2020). Cameron & Green (2012) highlight that any approach to change should consider the political system of an organisation. Change takes places as new members are placed in positions of power with new perspectives, new ways of distributing

scarce resources, and members around those in power position themselves to benefit rather than lose out on the change process (Cameron & Green, 2012).

Political behaviour entails the use of power and comprises both explicit and implicit activities where people use power to advance their interests (Senior & Swailes, 2016:185). Buchanan & Badham (2020:3) suggest that organisational change has the capacity to deepen power relations and political behaviour because some members and groups of the organisation may perceive that their positions may either be threatened or strengthened. Furthermore, power is often a reason for change, strengthening a member's power base, and limiting other members (Suddaby & Foster, 2017 cited in Buchanan & Badham, 2020:3).

McShane & Glinow (2018) identified the contexts in which organisational politics may thrive. Firstly, organisational politics may be prompted by limited resources in the workplace. When organisations put in place measures to cut back on resources, members of the organisation tend to rely on political strategies to protect their resources and ensure that changes do not take place. Secondly, organisational politics thrive in the context of unclear or complex rules or the absence of rules. This creates an opportunity for members to use political tactics to serve their own interests. Thirdly, the process of organisational change itself tends to expose organisational politics because change creates uncertainty, and this unsettles members or even threaten the availability of and access to resources. Hence, the need for change agents to continuously involve and inform members of changes taking place to minimise engagement in organisational politics. Lastly, political behaviour thrives in workplaces where it is tolerated and strengthened. Some organisations feed their leader's self-serving behaviour through reward systems. McShane & Glinow (2018:297) suggest that, to minimise self-serving behaviour of leaders, 'organisations need to diagnose and alter systems and role modelling that support self-serving behaviour'.

In addition, power and politics can also be used in productive ways; for example, to drive the process of change through conflict resolution, creating a platform where members can come to come sort of compromise and to resolve challenges (Buchanan & Badham, 2020). Maslyn et al., (2017), cited in Buchanan & Badham, (2020) suggest that, instead of eliminating organisational politics, managers should use their power and politics to fulfil organisational goals that benefit the organisation. This does not mean that members of an organisation do not have conflicting aspirations, interests and values. Organisational changes most likely will not benefit members equally.

2.5.2. Context of Change

The second major component of the processual perspective is the context in which transformation takes place (Dawson, 2003). Under the processual perspective, context refers to the 'past and present external and internal operating environments as well as the influence of future projections and expectations on current operating practice' (Dawson, 2003:10). In other words, the outcomes of the change process are influenced by an amalgamation of factors encompassing the past, current and future contexts in which the organisation operates (Palmer, Dunford & Buchanan, 2017). Understanding the context in which organisational change takes place is a research area that has not been adequately explored; therefore, the context of change is a critical area of study (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999, cited in Ahmad and Cheng, 2018).

The processual perspective considers a historical approach to both the 'internal and external organisational context, understanding the opportunities, constraints and organisationally defined routes to change' (Kelly & Amburgey, 1991, cited in Dawson, 2003:10). Contextual factors 'are the why part of change, they explain why the change is necessary' (Pettigrew, 1987, cited in Self, Armenakis & Schraeder, 2007:214).

External contextual factors comprise of changes in the tactics used by competitors, levels of global competition, government regulation, shifting social norms, technological developments and changes in business activities (Dawson, 2003). External contextual factors have an impact on the performance of the organisation and are the catalyst for the change process; for example, the implementation of strategic plans or restructuring for the purposes of improving the performance of the business (Self, Armenakis and Schraeder, 2007).

Using Leavitt's (1964) classification model, Dawson (2003:10) notes that internal contextual factors include 'human resources, administrative structures, technology and product or service' and an additional component of past events and the culture of an organisation. The history and culture of an organisation are critical to the understanding of change, particularly the 'existence of multiple narratives and competing histories of change' (Dawson, 2003:10). The organisational context is perceived as an ever-changing process because organisations are dynamic and experiences changes connected to their internal and external environment (Self, Armenakis & Schraeder, 2007). Self, Armenakis & Schraeder (2007) argue that the

36

context of organisational change should be evaluated through the eyes of those who experience the benefits and losses of the change process.

As shown in Section 1.1. of the thesis, the context of organisational change in Zimbabwe is characterised by a restrictive economic and political environment. According to the World Bank (2020:296) macroeconomic challenges that include 'high inflation, unstable exchange rates and unsustainable debt have constrained macroeconomic stability and productivity growth' in Zimbabwe. The World Bank report further expounds that trade between Zimbabwe and other countries declined, and there was limited foreign direct investment hampering the 'transfer of new technologies and investments in modernising the economy' (World Bank, 2020:296). Furthermore, (Kanyenze, Chitambara & Tyson, 2017; Mlambo, 2017; Mazikana, 2017; Sachikonye, 1999) argue that Zimbabwe has been experiencing a process of de-industrialisation characterised by lack of productivity and increasing informalisation of the economy. Mlambo (2017:108) describes the economy as having shifted from an 'industrial powerhouse to a nation of vendors.' Coupled with these changes was a fall in wages and deepening poverty levels (Kanyenze, Chitambara & Tyson, 2017). In addition, the 2019 Labour Force and Child Labour Survey (LFCLS) indicates that 210 000 employees were retrenched over the period 2014 to 2019. The unemployment rate in 2019 was 16.4% Labour Force and Child Labour Survey, 2019:172).

Politically, the period 2010 to 2020 coincided with an unprecedented historical period where a Government of National Unity (GNU) was established from 2009 to 2013. After the highly disputed 2008 elections, the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) conceded to some form of a power sharing agreement with the opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). As part of its economic reforms, the GNU introduced a multi-currency regime in 2019 to detain the free-falling economy. This shift made a positive impact on the economy evidenced by an improved business environment (Manda & Sibanda, 2020; CZI, 2011). Unfortunately, these positive developments were short-lived as ZANU-PF resumed total control of the government and the economic decline re-commenced from 2013 onwards. The positive developments were unsustainable because the ensuing macroeconomic changes were deemed weak and inconsistent resulting in shortages of the US dollar on the market and a loss of monetary value between the converted money held in banks referred to RTGS dollars and US dollars (Jefferis, 2020). In June 2019, the government scrapped off the multi-currency regime and reintroduced the 'defunct Zimbabwe dollar' (Jefferis, 2020: 5).

Since the re-introduction of the Zimbabwean dollar, its performance has been dismal with the exchange rate declining significantly, officially and on the parallel market (Jefferis, 2020).

2.5.3. Substance of Change

The last component of the processual perspective is the substance of change. It involves the 'type and scale' of the change process as determined by management as necessary (Collins, 1998:75). The substance of change has enabling or constraining capabilities providing options which management may or may not pursue (Collins, 1998). Dawson (2003) identifies four group determinants of change, which are scale and scope of change, defining characteristics of change, timeframe of change and the perceived centrality of change.

(i) Scale and Scope of Change

According to Dawson (2003), the scale and scope of change varies from subtle changes to dramatic and extensive transformation. In addition, the scale and scope of change can be elaborated by distinguishing between changes made in small areas of the operational process, departmental changes, branch, plant or the whole organisation. According to Sveningsson & Sorgade, (2019) small or trivial changes often do not create significant conflict or threaten members' access to resources; however, radical or large-scale changes are more complex and may threaten work practices that employees are used to. Large-scale changes may cause feelings of anxiety and make workers question what the change means for them. It is likely that large-scale changes are at increased risk of being resisted and leading to conflict (Sveningsson & Sorgade, 2019).

Figure 2: Scale and scope of change
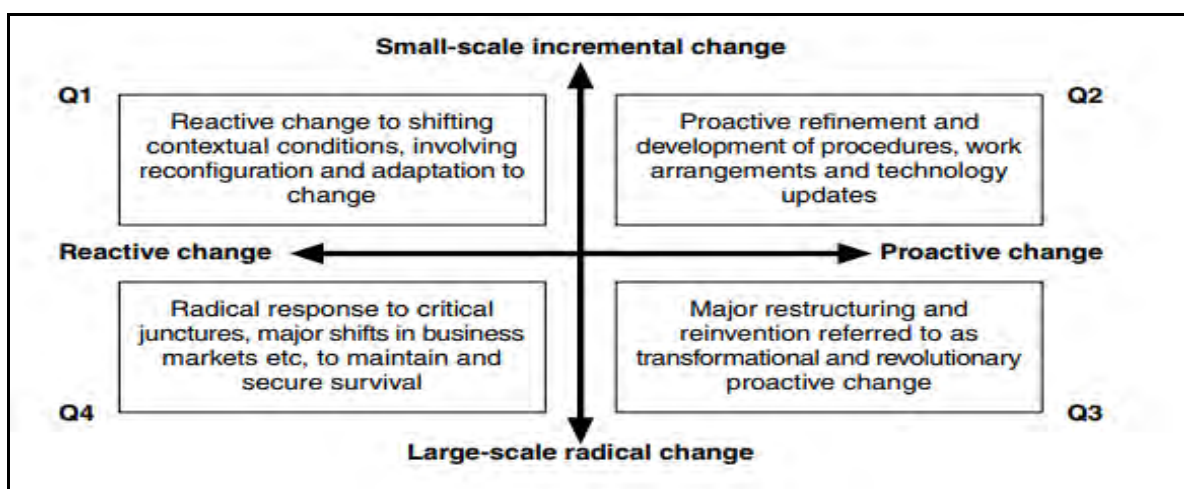
Source: Dawson (2003:13).

The model of organisational life developed by Tushman *et al*., (1988), cited in Senior & Swailes, (2016) highlights the scale and scope of change and claims that periods of gradual change are interrupted by periods of discontinuous changes. Both gradual and radical changes aim at 'maintaining the fit between organisational strategy, structure and processes' (Senior & Swailes, 2016:33). The processual perspective acknowledges that there are critical stages in organisations that require radical change, and that constant change also takes place in organisations operating in environments which are comparatively stable (Dawson, 2003).

(ii) Defining characteristics of change

For Dawson (2003:11), this refers to two elements that is how change is labelled and the actual content of change. For example, an organisation may implement different change initiatives at a given time with different outcomes. Staff rationalisation and total quality management are all organisational change initiatives that may be initiated in an organisation at the same time but achieve divergent results in the organisation.

(iii) Timeframe of change

Organisational change involves change that can take place over a period of time or a quick response to changes in the market and elsewhere. Change initiatives are often characterised by 'temporal fluctuation': for example, a change programme at the beginning may have substantial momentum, even in the implementation process (Dawson, 2003:11). However, over time, these changes may go undetected in studies that focus mainly on the critical period in the process of workplace transformation. For Dawson (2003), timeframes of change should be perceived as analytical tools which only become clearer in hindsight.

(iv) Perceived Centrality of Change

According to Dawson (2003), the perceived centrality of change explains the degree to which change is viewed as being central to the continued existence of the organisation. If change is perceived to be critical for the continued operation and competitive position of the organisation, it will also have significant implications for resources allocated to the change process and workers' commitment to change.

Dawson (2003) notes that it is important to recognise that the determinants identified as substance of change are fluid and change over time. The substance of change cannot be separated from contextual and political determinants. For example, it is not unusual for a lack of clarity to be experienced when a new work practice is introduced and for the change

experience to be redefined as a process of adaptation takes place. In addition, understanding what change entails for a specific organisation can become a political process contested by external and internal interests in the control of the change process (Dawson, 2003). In a study of a mirror manufacturing plant, Dawson (2005) applied the processual perspective to the introduction of technology and new forms of work. He established that there is a 'mutual shaping between the technical and social during the process of organisational change', and that political behaviour may strengthen or redefine change initiatives (Dawson, 2005:385).

2.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the theoretical framework that informs this study, and illustrated how it feeds into the central argument and goals of the thesis. The role of politics, context and substance of change in analysing the transition from Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism at ZimPost was elaborated in this discussion. These tools of analyses are useful in illustrating the dynamics of organisational change in a public sector organisation. In addition, this chapter demonstrates the relevance of the processual perspective in analysing the key elements that contribute to an understanding of organisational change from both a sociological and historical perspective. The theory also shows that organisational change does not occur in a linear, predictable fashion; rather, change is often 'messy' and workers may have different perspectives of change and interests in change initiatives. The central argument of the thesis also perceives change as non-linear because Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism do not unfold in identical forms.

CHAPTER 3

CHANGE IN POSTAL ORGANISATIONS: TAYLORISM, FORDISM AND POST-FORDISM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The overall goal of this thesis is to undertake a socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost, using broad organisational ideal types such as Taylorism, Fordism, and post- Fordism to explore the changes that unfolded at ZimPost in the past decade. The purpose of this chapter is to delve into literature on these broad organising principles to establish how they have been conceptualised, so as to enable a comparative analysis with particular circumstances that existed in ZimPost at the time the research was conducted (See chapters eight and nine). Various organisational studies have used Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories to make sense of changes taking place in the workplace and this thesis seeks to apply these categories in public organisations. In addition, this framework was adopted for this thesis to demonstrate the interaction between the economy and society, and how industry evolves in different phases of capitalism, showing the unique national characteristics that shape the evolution process.

Furthermore, this chapter illustrates how postal organisations have transitioned from a Taylorist model characterised by rigid bureaucracy, extensive paperwork and deskilling to a Fordist model, which entailed greater standardisation and mass production, the use of assembly line principles and the rise of trade unions. The Fordist model ran into crisis with the advancement of ICT, the Internet and outsourcing of work. The post-Fordist period has seen some postal operators making attempts to adopt flexible organisational models that can respond to changes quicker and operate more like commercial entities.

3.2 POST OFFICE AND TAYLORISM

This section discusses literature on Taylorism and how it can be applied to the post office. The purpose of the review is to show how Taylorism has been conceptualised in literature and how this can be compared with data that emerged from the study. Taylorism has been used as an analytical category to explain changes in the workplace such as organisation of work.

3.2.1. Scientific Management

In 1911, classical organisational theorist Frederick Taylor (1947), developed what he called *Principles of Scientific Management*. Scientific management theory and practice is integral to the 'managerial capitalist model of mass production and work organisation' (Baxter, 1994:13). Scientific management originated from a belief that managers had to change prevailing power relations in the process of production (Thompson & McHugh, 2002). The change from small craft to large-scale mechanised production towards the end of the 18th century increased the need for managers to explore new strategies to manage organisational resources and increase productivity (Uddin & Ussain, 2015). Management practices were changing from daily problem-solving approaches to more comprehensive, long-term management practices that could address emerging problems (Gull, 2017).

Scientific management involves an intensive study of work processes to break them down into simple tasks that could be accurately timed and planned (Giddens *et al.*, 2018). Taylor (1911) proposed the use of science in the management of organisations as opposed to the rule of thumb. Using time and motion studies, he believed that it was possible to 'identify the most efficient way of performing a task' (Dawson, 2003:28). For Taylor, the fundamental role of managers was to control the labour process (Thompson & McHugh, 2002). In addition, managers were responsible for acquiring knowledge on work processes, minimising or eliminating employees' control of work and establishing standard procedures for each task (Burnes, 2004). In other words, scientific management entails managers designing jobs to 'achieve maximum technical division of labour through advanced job fragmentation' (Watson, 2008:32).

Taylor (1947:36) stated that managers had the

> Burden of gathering together all of the traditional knowledge which in the past has been possessed by the workmen and then of classifying, tabulating and reducing this knowledge to rules, laws and formulae.

This approach locates scientific management within a 'process of bureaucratisation of production' (Thompson & McHugh, 2002:31). Concerning work processes, scientific management simplifies, routinised and standardised clerical tasks (Ritzer, 2011). Mechanisation of office work primarily through computers particularly clerical work, enables managers to control workers more effectively (Ritzer, 2011).

According to labour process theory (LPT), capitalist forms of production such as scientific management reduce the cost of labour by breaking down complex work processes intro smaller and unskilled tasks (Braverman, 1974). The theory argues that the continuous fragmentation process replaces the skilled craft worker by unskilled labour requiring little training (Braverman, 1998). Fragmentation of jobs into a series of tasks that require relatively little skill, training or understanding of the wider work processes result in the deskilling of the worker (Boreham et al., 2008:18). In addition, Braverman (1974: 57) argues that scientific management principles are clearly in favour of the capitalist mode of production and create an arrangement of relations between labour and capital where workers are essentially robbed of identifying with the labour process. Any special knowledge is the preserve of capital. In essence workers are reduced to mere tools of the production process.

Scientific management is also critiqued for its over-emphasis on the control of workers. According to Braverman (1974) managers assume extensive control over workers ensuring the uninterrupted enforcement of rules, essentially treating workers as homo economicus beings, whose role is maximised production. Taylor is also largely criticised for his belief that workers are naturally lazy and have a tendency of soldiering. It is argued that he did not consider the importance of human relations; in fact, they were shoved in the background.

In order to comprehend organisational change from Taylor's perspective, there is need to understand the historical context in which his ideas were developed (Burke, 2002). Burke summarises the key highlights of the historical context as follows:

(i) The industrial revolution was at its peak
(ii) Manufacturing was the main segment of economic development where growth was taking place
(iii) The main disciplines that particularly influenced the above two components were engineering and economics.

This explains why Taylor's perception of organisations was mechanical (Burke, 2002). The emergence of capitalism in Europe presented newfound possibilities and challenges that could not be contained in the old system (Burns, 2004). Change was introduced in the form of a shift from self-contained, independent family units to corporates that were dominated by businesspersons (Burns, 2004). The drive for profits formed industrial systems in countries such as Britain and this became the foundation of modern organisations (Burns, 2004). The key features of organisations during this period were domination of capital, division of labour

and hostile relations between owners of factories and workers (Burns, 2004: 47). Therefore, the rational approach adopted by classical theorists mainly focused on production and profit and negated human relations aspects.

Despite the limitations of Taylor's management model, principles of scientific management have been applied to postal and telecommunication industries for job design, standardised mass production and managerial authority (Batten & Schonmaker, 1987, cited in Baxter, 1994). For example, in the United States Post Office, scientific management practices were formally incorporated between 1913 and 1921 (DiPrete, 1988; U.S. POD, 1921, cited in Baxter, 1994).

3.2.2. A rigid bureaucracy

ZimPost, like many other government organisations operates as a bureaucracy. This discussion focuses on key aspects of bureaucracy and its implications on organisational change particularly the rigid and hierarchical structure that makes such organisations slow to change. The concept of bureaucracy was popularised by German Sociologist, Max Weber (Ritzer, 2011). Weber's ideal bureaucracy was the creation of a rational system,

> [characterised] by rules and legal order and coping with the changes that were taking place within society at that time, including the rise of science, development of industrial manufacturing, capitalism and its systematic pursuit of profit (Sycamnias, 2007, cited in Wahab, 2008:17).

Weber argued that bureaucracy was an inevitable outcome of modern society, and it was the most ideal way of managing the demands of large-scale organisations (Giddens 2006). Bureaucracies are defined as 'organisations in which tasks are divided among technical specialists, who devote their full working capacity to the organisation and whose activities are coordinated by rational rules, hierarchy and written documents' (Haveman, 2018:1). Officials in a bureaucracy have clearly defined duties and responsibilities and are assigned a limited number of tasks in line with administrative regulations (Wahab & Jawando, 2008). Weber outlined the benefits of a bureaucracy:

> [it] is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency, and is in this sense formally the most rational known means of exercising authority over human beings. It is superior reliability (Weber, 1921/1968, cited in Ritzer, 2011:129).

44

For Weber, modern society is heavily dependent on science, technology and bureaucracy (Giddens, 2006: 19). Weber argued that bureaucracies are underpinned by formal and substantive rationality, which entails (1) calculability, (2) efficiency, (3) predictability, (4) replacement of skills with technology such as computerised systems, (5) control over uncertainties and (6) rational systems which tend to have a series of unintended consequences for organisational members and wider society (Ritzer, 2011: 139). Formal and substantive rationality creates bureaucratic rigidities characteristic of public administrations (Roy, 2013, cited in Turyahikayo, 2018). Furthermore, public administrations rely on rigid processes such as 'paper and rule-based processes as well as vertical decision-making' (Roy, 2013, cited in Turyahikayo, 2018:11).

Traditionally, public postal administrations were modelled as bureaucracies, and according to Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, (2008:2),

> Mail service originated as a government function and has remained a government function almost universally until recently. So, it was not surprising that national post offices were run as government bureaucracies and not as commercial enterprises.

Furthermore, postal bureaucracies have been an integral aspect of government ministries commonly operating under the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (Panzar *et al.,* 2008). In Zimbabwe, mail delivery originated as a government service with the establishment of the Posts and Telecommunications Company (PTC) through an Act of Parliament in 1970 (Zwizwai *et al.,* 1995). Prior to this, PTC existed as a government department under the Ministry of Posts and, in 1995, PTC employed over 9,000 employees. The policy guidelines in the PTC Act ensured that PTC operated as a government bureaucracy – for example, any tariff changes required the approval of cabinet.

With hierarchical levels, strict rules, and multiple consultation processes with superiors, bureaucracies are argued to be slow and at times resistant to change (Mori, 2017). Contemporary organisations are confronted with global competition and cannot afford to 'overlook the negative effects originating from traditional Taylorist and autocratic organisational structures of the past' (Gene, 1997:2).

According to Guislain (2004), the future of traditional post offices is questionable in many developing countries as rigid and dominant forms of control common in postal bureaucracies have been deemed outdated. For example, before 1971 members of Congress controlled many aspects of the United States Post Office Department such as determining pricing of

products and hiring of managers (Carbaugh & Tenerelli, 2010). Managers are looking for innovative ways to change their organisations from a Taylorist model to models that foster increased involvement of workers in decision making and teamwork (Gene, 1997). Whilst public postal administrations have mainly adopted a bureaucratic model, organisational changes in bureaucratic administrations have become necessary as flexibility is critical to the survival of contemporary organisations (Mori, 2017). Flexibility entails replacing a bureaucratic vertical structure with a horizontal flexible structure (Giddens *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, traditional postal services are unable to sustain operational costs and Guislain (2004:5) argues that a 'more dynamic post office requires a management structure with the freedom and incentives to increase efficiency, client orientation and innovation'. A significant number of developing countries have not shifted from the traditional bureaucratic monopolies (Guislain, 2004). Mako *et al.,* (2013) argue that traditional methods are inadequate to handle organisational challenges in a fiercely competitive environment. The bureaucratic model used to manage public postal administrations was criticised for being rigid because 'there was little if any room for regulatory or competition policy to operate, postal policy was government policy' (Panzar, 2008:15). OECD countries have been shifting from a rigid bureaucracy through implementation of postal reforms (OECD, 2002).

Similarly, countries in the European Union (EU), realised the need to change from a rigid postal bureaucracy to a flexible organisational model that responds to change. At the beginning of 1990, public postal administrations still maintained the provision of postal services in many (EU) countries (ITA Consulting & WIK Consult, 2009). It was common for provision of postal services to be financed by revenue from telecommunications (Ibid). Postal services within the EU were characterised by poor-quality service (ITA Consulting & WIK Consult, 2009). Acting on these challenges, the EU adopted Directive 97/67 in 1997 (Jaag, Trinkner &Yusof, 2014). The aim of the Directive was to create a single market for postal services through gradually opening up the sector and 'weakening the position of the traditional postal operators' step by step' (Jaag, Trinkner & Yusof, 2014:1).

3.3 POSTAL SERVICES, FORDISM AND ITS CRISIS

This section explores literature on Fordism and the Fordist crisis. Key characteristics of Fordism and the crisis will be discussed in this section to facilitate an analysis of how these broad organisational principles have been qualified or hindered at ZimPost. The primary goal of the thesis is to trace the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost

in the past decade and an understanding of the key elements of Fordism and its crisis shed light on how these elements can be compared with developments at ZimPost.

Occasionally, industrial sociology is preoccupied with a set of concepts or ideas which 'function as organising principles for the whole area of inquiry' (Gilbert, Burrows & Pollert, 1992:1). The mid-1980s saw industrial and economic sociologists focused on debates concerning the economic restructuring of society. The 1980s and 1990s were recognised as a period of substantial economic changes, however the interpretation of these changes has been a source of significant debate (Gilbert, Burrows & Pollert, 1992). There have been both liberal and Marxian explanations of the changes in the dominant forms of production; analysis of the supposed mismatch between market capitalism and 'more socialised systems of collective consumption; and analyses of economic long waves' (Gilbert, Burrows & Pollert, 1992:1). Three interrelated concepts have emerged out of this debate which are Fordism, post-Fordism and different versions of economic flexibility. These concepts have been used to explain transformation of the labour market and the organisation of work (Gilbert, Burrows & Pollert, 1992:2).

A historical analysis of economies shows that 'accumulation undergoes long periods of stability, followed by long periods of instability and crisis' (Labrousse et al., 2018:1). Regulation theory was formulated in an attempt to explain the dynamics of long-term cycles of economic stability and change (Amin, 1994). According to Jessop (1990), there are seven main schools of thought within the regulationist approach. Regulation theory draws on two key concepts: regime of accumulation and mode of regulation (Amin, 1994). A regime of accumulation is described as 'a fairly long-term stabilisation of the allocation of social production between consumption and accumulation' (Lipietz, 1987:14). Forms of regulation are 'sets of explicit and implicit norms, institutions and rules, including government policies, that support the regime of accumulation' (Ward, 2010:179). The aim of regulation theory is to explain the period of relatively high and stable growth known as the 'Golden Age', which was subsequently followed by periods of economic decline from the 1970s in advanced countries (Labrousse *et al.,* 2018:10).

3.3.1. Fordist Regime of Accumulation
The term Fordism was coined by Antonio Gramsci to analyse class relations in America and describe Henry Ford's successful implementation of assembly line technology (Gramsci, 1971). Henry Ford is credited with the 'development of the mass production system, primarily through the creation of the automobile assembly line' (Ritzer, 2011:303). Fordism

represents production of goods on the assembly line, the control of workers by management and the use of technology (Antonio & Bonanno, 2000:34). Lipietz (1995:3) describes it as a combination of 'Taylorism and mechanisation'. Fordism entails 'an intensive regime of accumulation (Dawson, 2003) centred upon mass consumption [which] became a new monopolistic mode of regulation' in the USA and to some extent in Europe (Lipietz, 1987:35). Fordism also represents a historical period in the advancement of capitalism after World War II characterised by relatively stable relations, increased unionisation of workers, long-term employment, wages linked to productivity, collective bargaining agreements between organisations and unions, increase in wages, increased automation of production systems and seniority rights in the workplace (Giddens *et al.,* 2018). Industrial action in the form of strikes from 1945 to the early 1970s was not uncommon under the Fordist system in the USA. As the economy grew, workers also demanded a larger share of profits (Giddens *et al.,* 2018).

In 1908, Ford designed an automobile plant in Michigan for the manufacturing of one product using 'specialised tools and machinery designed for speed, precision and simplicity of operation' (Giddens *et al.,* 2018:360). In 1916, the Ford Motor Company experienced success with the production of 500,000 Model-T cars (Vidal, 2016). The mass production of automobiles was achieved through 'standardised parts and machinery which were pioneered in the arms industry under the direction and funding of the US government' (Vidal, 2016:283). His model aimed at cutting back production costs so that automobiles would be affordable to what Ford called 'the great multitude' (Volti, 2012:80).

Boyer & Durand (1993:7) outline the four principles of Fordism as follows:

> Firstly, to minimise and rationalise the process of production through increased mechanisation and synchronisation of production flows.

> Secondly, adherence to a strict hierarchical form of production and design in which production was not driven by demand but goods produced in bulk at low cost. It was assumed that the goods would always find a customer.

> Thirdly, keeping goods at low prices to stimulate mass consumption.

> Lastly, big companies reserved the stable portion of the market share for themselves as smaller companies could meet the demands for shorter production runs and diverse products.

These principles describe the ideal-type Fordism, which modelled the macro-economy in the United States (Amin, 1994). According to the regulation approach, Fordism did not develop as a clone of what obtained in the United States, but as 'different combinations of Fordist and non-Fordist features' (Nielsen, 1991, cited in Amin, 1994:10). For example, in South Africa, Klerck (2001) details the development and subsequent decline of racial Fordism.

3.3.2. Monopoly and Mass Production of Postal Products and Services

Many developed countries experienced exponential growth in mail volumes during the 20th century (Trinkner & Grossman, 2006, cited in Finger, & Jaag, 2015). This exponential growth was attributed mainly to the monopoly enjoyed by postal administrations in several countries. Postal services were operated by the government 'under a rather extensive government monopoly' in a majority of countries (UPU, 2019:16). For example, PTC enjoyed a monopoly of letter post services with the 'exclusive privilege of receiving, collecting, dispatching, conveying and delivering letters and of performing all the services incidental thereto' (Zwizwai *et al.,* 1995:101). PTC also held a 'virtual monopoly' of the telegram service stipulated in Section 27 of the Act. Private companies could only transmit telegrams at the authority and approval of the Minister of Posts (Zwizwai *et al.,* 1995:102). At the time the combination of a traditional mail product and new technology (telex) was hailed as a positive example of innovation within the postal service (Zwizwai, *et al.,* 1995). Given that public postal administrations were conferred a monopoly, there was mass production and mass standardisation of traditional mail products with letters and parcels projected to grow at an average annual rate of 2.4 percent and 5 percent respectively in 2005 (UPU, 2019). Post offices operated without considering the needs of customers who were perceived as just receivers of postal services for example, quality of service models was driven more by postal operators and not the needs of customers (UPU, 2019).

3.4. THE CRISIS OF FORDISM AND POSTAL SERVICES

The decline of Fordism began after the oil crisis of 1973, the subsequent decline of the American motor vehicle industry and the rise of the Japanese automobile industry (Ritzer, 2011). Whilst rationalisation and mechanisation were effective after the Second World War, several factors contributed to the decline of Fordism (Boyer & Durand, 1997). Large factories began to experience significant competition from smaller, flexible companies whose organisational design was more appropriate for the changed operating environment (Boyer & Durand, 1997). Central decision making had been useful under Fordism when the environment relatively stable, however the period after World War II ushered in

unprecedented challenges such as high interest rates, declining demand of products, and high rates of unemployment (Boyer & Durand, 1997). Consequently, these changes presented a significant 'crisis in management models' evidenced in reduced market shares and declining profits particularly for organisations that had been successful (Boyer & Durand, 1997:13). Organisations with a 'high degree of vertical integration in production' were exposed to substantial competition from organisations with a flat managerial hierarchy (Boyer & Durand, 1997:15).

The breakdown of the Fordist system is 'generally understood to have given rise to greater post-Fordist flexibility' (Giddens *et al.,* 2018:360). For example, whilst in the past the postal sector was mainly premised on physical transportation of communication services such as delivery of letters and parcels, the sector has since changed (Noordin, Hasnan & Osman, 2012.). The postal sector now includes non-traditional postal services such as 'courier services, freight services and e- services' (Noordin, Hasnan & Osman, 2012: 205).

The factors that contributed to the declining prominence of Fordism are intensively debated (Giddens *et al.,* 2018:360). Firstly, Fordist methods of production are not appropriate for all industries as they mainly suit industries that do not produce personalised products but standardised commodities. Secondly, designing an assembly line production system is expensive and, once designed, it is rigid to changes in the production. Any changes to the system require significant re-investment (Giddens *et al*., 2018). Standardised products are 'suited to rigid technologies such as the assembly line and rigidly bureaucratic organisations' (Sweet, 1994:28). Such production systems are not appropriate for organisations attempting to attract new markets for specialised goods (Sweets, 1994) Thirdly, the increased use of microprocessors, programmable stamping presses and quick changeover methods developed in Japan ushered in flexible machine tools that exceeded previous general-purpose machines (Vidal, 2016:290). Countries such as Japan maintained high-volume production but adopted a lean-production model (Vidal, 2016). It is important to note that a model in crisis does not entail that a substitute model will 'resolve problems of the first' (Durand & Boyer, 1997:19).

3.4.1. Increased Competition

In the late 1960s and 1970s, there was an emergence of private companies that offered competitive and quality services compared to the traditional mail services offered by post offices. During the late 1970s and particularly the 1980s, public postal operators began to experience challenges with meeting quality of service standards, which require mail to be

delivered within a specified timeframe (Finger *et al.*, 2005). This resulted in the emergence of private courier operators which provided express courier services (Finger *et al.*, 2005). Private courier operators such as DHL and FedEx quickly expanded their enterprises due to increased global trade activities (Finger *et al.*, 2005). A more detailed discussion of private courier operators and competition is located in section 3.6. of the thesis.

3.4.2. Rise of Information and Communication and Technologies

In the 1990s, postal organisations in Europe experienced a massive downturn in mail volumes. This was attributed to technological advancements that replaced the use of letters with quicker means of communication such as e-mail also known as 'e-substitution' (Jaag, 2015:25). These drivers of change had substantial effects on traditional postal operators (Finger *et al.*, 2005). A more elaborate discussion on the effects of information and communication technologies and the post is discussed in section 4.5. of the thesis.

3.4.3. Financial Deficits

Public postal operators accumulated financial deficits as political decision-making did not account for cost containment pushing countries to consider changing the organisational model used to run postal administrations (UPU, 2019). For example, the PTC Act (9/1970)-Chapter 250 did not create provisions for the postal and telecommunications administration to operate as a viable commercial entity. The Act simply stated that PTC should operate as a viable commercial entity without equipping or further clarifying how this was to be achieved. Furthermore, PTC could just borrow funds from treasury when the organisation was unable to make a profit (Zwizwai *et al.*, 1995). Zwizwai *et al.*, (1995) argue that such provisions reduced the effectiveness of policy implementation at PTC.

3.4.5. Changing Customer Needs

Changing product markets are noted to be one of the unique 'features of the new era in industrial production' (Piore & Sabel, 1984, cited in Sweet, 1994:12). Piore & Sabel (1984) suggest that industries are shifting from mass production to flexible specialisation in an effort to capture new markets and meet the changing needs of customers. Whilst customised products were once used to separate bourgeois tastes, in a post-modern society, classes are distinguished by individuality in consumption by the masses (Bourdieu, 1984).

In postal administrations, the evolution of products (mail and parcels) has taken place over many years; in fact, the original postal products first introduced in the 19th century 'are still with us' (Pintsov & Obrea, 2008:176). Over time, postal operators have been forced to

innovate their products through value-added services in response to the changing needs of customers – for example, the introduction of track and trace mail (Pintsov & Obrea, 2008:176). Post offices have also assumed non-traditional products. For example, Magyar Posta of Hungary introduced products such as mobile phone components, confectionary products, financial and insurance services as well as penetrating the mobile service provider market (Farkas & Petrovics, 2013). Magyar Posta changed its marketing strategy from a rigid bureaucratic approach to a 'more dynamic, informal type of customer-oriented behaviour' (Farkas & Petrovics, 2013:112).

In order to set themselves apart from other mail delivery organisations, some post offices are improving their business operations in an attempt to provide innovative services that meet the needs of their customers (Kiumarsi, Jayaraman & Isa, 2015). In line with these organisational changes, some post offices are now offering diverse services. For example, in Australia, post offices sell a variety of goods such as food items, pens, books, presents and children's toys (Kiumarsi, Jayaraman & Isa, 2015:55). This increased the demand for organisational changes that could shift public postal operators from conducting business like other government departments to customer-driven organisations (Finger *et al.,* 2005).

3.4.6. Rising Trade Unionism

While Taylorised bureaucratic organisations were mainly formulated to increase production and profit, the dominant nature of management common in such organisations, had the unintended consequences of increasing the collective power of workers by facilitating organised workers' ability to interrupt production (Sweet, 1994). Fordism transformed work processes through the use of technology; however, the repetition of menial tasks also resulted in the boredom of workers as they continuously had to execute a single task (Maller & Dwolotsky, 1993). A number of challenges were experienced with workers that included a decline in the standard of products, workers not reporting for work, high staff turnover and the rise of trade unionism (Clarke, 1990). Strikes were particularly effective in large organisations as the financial costs were intensified by centralised production (Sweet, 1994).

3.5. POSTAL SERVICES UNDER POST-FORDISM

At the centre of post-Fordism is the argument that there are new forms of the capital and labour relations (Gough, 1992). There is general consensus amongst social scientists that the Fordist regime of accumulation declined during the 1970s and 1980s (Hirst and Zeitlin, 1991). Change commentators such as Hall (1988), cited in Ritzer, (2011:304), argue that

there is no 'clear historical break between Fordism and post-Fordism'. Instead, there are elements of Fordism that continue to persist in the post-Fordist era (Ritzer, 2011). Post-Fordism is a concept that was made popular by Michael Piore and Charles Sabel (1984) to describe the transition from Fordism to an era of capitalist economic production preoccupied with flexibility, innovation and customised products (see also Giddens et al., 2018).

According to (Sweet, 1994) the concepts of 'post-Fordism' and 'flexible specialisation' are often used to describe the new approach to production. The concept of flexible specialisation is used by analysts to refer to a new approach to production replacing Fordism that stresses innovation, adaptability, expansion of markets and customised products and services (Sweet, 1994). Whereas the term post-Fordism is used 'when analysts intend to critique the changes in production, because their analysis shows that these changes alter class relations in ways that hurt workers' (Hirst & Zeitlin, 1991 cited in Sweet, 1994:40).

Figure 3: Fordist versus post-Fordist production systems

FORDISM	POST-FORDISM
Bureaucratic/vertical	Flexible/horizontal
Mass production	Mass customization
Most work in-house (local)	Most work outsourced (global)
Job security (high wage, long term, full time, high career advancement)	Job insecurity (low wage, short term, part time, low career advancement)

Source: Giddens *et al.* (2018:361).

Five possible post-Fordist scenarios have been identified: 'flexible specialisation, international Keynesian attempts to underwrite employment, market-led labour flexibility, segmented labour markets, and negotiated attempts positively to develop skills and labour resources' (Boyer, 1988, cited in Amin, 1994:19).

Since the 1970s, a number of 'flexible' practices have characterised capitalist production economies and these include 'global supply chains involving independent contract factories, problem-solving teams, multitasking and niche marketing' (Giddens, 2018:361). According to Watson (2011:93), the post-Fordist regime of accumulation replaced Fordism and placed

emphasis on quality service, competitive production to meet the needs of a shifting and differentiated market, and the utilisation of highly skilled and flexible labour. Post-Fordism is supported by a mode of regulation characterised by reduced state interference in labour markets, a change of responsibility for 'welfare provision from the state to employers or private individuals and a more flexible and varied approach to employment relations' (Watson, 2008:93). Furthermore, post-Fordism entails the emergence of new managerial practices and the declining unionisation of labour (Sweet, 1994). The figure below shows the differences between the Fordist and post-Fordist model characterised by flexibility.

Figure 4: Old and New Model
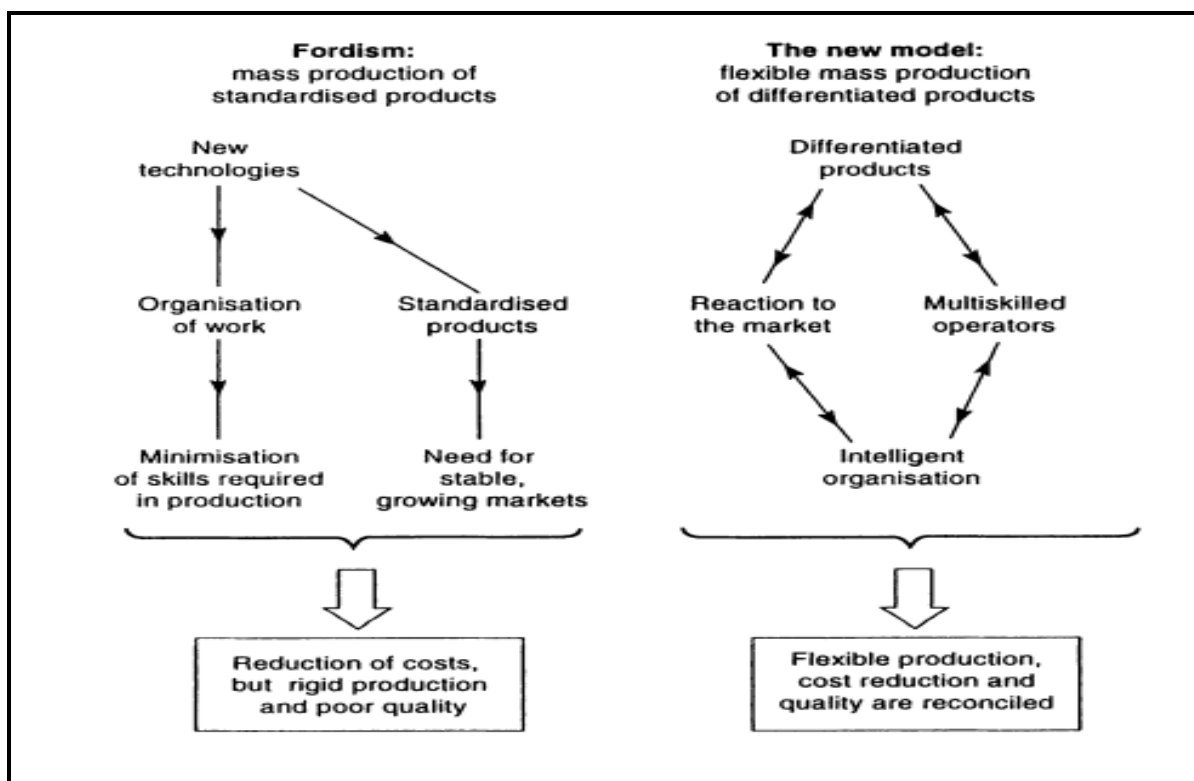
Source: Boyer & Durand (1997: 32).

Piore & Sabel (1984) propose flexible specialisation as the industrial model best suited for ensuring quality production of goods for a specialist and unstable markets at minimum cost and time. This model relies on 'skills, flexibility and networking between task-special units in order to produce changing volumes and combination of goods without incurring productivity losses' (Amin: 1994:21).

3.6 ADOPTION OF FLEXIBLE ORGANISATIONAL MODELS IN THE POSTAL SECTOR

Given the substantive challenges experienced by many postal operators, postal reforms have focused on adopting flexible business models and practices such as liberalisation, privatisation and commercialisation. The discussion below explores how postal reforms have been adopted and modified in different countries. Privatisation of postal operators has mainly occurred in developed countries. The discussion shows that postal reforms have seen a substantial number of countries changing the legal status of postal operators from public administrations to statutory corporations.

3.6.1. Liberalisation and Commercialisation of the Postal Service

Postal reforms in the 1970s and 1980s involved a shift in economic thinking, which argued for increased 'use of market forces and greater commercial orientation rather than bureaucratic structures in major sectors of the economy' (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:2). There has been a fundamental shift amongst public postal administrations from established monopolies towards a new approach 'embracing liberalisation, open markets and dismantling of public monopolies' (Guermazi & Segni, 2004:42). The strategies of commercialisation and corporatisation of public postal operators have been adopted to counter the contraction of mail volumes and the threat of competition (Maruyama & Sano 2008). Commercialisation is perceived as a necessary step of the liberalisation process involving meeting customer needs, incorporation of commercial and accounting practices, adoption of enhanced professionalisation for staff, a focus on making the public postal administration a profit-making organisation and fostering a business culture (Guislain & Lee, 2004). Reform experiences in other sectors suggest that greater private participation in the postal sector may improve quality of service and service delivery (Guislain & Lee 2004).

These postal reforms have been necessitated by changes such as increased competition: first, the emergence of private courier companies in the 1980s and, secondly and most importantly, the Internet and other e-services in the 1990s (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). Governments recognised that an increasingly competitive environment requires public postal administrations to operate more efficiently (ostensibly, like commercial entities) and not as government bureaucracies. These changes also mean that postal operators need the liberty to price services in a commercial manner. At the same time, governments are not keen to implement postal reforms that follow a commercial logic at the cost of losing politically

popular services geographical locations where it is not profitable to provide postal services (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008).

Uni Post & Logistics Global Union (2009) identify four main driving forces behind the liberalisation of public postal operators. Firstly, the economic decline that particular countries were undergoing at the time the liberalisation process was undertaken. Secondly, the technological transformation and the structural decline in mail volumes attributed to mail substitution. Thirdly, a push for postal reforms, particularly by EU member countries, through the Directive of the Postal Sector adopted in 1997 (Finger *et al*., 2005). The Third Postal Directive requires EU member countries to have completed the elimination of exclusive rights or reserved areas by 2013 (Maruyama & Sano, 2008). Lastly, liberalisation (and privatisation) of postal services was undertaken as part of structural adjustment programmes, particularly for Latin American countries such as Argentina. Liberalisation has ushered in several changes within the postal sector – for example, in EU member countries and elsewhere, there has been 'corporatisation' of public postal administrations (Panzar, 2008:15). Postal operators have been transformed from government departments into commercial entities (Panzar, 2008).

The process of liberalisation involves, firstly, the public postal operator being transformed into a corporation owned by the government (Uni Post & Logistics Global Union, 2009). The second stage entails separation of posts and telecommunication services into different companies wholly owned by the government. Various governments took steps to shift the status of postal operators from government departments to wholly-owned state enterprises; for example, in the United States of America, the Postal Reorganisation Act of 1970 created the United States Postal Service (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008).

Towards the end of the 20th century postal reforms entailed a change of post offices into 'business-like' state entities and the separation of ministries into independent agencies for post, telephone and telegraph (PTTs) – for example, the German Postreform 1 of 1989 (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:2). The process of liberalisation has assumed similar forms in different countries. In 2003, postal services in Japan were changed to a corporation owned by the government (Uni Post & Logistics Global Union, 2009). Later, the corporation was split into four separate companies that included mail handling, a savings bank, insurance company and the counters network (Uni Post & Logistics Global Union, 2009). Similar postal reforms were also experienced in Zimbabwe, with the enactment of the Postal and

Telecommunications Act [Chapter 12:05] of 2000, which necessitated the unbundling of the Posts and Telecommunications Corporation into four separate companies.

Other reforms include wide-ranging changes aimed at promoting commercialisation of public postal operators. A common practice has been creating strong management incentives for performance through profit targets, for example, in countries such as Australia, Sweden, New Zealand and Canada (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008. In these countries, post offices are organised as corporations with a strong element of profit making, a commercial culture even though the government is still the owner of the corporation (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). Concerning commercialisation in non-profit locations or areas with low demand, a number of models or approaches have been implemented by postal operators. These include closure of post offices. If governments have reservation about closure, then adequate schemes can be developed to maintain and finance the post offices (Guislain & Lee, 2004). For example, in the UK, Royal Mail pays a subsidy to maintain post offices in rural areas to avoid closure (Guislain & Lee, 2004).

Table 2. Legal structures of postal operators

Public Administration	Statutory Corporation	Public Company	Private Company
Post office as a government department, entity or public agency.	Post office organised as a statutory corporation under public law	Post office organised under company law, typically as a limited liability company.	Post office organised as a company, fully or partially privatised; may be fully quoted on a stock exchange
Public Law		**Private Law**	
Public Ownership			**Private Ownership**

Source: adapted from Guislain & Lee (2004:7).

The table above illustrates the legal structure of postal operators. Organisational changes in post offices as outlined in the table above, start with a change in the legal structure of the postal organisation from a public administration to a statutory corporation and 'subsequently to a publicly or privately owned limited liability company' (Guislain & Lee, 2004:7). Guislain & Lee (2004) suggest that if the legal transformation of public postal operators from government bureaucracies to commercial entities is not accompanied by strong

commercialisation efforts such as greater involvement of the private sector, through outsourcing work, it is likely that these commercialisation efforts will not be successful.

3.6.2. Liberalisation and Working Conditions for Postal Workers

A 2019 study of 11 countries established that liberalisation of postal operators has contributed to a sharp decline in employment, increased casualisation of labour, and deterioration of working conditions (Global Uni, 2019). The study showed that a number of postal operators have made significant investments in fully automating their sorting centres. For example, Belgium reduced the number of distribution centres from 400 to 60 and New Zealand from six to three (Global Uni, 2019). These declines are anticipated to have a negative impact on the employment status of postal workers with the 'creation of new low skilled job profiles replacing the traditional postman that is the sorting agent and the delivery agent' (Global Uni, 2019:9). In the UK, the post office was demerged from Royal Mail for the purposes of privatising the postal service. Due to public funding cuts, the post office has adopted a low-cost organisational model of franchising some post offices. The closure and franchising of some post offices has resulted in a 33% decline in employment at Royal Mail (Global Uni, 2019). The study also reports that rationalisation and restructuring of post offices have led to alternative forms of employment thereby decreasing salaries as postal operators seek to adopt organisational models that are low cost (Global Uni, 2019).

Figure 5: **South African Post Office labour cost optimisation programme, 2018-2021**

SAPO labour cost optimization programme for the period 2018-2021				
Item	**Reduction**	**Annual Saving**	**Required Investment**	**Implementation**
Labour cost				
Overtime	80%	R22m	–	2 months
Extended hours	32,5 hrs pm	R57m	–	2 months
Other outsourcing		R8m	–	14 months
Owner Driver scheme	10%	R10m	–	14 months
Postal Assistants	10%	R11m	–	8 months
Human Resources Reorganisation	–	R757m	R 322m	3 months
Training Centre	–	–	R 5,4m	3 months
Total		R 865m	R 327,4m	

Source: Uni Global (2019:13).

With further declines in mail volumes expected, postal operators are exploring other strategies to reduce the number of employees. In 2017, PostNord adopted a new production model that will decrease the number of Danish postal workers by 3,500 to 4,000 workers within two to three years (Global Uni, 2019). A similar announcement was made in South Africa by the South African Post Office with the adoption of a cost optimisation strategy that will see the South African Post Office reduce its labour costs to 40% of its total costs over the period 2018 to 2021.

Whilst postal operators tend to rely on standard forms of employment (i.e., permanent, full-time), private courier operators tend to adopt non-standard forms of employment in their organisational models, such as 'on-call work, temporary agency work, outsourcing, subcontracted workers and self-employment' (Uni Global, 2019: 14). Non-standard forms of employment are being adopted in postal organisations to lower the costs of employment and make work more flexible. However, non-standard forms of work do not provide job security and, at times, result in the loss of social security contributions that are supposed to be co-paid by the employer (Uni Global, 2019). Whilst non-standard forms of work are not as extensive for postal operators, they have increased the number of part-time workers. For example, in Belgium, South Africa, Sweden and the UK, part-time workers comprise a quarter or more of postal workers (Uni Global, 2019). Other options adopted by postal operators to reduce staff include freezing recruitment, the use of voluntary schemes for early retirement and golden handshakes. For example, La Poste in France froze recruitment in 1993, whilst bpost reduced the number of employees from 70% to 45% between 2010 and 2018 (Uni Global, 2019).

In Spain, the postal operator, Correos, has struggled to cope with the liberalisation process due to a lack of government support. Trade unions reported that this has resulted in Correos downsizing its operations and postal workers experiencing wage cuts and strained labour relations (Pérez de Guzmán, Martínez & Ulloa, 2021). As a coping strategy, Correos has opted for flexible work models, specifically part-time employment and shift work, which to the benefit of the organisation are not included in collective bargaining agreements (ibid). Whilst trade unions have substantial support at Correos, they have experienced significant challenges in 'securing negotiations and signing collective agreements' since the liberalisation of the post office (Pérez de Guzmán, Martínez & Ulloa, 2021:7). It is argued that the postal operator has a 'deliberate policy of blocking the collective bargaining process' (Pérez de Guzmán, Martínez & Ulloa, 2021:7).

In Belgium, union membership at bpost is high, ranging between 70 to 80% in comparison to the national average of 55% (Pérez de Guzmán, Martínez and Ulloa, 2021). Postal workers at bpost are represented by three trade unions: Centrale Generale des Services Publics (CGSP), CSC Transcom (CSC) and Syndicat Libre de la Fonction Publique (SLEP). Whilst CSC often mobilises workers to engage in industrial action such as strikes, it has never signed the agreements put in place to resolve industrial conflict. In contrast, the other two unions accept compromises stating the need to secure employment. There is hardly union unity at bpost (Pérez de Guzmán, Martínez & Ulloa, 2021).

3.6.3. Privatisation of Postal Services

Further reform postal operators involve privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Privatisation entails 'transfer of ownership from the public to the private sector through the sale of shares' (Guislain & Lee, 2004:10). The shares may be sold to strategic investors, or the postal administration may be listed on the stock exchange (Dieke, 2012). The purpose of privatisation is to enhance profitability, operational efficiency and enable the post office to respond quicker to market changes (Dieke, 2012).

The German and Netherlands post offices are examples of privatised postal operators. Liberalisation of German Post began in the 1980s. In 1989, post and telecommunication services were separated into three business units with the establishment of the German Federal Postal Service (*Deutsche Bundespost Postdienst*). Privatisation of the German Postal Service began in 2000 with an initial public offering. By 2008, 'private investors owned 69% of what is now called Deutsche Post World Net' (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008:7). The postal company implemented privatisation strategies that enabled its different business units to grow through the internationalisation of its operations (Bojovic, Kujacic & Macura, 2014).

The privatisation process in Netherlands took a similar path to that of Germany. The Netherlands changed its post office from a state enterprise to a private company wholly owned by the government in 1989. This was the initial step towards full privatisation. In 1994, Dutch Post, as part of the postal and telecommunications operator (KPN), was floated on the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. In 1996, KPN was acquired by TNT, an international courier company. Thereafter, KPN was demerged into two companies: that is, KPN, a telecommunications company, and TNT Post group, a post and transportation company. Full privatisation of TNT was attained in 2006 with no government shares (Dieke, 2012). In 2011,

there was further demerging of TNT and two companies were created, namely TNT Express and Post NL (Ibid.). Positive indicators include increased use of technology to increase efficiency, new business lines, increased profits and expansion into foreign markets (Dieke, 2012; Guislain & Lee, 2004).

3.6.4. Liberalisation and Commercialisation of Postal Services in Developing Countries

Whilst progress has been made in industrialised countries to create more flexible postal organisations through the postal directives fostered by the EU (among others), the pace of reforms in developing countries has been much slower (Ianni, 2008). There is no regional initiative that is comparable to the EU directives to liberalise the market whilst maintaining some sort of universal service obligation (Ibid.). In addition, Ianni (2008) notes that little research has been undertaken on why there has been limited postal reforms and modernisation in developing countries. Whilst research is limited, Guermazi & Segni (2004:42) state that 'liberalisation of the postal service has not followed a predefined, well-conceived policy reform agenda' in developing countries. In addition, (Guermazi & Segni 2004) argue that the regulatory approach to universal service utilised in developed countries does not suit the low volumes and limited demand of postal services in developing countries. Furthermore, Guislain & Lee (2004) argue that privatisation in developing countries may not be attractive to the private sector without any prior and significant changes in business operations.

In general, postal reforms in developing countries have been ad hoc and reactive rather than well-planned and proactive. Unmet demand for competitive postal services in developing countries has 'driven an unofficial liberalisation process and growing *de facto* competition defying the monopoly' (Guislain & Lee, 2004:43). In Latin America, incumbent postal operators have as little as 20% of the traditional mail market due to their inefficiency and ongoing failure to satisfy customer demands' (Ianni, 2008:401).

Postal reforms similar to those implemented in EU member countries that is liberalisation of the postal market and privatisation of former state-owned operators have also been adopted in Asian counties (Maruyama & Sano, 2008). However, there has not been a regional drive towards economic and political integration similar to the European experience. Different countries implemented diverse reforms deemed necessary in their postal organisations unlike the EU experience where a regional approach was adopted. Postal reforms in Asia are aimed

at attaining management efficiency, expanding business and transforming postal bureaucracies into corporatized or privatised postal organisations (Ibid.).

One of the few developing countries to privatise the public postal operator is Argentina. In 1997, the postal operator was awarded a 30-year concession to operate a poorly performing postal service (Guislain & Lee, 2004). The concession stipulated that the investor would pay concession fees of USD 100-million per annum, and failure to do so would result in the concession being revoked by the government. The post office was transformed through the creation of a corporate image, improved quality of service, diversified products and services, staff rationalisation by 40 percent and recapitalisation of the post office through an investment of more than USD350-million (Guislain & Lee, 2004). Despite these positive developments, the concession was revoked in 2003 for non-payment. Non-payment of the concession fee was attributed to the high cost of maintaining the universal service obligation, competition from unregistered courier operators and difficulties in dealing with labour.

A number of challenges have necessitated organisational change in postal administrations particularly in developing countries. Many postal administrations lack appropriate accounting practices, 'operate from a government defined budget and are usually loss making, although profits and losses are often difficult to determine due to the lack of commercial accounts' (Guislain & Lee, 2004:7). In addition, postal administrations experience 'high political interference with political appointees managing the organisations' (Guislain & Lee, 2004:7). Other challenges include large numbers of staff, poor operations, weak tariff structures that only cover operating costs, poorly equipped and undercapitalised post offices, lack of technology at postal retail outlets and poor marketing and customer service (Guislain & Lee, 2004).

Segni & Ianni (2004) note that postal organisational changes in developing countries entailed commercialisation of the public administration, improved operational performance of the public postal operator, improved financial performance of the public postal operator, and lastly legal and regulatory reforms such as progressive liberalisation. In a case study of postal reforms in three developing countries (Tanzania, Morocco and Trinidad and Tobago), Segni and Ianni (2004) found that all three countries focused on commercialisation and had performance contracts with government to improve the quality of service, meeting customer needs and financial performance. Positive developments have been recorded in the three countries for different areas. For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, there was improvement in

quality of service with postal coverage extending from 50% to 96% of the population (Segni & Ianni, 2004). Unfortunately, these improvements have failed to turn around the financial performance of the postal operator during the reform period. All three countries implemented legal and regulatory reforms to varying degrees; however, market liberalisation has been limited. Tanzania reduced it reserved area whilst Morocco and Trinidad and Tobago maintained their reserved areas (Segni & Ianni, 2004).

Liberalisation of the post office in South Africa has been marred by challenges, which include strikes, internal cases of theft, weak service delivery, limited government investment, declining revenue, high losses and resistance to privatisation of the postal operator (Global Uni, 2019). Resistance to privatisation in South Africa shows that it may not be perceived as a feasible option in many countries for political and operational reasons (Guislain & Lee, 2004). The political will to privatise or change postal organisations is sometimes compromised by a number of factors including the fact that the post office is often a large employer in many countries and at times the only presence of the government in remote areas. In such cases, privatisation will most likely lead to the closure of post offices and the loss of jobs (Ibid.). Whilst politicians may want the rural areas with limited demand to be serviced, they are often not willing to allocate scarce resources to support the presence of post offices in those areas (Guislain & Lee, 2004). For example, since 1992, the government of Zimbabwe had a deliberate policy to increase the number of post offices in rural and high-density areas with the intention of improving the post office density ratio. The set target was 50,000 inhabitants per post office (Zwizwai *et al.,* 1995). A critical question asked by Guislain & Lee (2004:6) is 'Are politicians willing to forgo the opportunity for patronage too often provided though postal employment?'

Other organisational changes made by postal operators include diversification of services through the provision of services on behalf of government and other businesses, renting out excess space to businesses that have the potential to attract customers, close or enable agents to operate post offices that do not receive customers on a transaction fee basis and allowing postal networks to deliver goods apart from mail on behalf of customers or other businesses (Guislain, 2004). Guislain & Lee (2004) recommend that postal reforms in developing countries should aim at improving performance and implementing management reforms. This is to be achieved through developing countries implementing clear liberalisation reforms that meet the expectations of customers and improve the quality of service (Guermazi & Segni, 2004).

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed literature on Taylorism, Fordism, Fordist crisis and ways out of Fordism such as post-Fordism to frame the evolution of postal services at ZimPost. This chapter established that these broad organising principles are interdependent and also take different forms depending on the context in which they evolve. The study also showed that post-Fordism is still developing and like any other broad organising type it does not have the solutions to resolve all the challenges with Fordism. The chapter also illustrated how postal services have also been evolving using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories. The chapter shows that a substantive number of public postal operators are modelled as bureaucracies and organisational change in the form of postal reforms is aimed at commercialising, privatising and liberalising the postal service.

CHAPTER 4

DRIVERS AND DYNAMICS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section examines the internal and external drivers of organisational change at the global, regional and local level. The second and third sections of the chapter explore the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of ICTs and HRM, as outlined in the goals of the thesis. Whilst ICTs and HRM are not the only elements that shape how organisations evolve, this study argues that ICT and HRM are key determinants of how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve in a given context. This contextual chapter explores how ICTs and HRM have transformed the workplace, the organisation of work and employee relations.

4.2. DRIVERS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

A socio-historical analysis of organisational change using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories, requires an exploration of the drivers of change to explain how industry evolves and the forces that shape the transformational process. One of the goals of the thesis is to conceptualise the drivers of change at ZimPost over the period from 2010 to 2020. Therefore, this section identifies the drivers of organisational change as outlined in literature, to facilitate an analysis of these forces of change as perceived by ZimPost employees in the case study. It is important to note that the distinction between internal and external drivers of change is not absolute or clear cut as scholars have diverse views about how a particular force or driver of change may operate in an organisation.

According to Johns (1973:5), change is a necessary way of life for all organisations. Change is often viewed as an indication of growth and improvement (Lewis, 2011; Boddy, 2008). For Etzioni (1964:3), organisations have an inherent need for change viewing them as a particular kind of social system, namely one which is deliberately 'constructed and reconstructed to seek specific goals or values.' Change is viewed as the only constant within an organisation (Elving, 2005). It is seen as an unavoidable aspect of social and organisational life (Mullins, 2010.)

Organisations are often under tremendous pressure to constantly change (Lewis, 2011). Change is perceived as necessary if organisations are to remain competitive and profitable (Ramanathan, 2008). Whilst change is an inexorable part of life and exhibits itself in a variety of ways, it does not hold the same inference across people, situations and contexts (Sharma, 2007). The need for perpetual innovation in all organisations is regarded as inevitable if organisations are to avoid stagnation (Johns, 1973). Unfortunately, whilst change is often considered a sign of progress and improvement (Lewis, 2011), it is not always associated with success and efficiency (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

Organisations are systems that operate in a context of various drivers of change. They are subject to sets of political, social, economic and internal forces (Singh, 2005). Change in organisations is influenced both by internal and external factors (Dawson, 2003). Postal organisations have been driven by both internal and external factors. External factors of change are viewed as a reaction to a substantial risk or opportunity that may arise outside the organisation (Alkaya & Hepaktan, 2003). Alternatively, changes in business, the economy and managerial practices occur in response to changes internal to the organisation (Daft, 1983, cited in Alkaya & Hepaktan, 2003). Organisations are compelled to change because they need to be 'efficient and effective' (Shen, 2005:3).

Some organisations are more predisposed to change due to declining markets for the products and services that they offer (Esparcia, Boissler & Argente, 2014), for example declining mail volumes as customers do not use mail as they used to. It is therefore imperative for organisations to assess on a regular basis the environment in which they operate and implement changes that will keep them competitive and relevant (Alkaya & Hepaktan, 2003). Some of the shifts in trends that have historically effected change in organisations are summarised in the table below.

Table 3. Trends in organisational change

From	To
Industrial era	Information era
National economy	Global economy
Technological development	Technological sophistication
Stability and predictability	Sudden changes
Long term	Short term
Centralisation	Decentralisation
Hierarchies	Networking
Emphasis on continuity	Emphasis on change

Source: adapted from Sharma (2007:4).

Based on the shifts in trends highlighted in the table above, any dynamic in the environment that compromises an organisation's ability to make products, market its services and realise profits, becomes a force of change (Singh, 2005). Whilst profit making is not the central goal of public sector organisations, increasingly, there has been a focus on the importance of 'self -reliance as public resources have shrunk and become increasingly difficult to obtain' (Powell & Osborne, 2020:63). Public sector organisations are being encouraged to adopt sustainable business practices whilst also meeting the social service obligations (Powell & Osborne, 2020). The term, 'social enterprise' demonstrates this dual role expected of public sector organisations. Social enterprises are defined as 'hybrid organisations with dual social and business objectives' (Powell & Osborne, 2020: 64). In other words, public sector organisations utilise business strategies to fulfil their social mandate. The income derived from the application of business strategies is then used to meet further social obligations rather than profit making for shareholders (Powell & Osborne, 2020).

4.3. EXTERNAL DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN ORGANISATIONS

External drivers of change are those that push internal change within the organisation due to variations in their environment (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014). These external drivers

of change depend on various factors such as the economy, technology, (de)regulation, increased global competition, and changing customer needs and preferences.

(i) Political Factors

One of the key aspects of an organisation's external drivers of change is politics. This entails how a society formulates and uses power, including regulatory aspects such as laws and policies (Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2010). Political processes affect how organisations conduct business as government may introduce legislation that requires organisations to change the way they do business. Globally, public postal operators in many countries are regulated by state owned regulatory authorities responsible for approval of tariffs, universal access agreements, and licensing of private courier operators.

(ii) Economic Factors

The economy is a significant component of the environment in which an organisation operates. In recent years, organisations have been compelled more by economic factors than political ones (Sharma, 2007). National and global economies are increasingly characterised by uncertainty, and this is often a cause of change for organisations (Singh, 2005). Economic changes include recessions, unstable interest rates, unemployment rates, consumer price index, disposable income, inflation and deflation as well as capital investments (Singh, 2005; Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2010). The economy has an impact on the whole of industry and includes the supply, manufacturing or production of goods and services as well as consumption patterns.

(iii) Technological Factors

Technological developments are a key driving force in the process of change in postal and other organisations. Dramatic technological modifications have revolutionised the workplace and this has led to new products and services (Singh 2005; Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2010). Scholars such as Dawson (2003:15) argue that 'technology can both be an internal and external' driver of change in an organisation. Technological innovations have the ability to produce new forms of industry (Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2010). The introduction of information technology, for instance, leads to changes in the structure of work and other organisational performances (Eason, 2005). At times when new information technology is introduced, it may lead to a reduction in the number of people employed, the need for different skills and/or the retraining of employees (Eason, 2005:107).

(iv) Market Forces

The demand for certain products and services may change over time (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014). For example, the total number of postal and courier mail volumes in Zimbabwe declined by 25% in the third quarter of 2019 (POTRAZ, 2019). According to POTRAZ (2019), postal and courier mail volumes have been on a downward trend over the past year (third quarter of 2018 to third quarter of 2019). The decline in mail volumes, especially domestic mail, is attributed to e-substitution (POTRAZ, 2019). Organisations that offer services that are no longer required by the market may become dysfunctional and cease to exist (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014). This also diminishes the life cycle of products and services thereby affecting the production process (Sharma, 2007). The desires and preferences of customers are constantly changing, and this pushes organisations to be innovative and sensitive to the demands of customers (Singh, 2005).

(v) Globalisation

According to Ritzer (2011:574) globalisation 'is the spread of worldwide practices, relations, consciousness and organisation of social life'. Globalisation has transformed the nature of business operations and has driven organisations to change. Globalisation has intensified the promotion of economic growth through the opening up of markets and governments reducing restrictions imposed on businesses. Sharma (2007) highlights that the implications on organisations are that where an organisation used to enjoy monopoly in a particular area, now it has to compete with other organisations from other parts of the world in the provision of quality products and services at affordable rates. The advancement of globalisation presents possibilities and difficulties for organisations (Shen, 2005).

(vi) Policy and Regulatory Drivers

Globally, regionally and locally there are several institutions that play a key role in the regulation of the postal service such as the Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Bank, European Union (EU), Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) and the Southern Africa Postal Operators Association (SAPOA) and locally (e.g., POTRAZ). Countries are obliged to meet universal service obligations that are imposed on public postal operators by the UPU (Finger *et al.,* 2005). Member countries of the UPU (of which Zimbabwe is a member) are obliged to provide universal access to communication services. Accessible and affordable postal services are required to be available even in areas that are not financially viable; for example, locations that are difficult to access such as remote rural areas (UPU Convention Manual, 2018).

(vii) Postal Reforms

Postal reforms are stated to be an important aspect of a wider global movement which includes 'privatisation of network industries' (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008:2). The emergence of this movement can be traced back to the 1970s and 1980s (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008). It was advocated that there was need to depend more on the free will of market forces and 'greater commercial orientation rather than bureaucratic structures' in significant areas of the economy (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008:2). This pushed some governments in developed countries to liberalise particular sectors of their economies such as airline industry, energy and telecommunications (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008).

For a long time, postal organisations did not liberalise the postal market, however due to increasing changes in the postal industry such as e-substitution many developed countries found ways to incorporate these trends into their reform programmes (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008). According to (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008), postal reforms are being implemented across the world. The key drivers behind these reforms are increased competition that took place around the 1980s through the rise of private courier companies and more significantly the Internet and other forms of communication technology in the 1990s (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008). It is becoming increasingly clear to governments that competition requires public postal operators to conduct business in a commercial manner as opposed to maintaining a government bureaucracy (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008). These changes compel postal operators to also change their operations and make use of viable pricing structures (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008). On the other hand, governments are not prepared to adopt these reforms because of the political mileage of providing the service to certain key populations (Crew and Kleindorfer, 2008).

4.4. INTERNAL DRIVERS OF CHANGE IN ORGANISATIONS

Various forces within the organisation have the potential to hinder its efficiency (Singh, 2005). These relate to management ideology, structure, systems of power and control as well as the culture of the organisation (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014). In other words, internal drivers of organisational change are pointers produced within the organisation showing that a change is necessary (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014). Outlined below are examples of internal drivers of organisational change.

(i) Systemic Dynamics

Since organisations can be viewed as systems, the different sub-systems are in continual interaction with each other and hence factors such as internal politics, technology, group and power dynamics often demand change within the organisation (Sharma, 2007). For example, postal operators are also driving transformation of the sector internally by 'separating posts from telecommunications' (Anson & Helble, 2014:19).

(ii) Growth

In business studies, the growth of an organisation is evidenced through an increase in the number of certain variables for example, the number of employees or the market share amongst other factors (Witeck-Crabb, 2014). Growth is often measured in visible quantifiable changes in an organisation (Ibid.). When an organisation expands its operations, it becomes necessary to change its structure (Esparcia, Boissier & Argente, 2014).

(iii) Inadequacy of Administrative Processes

Administrative rules and regulations play an important role in organisations as they are used by management to create order for example, the code of conduct (Weichbrodt & Grote, 2015). Organisational procedures may need to change due to these changing organisational realities. At times regulations change in order to meet new organisational objectives and goals. If organisations choose to ignore such changes it may lead to the failure of the organisation to continue its existence (Sharma, 2007).

(iv) Power and Political Forces

A detailed discussion of power and political behaviour is located in Chapter 2 of the thesis. Power and politics play an important role as drivers of organisational change. According to Palmer, Buchanan & Dunford (2017) power and political influence appear in various forms within organisations. These include for example, board level tussles for leadership positions, a shift in traditional internal power relations to allow the wider participation of workers such as removal of a leader holding on to power for a substantial period (Palmer, Buchanan & Dunford 2017). These internal power and political struggles may drive organisational change within organisations.

(v) Change of leadership

A change in the leadership of an organisation may also signal changes in the old way of doing things and the introduction of new ideas and organisational practices (Palmer, Buchanan & Dunford 2017). In fact, leaders are perceived as 'champions of change' (Mansaray, 2020:18). The leadership style of a leader plays an important role in how change

is implemented in an organisation (Mansaray, 2020). For example, authoritarian leadership style is where the leader of an organisation retains control of the organisation and decision-making processes (Mansaray, 2020). Such leaders mainly depend on discipline to influence change. On the other hand, transformational leadership style is premised on identifying the needs of organisational members and finding ways to address them. These leadership styles influence how change is implemented in an organisation (Mansaray, 2020).

4.5. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The role of technology in the evolution of production systems from Taylorism to Fordism, the crisis of Fordism and ways out of Fordism such as post-Fordism cannot be understated. One of the key arguments of this thesis holds that technology is a determining factor in how these organising principles evolve. The first component of the second goal in the thesis is to examine the dynamics of organisational change in the broad area of ICTs and this section discusses literature on the shifting role of technology, and how it has influenced change in organisations. The conceptualisation of technology and how it shapes Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism will inform discussions in the analytical chapters of the thesis (chapters eight and nine). The discussion in this section will start with defining technology and ICTs followed by an examination of the role of technology in shaping Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism. Thereafter, the chapter will focus on an analysis of the social construction of technology approach which is useful in providing a sociological lens to the understanding of technology in this thesis. The social construction of technology approach adopts the interpretivist approach adopted for this study. Lastly, the discussion will explore the role of technology in the workplace including postal organisations.

4.5.1. Defining Technology and ICTs

An analysis of economic institutions is central in sociology because the economy plays an integral role in social life (Giddens *et al.*, 2018). Economic institutions are in a constant state of change and one of the 'reasons for such change is technology, which harnesses science to machinery, electronics, and even biology to produce an ever-increasing variety of goods more cheaply' (Giddens *et al.*, 2018:356). Technology is defined as the 'tools, machines and control devices used to carry out tasks and the principles, techniques and reasoning which accompany them' (Watson, 2008:87). Technology and organisations are perceived to be 'fluid and interlocking processes', a state in which the evolution process of technology and

organisations, is intertwined rather than opposite to each other (Scarborough & Corbett, 1992 cited in Watson, 2008:89).

ICTs are defined as 'technologies that enable recording, processing, retrieving and the transmission of information or data' (Apulu & Latham, 2011:4). The computer revolution in the early 20th century began with the first commercial use of computers around 1960 and continued with the development of the World Wide Web in the 1990s (Frey & Osborne, 2015). From the 1980s, the use of computer-based technologies in the workplace have expanded significantly, subsequently changing the skills required in the workplace and the inception of innovative forms of knowledge (Smith, 2013). Around the 1990s, the Internet and other associated information technologies arose as the most significant 'technological developments of the twentieth century' (Mc Loughlin, 2002:1). The use of micro-processor-based technologies grew at a quick pace and were used in many areas of the economy, organisations and jobs in USA and elsewhere (Smith, 2013:113).

The use of computers in the workplace has become a common feature amongst billions of people around the globe (Smith, 2013). This phenomenon is called 'computer-mediated work'. The term was first used in the early 1980s to explain how computers were changing the way work was performed (Smith, 2013). The phenomenon of 'computer-mediated work' was coined by Shoshana Zuboff in 1981. Zuboff's (1988) research illustrates the three-fold nature of the connection between IT and work. Firstly, technology is value laden, it has embedded features that make it possible for humanity to have new experiences and put an end to old ones (Smith, 2013). Secondly, IT influences the relationships between persons and groups (Smith, 2013). Lastly, social agents are not only influenced by technology, but are also influenced by 'social, political and economic interests that inscribe the situation with their intended and unintended opportunities and limitations' (Smith, 2013:113). The social construction of technology suggests that technology is also influenced by social agents. As the process of technological transformation unfolds, it brings together 'information across time and space' (Zuboff, 1988:2).

4.5.2. Technological change, Taylorism, Fordism and Post-Fordism
From an economics perspective, the dynamics of technology emerge and change due to specific economic, institutional and social environments (Dosi, 1988, cited in Coccia, 2019). Therefore, this section explores the role of technology as industry evolves in different phases as outlined in the central argument of the thesis. As alluded to in chapter three of the thesis, towards the end of the 19th century, Frederick Taylor, developed a form of scientific

management based on breaking down work into simple tasks that were accurately timed and organised. This management approach also known as Taylorism was designed to ensure maximum production and according to Giddens *et al.*, (2018) it had substantial impact on the organisation of work and technology. However, much of the utilisation of technology in work processes was developed by Henry Ford. Whilst Taylor used bureaucratisation to solve coordination challenges, Ford utilised technological innovation based on technical solutions that 'constructed a rationalisation pattern for mass production industries' (Arslan & Erdil, 2003:7).

Henry Ford adopted principles of scientific management and used an assembly line in his auto plant to produce only the Model T car using 'specialised tools and machinery for speed, precision and simplicity of operation' (Giddens *et al.*, 2018:360). The specialisation of work, use of specialised tools, and the assembly line was typical of the shift from craft production to industrial production (Clarke, 1992). Fords' technological advancements and fragmentation of work ensured that challenges in production could quickly be identified, 'providing well-defined technological and/or organisational problems' to be addressed by his engineers (Clarke, 1992: 17). This also provided an opportunity for technological changes to be introduced in a discreet manner, substituting the tools or machines without changing the whole production system.

According to Clarke (1992:17) the assembly line revolutionised production, through the 'internalisation of technological dynamism and the incorporation of scientific and technical progress into the labour process'. Clarke (1992) suggests that the fragmentation of work and standardisation of products ushered in some form of 'flexibility' to the production process which created an opportunity for technological change and the 'penetration of capital into production' (Clarke, 1992:17).

Whilst Fordism is associated with deskilling of skilled workers, it also created the need for skilled workers to keep the assembly line functioning and maintain the machinery. To sustain the assembly line, new tools and machines had to be developed and this required highly skilled labour 'using flexible and general-purpose machines' (Clarke, 1992:18). The use of assembly line technology was successful in producing standardised products, which was a necessary development in the beginning, however, once it was achieved, standardisation became a hindrance to more technological advancement at the plant. Ford was not able to

anticipate that his success was only in the 'standardisation of components and not of the product' (Clarke, 1992:18).

The factors that led to the Fordist crisis are discussed in chapter three of the thesis, however it is important to mention the factors that the setting up of assembly lines is expensive and once the assembly line is set up it is difficult to change the product (Giddens *et al.*, 2018). To do so requires significant reinvestment (Giddens *et al.*, 2018). The Fordist crisis gave way to other ways out of Fordism such as post-Fordism. According to Gough (1992:31) 'debates on post-Fordism are centred on technical-organisational questions'. Questions are focused on how 'technology, design, production and marketing' can be organised to attain the most ideal way without increasing the cost of production or compromising the ability to respond to the market (Gough, 1992:31). As Fordism was experiencing a downturn, ICTs were perceived as solutions to increase mechanisation, increase productivity, whilst incorporating flexible means of production and a diversity of products (Blackburn *et al.,* 1985 cited in Watson, 2008).

4.5.3. Social Construction of Technology Approach

To conceptualise debates and studies on technology within the workplace in general and postal organisations in particular, this study is informed by the Social Construction of Technology approach developed by Pinch & Bijker (1987). Pinch & Bijker (1987:17) argue that the 'social constructivist view prevalent within the sociology of science and also located within the sociology of technology provides' an insightful way of analysing technology. The approach was also developed as a reaction to technological determinism (Bijker, 2008). Technological determinism is premised on the view, that technology progresses independently and, secondly, that technology drives societal advancement (Bijker, 2008). Technological development is perceived as the only autonomous variable pushing organisational transformation (McLoughlin *et al.,* 2002).

Scholars such as Watson (2012) and McLaughlin et al., (2002) warn of the risks of oversimplified narratives about the effects of technology on organisations. Watson (2012) argues that there is not a simple or automatic cause-and-effect relationship between technology and change in organisations. Many scholars in the 1990s, who wrote about the effects of information technology presented it as a predictable process that follows a linear trajectory with the assumption that technological transformation causes social change (Webster, 1995, cited in McLaughlin et al. 2002). Technological determinism was dismissed

as being an 'intellectually weak research strategy because it entails a teleological' notion of technological advancement (Bijker, 2008:1).

As formulated by (Bijker & Pinch, 1987), the social construction of technology approach involves four main themes. Firstly, technological development is a process that is open to interpretation; therefore, it can bring out different interpretations for various social actors (Klein & Kleinman, 2002). The second theme is that of the 'relevant social group' (Klein and Kleinman, 2002:29). According to Pinch and Bijker (1987:414), a social group refers to 'institutions and organisations (such as the military or some specific industrial company) as well as organised or unorganised groups or individuals.' However, in order to determine the applicable social group, there is need to find out if the 'artefact has any meaning at all for all members of the social group' (Pinch and Bijker, 1987:414). Artefacts refer to objects made by human agents to meet practical needs. Different organisations may have varied understandings of how technology is utilised (Klein & Kleinman, 2002).

The third theme involves the challenges that technology poses to each social group (Pinch & Bijker, 1987). Each group may present its own perspective of challenges being experienced with the artefact (Klein & Kleinman, 2002). The fourth theme is concerned with the wider society. This theme considers the socio-cultural and political context in which technological advancement occurs (Klein & Kleinman, 2002). Pinch & Bijker, (1987) argue that their framework is more than just a general explanation of technological advancement. It highlights the 'multidirectional character' and shows the 'interpretative flexibility of technical artefacts' (Pinch & Bijker, 1987:40).

The social construction of technology approach is one of the several 'constructivist' approaches used to analyse the study of science and technology (Bijker, 2008:1). In this approach, the term 'constructivist' entails the idea that elements of science and technology are analysed as the interaction and mutual reliance of 'social and technical elements' (Jackson, Poole & Kuhn, 2001:3). They are not just 'analysed' in this way (epistemology) but also operate like this in reality (ontology). Rather than having technological deterministic views about the impact of technology on organisations, technological innovation is seen as being necessitated by the relationship between 'technical and social entities' (Badham, 2005, cited in Watson 2012:93). Badham (2005), cited in Watson, (2012:93) suggests a three-dimensional perspective. This perspective considers the inseparability between technology and society calling them 'socio-technical entities' (Watson, 2012:93). This approach closes

the gap between technology and social actors, which allows for a clearer picture of how technology and society interact (Watson, 2012). The relationship between technology and organisations is always changing and overlapping (Watson, 2012). It is argued that the two should be analysed in this manner and not as if they are competing forces (Watson, 2012; Orlikowski, 1992, cited in McLoughlin 2002).

The major role that has been played by sociologists in the debates on technology and change has been to refute 'technological determinism' (Dawson, 2003:70). Instead, sociologists argue for the Social Construction of Technology approach. According to this approach, technology is not 'structurally determined'; instead, it is 'socially constructed' and technological change cannot be conceived outside social processes (Dawson, 2003: 70). Constructionist approaches argue that technology on its own cannot fully clarify technological growth or how it is utilised in different settings (Jackson, Poole & Kuhn, 2001).

4.5.4. Information and Communication Technologies in the changing workplace

To comprehend the dynamics of organisational change in ICT as outlined in the goals of the thesis, it is necessary to examine studies that have been conducted on how technology is changing the workplace. It is evident that changes in the workplace have been prompted by significant 'social and technological developments' over the years. (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017:1). For example, in developed countries – such as the (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK) –there has been a significant shift towards competitive markets as well as minimal government interference since the 1980s (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017; Flew, 2014). These developments are part of what is regarded as neoliberalism. Neoliberalism denotes a 'political project that is justified on philosophical grounds and seeks to extend competitive market forces, consolidate a market friendly constitution, and promote individual freedom' (Jessop, 2017:2). Neoliberalism has become the political underpinning of liberalised trade and globalisation leading to intensified competition in many service sectors (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017; Flew, 2014).

Changes and developments in the workplace have been fostered by important societal and technological advancements (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017). These changes can be described as 'social acceleration' to explain the rapid transformation taking place in 'late capitalism' (Rosa, 2013, cited in Korunka & Kubicek, 2017:2). Social acceleration can be explained in three ways: that is, technological acceleration, social change acceleration and acceleration of pace (Rosa, 2013, cited in Korunka & Kubicek, 2017:2). Technological acceleration is defined as the rapid transformation of 'goal direct process of transport communication and

production' (Rosa, 2003, cited in Korunka & Kubicek, 2017:2). Secondly, acceleration of social change is described as the process of quick 'social structural' transformation and, lastly, acceleration of pace is the intensification of 'actions and experiences' with the objective of processing these actions in less time (Rosa, 2003, cited in Korunka & Kubicek, 2017:2). Together, these forms of transformation have led to the restructuring of workplaces in many ways, including, for example, a shift towards flexible work, that is the ability of workers to work from various locations including the home (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017; Kossek & Michel, 2011).

Information systems are argued to be necessary in the proficient operation of a contemporary organisation (Irani & Love, 2008). According to Arcangel & Johnson (2011), information technologies are everywhere, and it is unimaginable that an organisation can operate without any reference or reliance on information technology. It is perceived more as a facilitator of rapid change and not just and enabler of change in organisations (Arcangel & Johnson, 2011: 21).

In addition, the value of allocating resources to information systems has become a pertinent issue within and among organisations (Irani & Love, 2008). Provision of quality products and services through efficient supply chains is regarded as the key driver for investment in information systems (Irani & Love, 2008). ICTs are argued to be at the centre of change in organisations (McLoughlin, 2002). In fact, ICTs are associated with the ushering in of a paradigm shift through which ICTs facilitate significant change in organisations (Harris, 1998, cited in McLoughlin, 2002:2). This transformation is noted to be occurring with the crisis of Fordism and the upsurge of post-Fordist production systems that entail 'lean' manufacturing and 'flexible specialisation' (Badham & Mathews, 1989, cited in McLoughlin, 2002:2).

The use of technology in the workplace is argued to have the potential to increase labour productivity, reduce average costs of production and promote innovation (Keane, 2008). New technology is also associated with computerisation of workflows and processes (Nathan, Carpenter & Roberts, 2003). Globalisation coupled with the advancement of information technology and information systems are regarded as having a remarkable bearing on how organisations operate (Gunasekaran, Ngai & McGaughey, 2008:1). It is argued that advances in technological capabilities and the need for more efficiency have motivated the development of advanced forms of production controls and processes such as the re-

configuration and re-engineering of work processes (Noon & Blyton, 2002:32). The need to withstand the pressure of competition often compels organisations to use technology in order to increase profits (Baxter, 1994).

Studies on various organisations suggest that technology has a profound impact on work processes (Gekara *et al.,* 2013; Laidlaw & Curtis, 1986; Saltari & Travaglini, 2009; Akcomak, Borghans & Weel, 2011). The organisation of work has undergone major technological changes such as the use of IT applications in various work processes (Chusseau *et al.,* 2008). The specific transformation of the work processes in different sectors of the economy is often a combination of technical, economic and social forces (Hecht, 2001). ICTs are being perceived as a 'new economy' a new way of organising and managing economic activity based on the opportunities that the Internet provides to businesses (Dutta & Ossorio, 2014; Jorgenson & Stiroh, 1999).

These developments have coincided with the transformation of the idea of 'work'. In some organisations, work is no longer regarded as something that only transpires at specific times, 'within a detailed division of labour and bureaucratic hierarchy, normally at a given place, an organisation physically manifested in offices, factories and the like' (McLoughlin, 2002:1). New notions of work enabled by technological advancements entail flexibility, remote work and virtual corporates (McLoughlin, 2002:1). Research on work and IT indicates that the use of computers in the workplace significantly transforms the way work is undertaken (Jackson, Poole, Kuhn, 2002). In some workplaces, there is no need to have a typical work shift; rather, tasks can be performed in any setting with no time restrictions thereby making work flexible (Korunka & Kubicek, 2011; Kossek & Michel, 2011; Clarke & Holdsworth, 2017; Gerdenitsch, 2017).

Changes instigated by ICTs in the workplace have mainly been seen in aspects such as 'communication, organisational structures, management and functioning of organisations' (Bezweek & Egbu, 2010:152; Smith, 2013). Other forms of transformation include changes in reporting structures, and this may have an impact on centralisation or devolution of decision-making process as well as regulation systems (Bezweek & Egbu. 2010).

Zuboff's 1988 ethnographic study of the use of computer technology at a large paper mill company shows how workers used to manually handle pulp and other products; however, with the advent of new technology these tasks were automated (Zuboff, 1988, cited in Jackson et. al, 2001). In the old way of producing paper, the workers mastered certain skills

which they had developed over a long period of time. For example, Zuboff (1988) notes that paper mill workers would 'taste and feel pulp' to establish if the pulp was ready for subsequent processes (Zuboff, 1988, cited in Jackson et. al, 2001:6). These skills were inherent in the tasks themselves and learnt slowly over a significant amount of time, and 'produced and reproduced in action' (Jackson, Poole, Kuhn, 2002:6). (Giddens *et al.*, 2018)

With the emergence of computers in the workplace, paper mill workers had to acquire different forms of knowledge and ways of carrying out tasks (Jackson, Poole, Kuhn, 2002). The intimate hands-on way of performing work that workers at the paper mill had been used to had changed (Jackson, Poole, Kuhn, 2002).). These workers had to be accustomed to 'abstract' ways of work practices such as understanding visual records of production from a computer or machinery and ensure that those readings are within the stipulated limits Jackson, Poole, Kuhn, 2002). Whilst workers were used to depending on their senses such as taste, they now had to rely on the information generated by a computer system (Ibid.). This information was detached from the information workers obtained by being involved in the work process itself (Ibid.). Therefore, workers had to change and acquire new forms of knowledge; that is attaching meaning to data obtained from a computer system as opposed to their direct involvement in the labour process (Ibid).

In a case study conducted on two companies in, Nigeria, the impact of ICT on organisations was noted to make the accounting process and information management more efficient (Apulu & Latham, 2011). Company A incorporated ICT in its work processes to mechanise the organisation's records (Apulu & Latham, 2011). The use of ICT was also noted to facilitate the timeous processing of audit reports, unlike the manual process (Apulu & Latham, 2011). In a case study conducted of Company B, the use of ICT in the organisation was also noted to reduce the burdensome nature of the manual processing of information (Apulu & Latham, 2011). The two companies in the case study also utilised ICTs for the purposes of having an advantage over competitors in service delivery (Apulu & Latham, 2011).

In a qualitative study on reappraising the role of ICT and bureaucracy in public service delivery, Cordella & Tempini (2015) argue that this technology is not only used in bureaucracies to reform the organisation but also to enhance the efficiency of bureaucracy (Ibid.). The study seeks to challenge the idea that ICTs are mainly applied in public organisations to decrease the impact of bureaucratic processes in such organisations (ibid.).

The scholars argue that the role of bureaucracies can be enhanced through what are known as e-bureaucracies. E-bureaucracies are defined as organisations that are premised on the principles of bureaucracy; however, they depend on ICTs to 'sustain procedural efficiency' (Cordella & Tempini, 2015:2). ICTs are utilised in the bureaucracy to support the functionality of the organisation (Ibid.). The functions are found in the 'legal- normative set of rules designed to standardise the administrative procedure and delivery of public services' (Cordella & Tempini, 2015:2).

In their study of the Vernice Municipality, Cordella & Tempini (2015) found that the use of an information system called IRIS facilitated improved service delivery for citizens. Through IRIS, citizens could report faults and areas that needed maintenance work (Ibid.). The information system was seen as an effective mechanism to support workers of the municipality with their assignments (Ibid.). It was observed that use of the information system resulted in the formation of a new bureaucratic structure, which enables the municipality of Venice to be more efficient in its operations and service delivery to its citizens (Cordella & Tempini, 2015:29). This change in the structure of the bureaucracy is argued to be part of the process of organisational transformation to e-bureaucracy (Ibid.).

In an exploratory case study of two micro-finance organisations on computer-mediated organisational change, Mia & Ramage (2018:40) argue that the utilisation of ICT in organisations entails 'material and social changes.' In addition, the effects of ICT-mediated changes in organisations varies across different organisations (Mia & Ramage, 2018). These changes in organisations do not always benefit organisations the same (Mia & Ramage, 2018). At times, the changes may be adverse in some aspects of the organisation (Brynjolfsson & Lorin, 1988, cited in Mia & Ramage, 2018). For example, cheaper and advanced forms of ICTs enable workers to remain connected to their work outside the stipulated work hours (Thomas, 2014). As a result, some workers are disgruntled about the increased working hours and the struggle to maintain some form of work-life balance (MacDermid & Wittenborn, 2007, cited in Thomas, 2014). These negative impacts present unique challenges for human-capital development initiatives (Thomas, 2014).

An exploratory study of the impact of ICTs on organisations in the private and public sectors indicates that ICTs provide opportunities for more 'centralisation and impersonal control' (Wijnhoven & Wassenaar, 1990:35). In addition, the potential for 'adhocracy' was minimised through various control and observation mechanisms (Wijnhoven & Wassenaar, 1990:48).

Adhocracy refers to a 'flexible and informal alternative to bureaucracy' (Birkinshaw & Ridderstråle, 2011:3). Adhocracy focuses on organisations using more flexible forms of governance so that the organisation can be set-up and disbanded quickly when opportunities arose or were no longer available. Such flexible options are in line with elements of post-Fordism.

ICTs also has the potential to transform the structure of an organisation (Mia & Ramage, 2018). Whilst scholars (Brodar, Calopa & Pihir, 2009; Andrade & Joia, 2012; Cudanor, Jasko & Jevtic, 2009) have diverse views about organisational structures and ICT, debates have mainly focused on whether ICT centralises or decentralises organisational structures. For example, Orlikowski & Barley (2001), cited in Mia & Ramage, (2018:41) argue that, in the context where inflexible 'institutional norms, structures and working procedures' prevail, the impact of ICT on organisational structure is limited significantly. The impact of ICT on organisations is explained as disordered, fluid, disputed, subject to chance, unforeseen, diverse and presenting layers of features that are influenced by factors within and outside the organisation (Orlikowski & Yates, 2006, cited in Mia & Ramage, 2018). In the microfinance organisations studied by Mia & Ramage (2018), ICT was noted to bring about change through minimising the reporting structures at all levels. ICT was noted to minimise 'support service structure horizontally and the management and supervisory layers vertically' (Mia & Ramage, 2018:43).

Over the past decades, ICT has been perceived as a 'trigger of modernisation' in public organisations (Van de Donk & Stellen, 1998, cited in Zanfei, 2016:10). Use of ICTs in public administrations is anticipated to enable organisations to be more transparency and accountability to the public and a reduction in the barriers of communication between citizens and public administrations (Zanfei, 2016:10). However, it is also argued that the use of ICTs by public sector organisations is still falling behind considering the advances that have been made by private organisations (Huijboom, 2007).

Whilst there is more utilisation of ICTs in public administrations, the effects on the workplace also appear to differ due to the kind of technology being used, the category of the service being offered and management strategies (Burris, 1998; Salzman and Rosenthal, 1994 cited in Nygren, 2009). At times, it is difficult to foresee how employees will be affected by information technology because the way technology is implemented in a society or organisation is dependent on 'social and political choices in complex ways' (Eriksson-

Zetterquist et al., 2009 cited in Nygren, 2009:3). Therefore, change is premised on both social and technical aspects such as the type of application put in place, the support networks and who controls it (Nygren, 2009).

4.6. CHANGES IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND LABOUR

To comprehend the impact of technology on ZimPost workers, this section of the thesis, discusses studies that examine the impact of ICT on workers. New technological advancements are perceived to create a wide variety of possibilities in how human beings interact through electronic means (McLoughlin, 2002). These technologies transform the way people deliberate, network and do their work (Marius, 2012; Schmidt *et al.,* 2012 cited in De Wet *et al.,* 2016). Rapid improvement in ICT over the past decades has provided employers with access to cheaper machines that can replace workers in many middle-skilled activities such as bookkeeping, clerical work and repetitive production tasks (Frey & Osborne, 2015). For workers, however, new technology is often associated with increased skills requirements, work intensification and deskilling (Nathan, Carpenter & Roberts, 2003). Autor *et al.,* (2003) cited in Bloom, Schankerman & Van Reenen*,* (2013:13) argue that the most significant way in which ICTs impact the division of labour through automation. They argue that routine tasks of assembly-line workers and human-capital workers – for example, a reduction of bank tellers as some of the work has been computerised (Bloom *et al.,* 2013). It is also perceived that ICTs open up new possibilities for the management and monitoring of production processes through a 'shift from control by the human eye to control by the silicon eye' (Huys *et al.,* 2002: 50).

The effects of social transformation on workplaces and employees are intertwined with the advancement and utilisation of technology (Flecker *et al,* 2017). In public sector organisations, there have been major changes taking place due to the incorporation of technology in their operations (Munro & Rainbird, 2002). ICTs have over the years played a significant role in the change process because of the way ICTs have transformed aspects of society such as mass media, social media, creation and trade of financial assets, governments and work (Flecker *et al.,* 2017). Public administrations are unique in that they comprise of a wide variety of activities and have a diverse workforce (Munro & Rainbird, 2002).

Munro & Rainbird (2002) argue that studies on modern technology have not adequately focused on the implications of technology for workers' skills in public organisations. In some aspects of work, different forms of work are being synthesised – for example, bringing

together physical and office work and multi-tasking (Ibid.). Another aspect of public organisations is that there is a large workforce that earns low wages, as well as limited control over their work (Munro & Rainbird, 2002). However, the change in skills sets amongst public organisations has been noted to be multifaceted (Ibid.). In a study conducted by Munro & Rainbird (2002) on IT and skills change in public sector organisations, it was observed that there was evidence of broadening and upgrading of work (Ibid). Therefore, workers had different experiences about their work. Some workers would explain that they were experiencing deskilling in their work; however, this was observed to be not caused by modern or advanced technology (Munro & Rainbird, 2002). This deskilling was attributed to changes in the grading system, work structures and outsourcing of work. Changes in work were noted to be instigated mainly by management (Ibid.). Workers also instigated some changes to their work, mainly for the purposes of creating opportunities for career advancement and making the job more stimulating (Ibid.). Workers were more interested in changes that benefited them such as learning new ICT skills (Ibid.).

In a study carried out by De Wet *et al.,* (2016) on the influence of ICT on workers in South Africa, it was found that ICT changes (among others) the reporting structure in the workplace. This was attributed to the use of ICTs which were used to communicate messages with workers being asked to perform various tasks even if the worker did not report to the manager or supervisor directly (De Wet *et al.,* 2016). The findings of the study also indicated that ICTs were changing the way workers communicate at their places of employment. For example, some workers prefer using instant messages as opposed to direct communication, even though they were in the same office (De Wet *et al.,* 2016).

Another interesting aspect of the influence of technology in the workplace raised by the participants was that it transformed the notion of availability. There is a strong expectation for workers to be available both at home and work through ICTs such as smartphones (De Wet *et al.,* 2016). Workers were also expected to be at the disposal of their clients at all times by replying to their communication instantly (De Wet *et al.,* 2016). Due to the availability of technology workers were also expected to be more productive. This was noted to be frustrating to workers (De Wet *et al.,* 2016).

According to Korunka (2017) the extensive use of advanced technologies in the workplace has multifaceted positive and negative influences on workers. These are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. ICT challenges, potential positive and negative outcomes for workers

	Challenges	Potential Positive Outcomes	Potential Negative Outcomes
Individual level	Need for ICT related competencies Adequate recovery from work Finding a personal work and non-work balance	Availability and easy access to a wide range of information Increased independence because of better information	Techno strain Techno addiction Alienation
Job	Work intensification Work interruption Lack of training Frustration because of technical problems	More and better feedback Many new opportunities to learn	Burnout
Organisation	Micromanagement Need for development of trust Permanent adaptation needs	Higher quality service Increased productivity Cost reductions	ICT dependency Complex interdependencies between subsystems of organisations
Work- family life	Adequate telework design	Enhanced productivity More "quality time"	Reduced privacy
Society and specific risk groups	Need for new forms of learning Development of opportunities for people living with disabilities	Bridging distances Inclusion of all minority groups	ICT dependency

Source: Adapted from Korunka & Hoonakker (2014, cited in Korunka, 2017:132).

Due to the quick-paced technological advancements in workplaces, there are challenges that workers constantly encounter, such as the perpetual need for system updates, enhancements of applications and technological equipment (Korunka, 2017). Workers may experience work disruptions, which have been explained as triggers of work-related stress (Korunka, 2017). In addition, the continued use of communication tools such as email is argued to also increase work-related stress (Korunka, 2017).

4.6.1. Information and Communication Technology in the Postal Sector

The role of ICT in shaping the evolution of ZimPost is a pertinent goal of the thesis. the studies outlined below, look at how technology is utilised in the postal sector. Whilst post offices appear to be relics from the past, they were historically considered as advanced in the provision of communication services (Gori & Parcu, 2018). One of the major sources of change in the postal sector in contemporary society has been alternative means of communication that are providing significant competition for postal administrations (Anson & Helble, 2014). Postal administrations that operate as government enterprises or government departments are lagging behind in utilising ICTs in their operations (ITU & UPU, 2010). ICTs are being adopted by postal operators to improve their operations, ensure postal operators are more available to their customers and increase revenue (ITU &UPU, 2010).

At the beginning of the 20th century, innovations such as telephones tested the viability of postal business (Gori & Parcu, 2018). The use of fax machines in businesses towards the end of the 1980s and the use of email in the 1990s challenged the way postal organisations operate in two main ways (Anson & Helble, 2014). First, the cost of sending documents was reduced significantly and, secondly, the delivery of emails was instant unlike the time it takes to deliver letters (Anson & Helble, 2014). Therefore, significant challenges are being presented to postal services by advanced information technologies such as the Internet (Gori & Parcu, 2018; Bojovic *et al.,* 2010)

In addition, substantive transformations in the postal sector are being influenced by advancements in the global society such as interconnectedness of economies, markets, cultures and communication services; the opening up of global markets; increased competition; and reconfigured the governments' involvement in the economy (Bojovic *et al.,* 2010). ICTs are argued to be changing the model upon which postal organisations operate, as they present both challenges and opportunities for postal organisations (Gori & Parcu, 2018). The implementation of ICTs creates new markets for postal businesses by replacing or

incorporating old ones thereby creating new networks that appeal to customers (Gori & Parcu, 2018). Postal organisations in developed countries have significantly invested in the development of postal e-services, logistics and financial business, such as online shopping and e-payments (UPU, 2012). Postal e-services are defined as electronic services that are offered by postal operators to their end-users such as individual customers, companies or states through the Internet (Corredera, 2015). Other channels used to deliver these services include smartphones, call centres and televisions (Corredera, 2015).

New technologies have also been used to improve business processes and services as well as promote the development of new products in the postal sector (UPU, 2012). More diverse services have been enhanced and the range of services has been expanded by the setting up of multi-functional postal outlets that offer services that meet ever-changing customer needs (UPU, 2012). According to Jaag (2015), to some extent, technological developments are shaping postal operations in conflicting ways. On one hand, they are liberalising postal markets through changes in the regulatory framework (Jaag, 2015; UPU, 2014). At the same time postal administrations are required to provide universal access to basic communication services in spite of the cost involved, even in areas that are not (commercially) viable. This is to ensure that basic communication services are accessed by all citizens without consideration of class, ethnicity, gender, race, or age differences (Jaag, 2015).

The use of advanced ICTs has also seen a reduction of mail volumes in both developed and developing countries as customers are communicating more through electronic means such as e-mail (Jaag, 2015). However, electronic means of communication have not totally eliminated traditional mail services (Ducasse *et al.,* 2008). Some customers are noted to prefer a combined method of communication that includes both electronic mail and letter post (Fu, 2007, cited in Ducasse *et al.,* 2008). For example, some customers prefer to view bills online and use paper bills for the purposes of filing for future purposes (Ducasse *et al.,* 2008). In studies conducted, a significant number of customers opt to have paper bills delivered to them even if they are charged for that paper bill by the different service providers (Ducasse *et al.,* 2008).

Whilst mail volumes are declining, parcel volumes have been growing due to e-commerce (Jaag & Finger, 2017). Parcel volumes doubled globally over the period 2005-2015 (IPC, 2016, cited in Jaag & Finger, 2017:153). The accessibility of information technologies has opened up new opportunities for postal operators such as providing services to support e-

commerce (UPU, 2020). As customers order products online, postal operators deliver the parcels to the customers' homes generating revenue from e-commerce (UPU, 2020). Parcels volumes have been growing in the categories of 'Business-to-Consumer and Consumer–to-Consumer' (Gori & Parcu, 2018:5).

Other technological services being utilised by postal operators include geo-coding, which involves the use of geo-location services making use of satellite technology to provide accurate geographical locations that are required in marketing particular products (Ducasse *et al.,* 2008). Mail products are then created in support of geo-location services to meet niche marketing services for companies (Ducasse *et al.,* 2008).

Online direct mail is another e-post product where the transmission of advertising material is conducted through the post using electronic communication (Corredera, 2015). Hybrid mail entails an individual or organisation sending a message electronically or physically to the postal organisation, this message is then transformed into an electronic or physical format to be delivered to the various postal addresses (Corredera, 2015). E-administration involves the processing of official documents such as passports, drivers' licenses using the postal administration website. Online processing of digital mail is another e-post service that entails enabling a small company to access combined services such as design, preparation, printing and sending of direct promotional mail or bills (Corredera, 2015). Arguably, digital tools are changing the way organisations operate and also how they interact with customers (Corredera, 2015:9). Digital tools also include high-speed transmission technologies such as broadband internet, social media, and mobile phones. These digital tools are noted to be 'long-term trends' (Corredera, 2015:9).

4.7. DYNAMICS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Human resources are an important element of any organisation including the postal sector. In 2018, post offices employed 5.32 million people globally (Anson et al., 2018). Therefore, management of a large workforce is an important element for many postal operators. The purpose of this section is to discuss literature that sheds light on the dynamics of organisational change in HRM. This thesis argues that HRM is a key determining factor in shaping how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve at ZimPost. These studies will inform the analysis of the case study to explore the dynamics of organisational change in HRM at ZimPost.

4.7.1. Management Strategies, Taylorism, Fordism and Post-Fordism

Management of labour changes with the evolution of broad organising principles- Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate the characteristics of the different management strategies that obtained in each organising principle. This discussion will inform and frame the analysis of the dynamics of change in HRM at ZimPost in chapter nine of the thesis. The purpose of this discussion is not to repeat what has already been discussed in Chapter three, but to bring attention to key managerial strategies that will inform the analysis with ZimPost employees.

The inception period of factory production presented substantial challenges for managers during the industrialisation period (Collins, 2005). These challenges included managing rising labour costs, management and motivation of workers, managing the powerful craft workers who were used to their own customs and traditions of performing work (Collins, 2005). Taylor designed a system of work organisation, production and management (Grachev & Rakitsky, 2013). Taylor's key characteristics of management involved 'standardisation of all tools and implements used in trades; the standardisation of the acts and movements of workmen in each class of work' (Blake & Moseley, 2010:28). Taylor proposed that managers were responsible for job design, and this entailed 'skill specialisation, minimal skill requirements, minimum training times, maximum repetition and the general limiting of both the number of tasks in a job and the variation within those tasks and jobs' (Watson, 2008:32). Managers are responsible for 'task performance in work organisation, thus reinforcing the strength of hierarchical power in those organisations. (Watson, 2008:124).

Taylor's management principles and work organisation practices were adopted by Ford, and the main objective was to reduce and rationalise the time of production through mechanisation of work (Boyer & Durand, 1997:7). Ford, adopted principles of scientific management such as fragmentation of work, 'intensive management work-planning and close supervision' (Watson, 2008:124). Fordism is also based on a strict hierarchical division of labour, centralised decision -making and processing of information. This left limited room for managerial initiative in work design. The hierarchical structure, is also designed to control lower-level workers and this is also achieved through linking salaries to productivity (Boyer & Durand, 1997:7). An integral feature of Fordism is 'vertical integration of the corporation, and with it the incorporation of the corporate labour force into collective bargaining arrangements' (Beynon, 2016:310).

As alluded to in chapter three, regulation theorists concur that the Fordist crisis possibly ushered in a new kind of capitalist formation which is termed post-Fordism. From a management perspective, post-Fordism is characterised by the approach that workers desire more control over their work and that 'workplaces should be more democratic' (Beynon, 2016:306).

4.7.2. Defining Human Resources Management

HRM is conceptualised as a body of work underpinned by a variety of theories developed from human behavioural sciences such as 'strategic management, human capital and industrial relations' (Armstrong, 2014:5). In practice, HRM is defined as 'the use of individuals to achieve organisational objectives' (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016: 25). It involves all aspects of how people are recruited in organisations (Armstrong, 2014). HRM is therefore 'the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, and of attending to their labour relations, health and safety and fairness concerns' (Dessler, 2017:3). In addition, HRM entails aspects of strategic planning, 'knowledge management, corporate social responsibility, organisation development, resourcing (workforce planning, recruitment and selection and talent management)' (Armstrong, 2014:4). The functions of HRM are located in four main areas which are regarded as the basis of human resources. These are explained by Torrington *et al.,* (2014:7-8) as follows:

(a) Staffing: Human resources managers' main task is to make sure that the organisation has the appropriate employees to fulfil its human resources requirements. In order to achieve this, human resources managers are required to craft organisational structures, formulate contracts in line with the diverse groups of employees, identify and hire 'ideal' workers to take up different roles within the organisation; that is, workers with the right skills and aptitudes for the job. The role of a human resources manager also involves maintaining the ability of the organisation to retain the relevant workforce at a cost that can be maintained by the organisation. Managers are therefore involved in formulating remuneration packages that are competitive in maintaining the relevant skills requirements in the organisation. Workers who no longer meet the objectives of the organisation are also to be relieved of their work. Human resources managers have in recent years tried to distinguish their organisations by branding their organisations as 'employers of choice' (Torrington *et al.,* 2014: 7).

(b) Performance function: It is not sufficient for human resources managers to meet the staffing requirements; there is also a need to keep workers' morale high and manage staff turnover. In order to ensure that workers perform at their peak, managers are required to equip employees with the relevant training and advancement. This may involve a performance-based remuneration package for workers. Trade unions also have a role to play in negotiating these packages with human resources managers. It is important to note that HRM is more focused on the individual employee and is opposed to collectives like trade unions. The performance function also involves managers addressing disciplinary issues where workers have not conducted themselves accordingly. In recent years, human resources managers are tasked with fostering a higher level of 'commitment' from workers where they go the extra mile in doing their work by, for example, working longer hours or doing more than what is stipulated in their job descriptions. Fostering such kind of commitment can be summarised by the term 'employee engagement' (Torrington *et al*., 2014:8).

(c) Change management function: A major role performed by human resources managers in all organisations is managing the change process. This change can both be internal and external and it occurs in various forms. At times, change may require managers to restructure certain aspects of the organisation or reorganise tasks and place workers in relevant roles. Sometimes managers may need to foster a new culture that is in line with organisational goals. The change process may involve activities such as hiring or developing people with leadership skills to facilitate the change process. It is also the role of human resources managers to prepare workers to accept change and ensure the processing of compensation for workers who have been adversely affected by the change process. Human resources managers also have the role of ensuring that workers fully participate in the change process in a timely manner. Change processes that do not involve authentic workers' participation tend to be a source of conflict within the organisation.

(d) Administrative function: The administrative objective provides support for other functions which focus more on the organisation having a competitive advantage. Human resources managers need to maintain good record keeping of employees – that is, their background, qualifications, performance, and attendance records – in order to ensure efficient operation of the organisation. The other administrative functions

include remuneration of employees, with each worker getting a monthly payment statement. Workers also need to comply with tax procedures and the human resources department facilitates this process as well as pension contributions and maternity pay. Sound administration systems are critical for an organisation's success as administrative inefficiency may result in possible legal complications. At times, human resources managers overlook this function in favour of policy and strategic roles, which usually attract more remuneration for human resources managers. However, organisations that have efficient administrative systems are able to provide the necessary support for other human resources functions.

One of the major challenges managers face in a global society is constant change (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016). Some of the changes include shifting government regulations, technological advancements, changing labour force and changing economies (Mondy & Martocchio, 2016).

4.8. ORIGINS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The foundations of HRM can be traced back to the beginning of 'industrial welfare' around the 1890s (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017:5). Motivated by a combination of factors such as profit, charity and religion, organisations began to provide benefits that included health care, accommodation and other workplace amenities for workers (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). To support a growing function of employee welfare, offices were designated to hire workers and address employee issues such as payment of workers and keeping a record of workers within the organisation (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017).

Before the industrial revolution, management was characterised by a foreman who was detached from 'ground level work' (Uddin & Hossain, 2015:2). The foreman was assigned the main production responsibilities and workers had some flexibility in the tools to use in executing their work and their mode of work (Uddin & Hossain, 2015). Each worker would bring tools to work (Uddin & Hossain, 2015). With the advent of the industrial revolution, new challenges emerged that required new ways of addressing organisational needs, especially increasing production, managing resources and enhancing skills (Uddin & Hossain, 2015).

Around the 1890s, the American economy was characterised by exponential industrial development with advancement in railway construction and new systems of communication such as telegraphs and steamships (Caldari, 2007). In addition, there was a huge influx of

labour with large numbers of migrants coming to the USA from Europe (Caldari, 2007). Whilst industries were advancing and utilising more sophisticated technologies, traditional forms of management were still being used and this was a major challenge that was deliberated by a council of American Mechanical Engineers, where Frederick Taylor was a member (Caldari, 2007). This influenced Taylor to write about his ideas on the management of an advanced factory (Caldari, 2007).

4.8.1. Personnel Management

As labour relations gained importance, the work done by personnel officers became more prominent (Entrekin & Scott-Lad, 2014). The personnel department addressed employee-related issues such as the hiring of workers, arbitration and boosting workers' confidence and production proficiency (Entrekin & Scott-Lad, 2014). The personnel section assumed a more significant position as part of an organisation's strategic plan (Entrekin & Scott-Lad, 2014). The role of the department had transformed from an 'administrative and maintenance function' to a more strategic role in the operations of the organisation (Entrekin & Scott-Lad, 2014:8).

However, there are debates on whether there has been a change in the 'concept, philosophy and principle' from personnel management to human resources management (Mayrock *et al.,* 2015:15). Scholars such as Armstrong (2014), Mondy & Martocchio (2016), Dessler (2017), Beardwell &Thompson (2017), and Torrington *et al.,* (2014) concur that the manner in which workers are managed has changed drastically over time. Dessler (2017:10) explains that HRM denotes an approach that is considered 'qualitatively' different from personnel management (Dessler, 2017:10). Personnel management is argued to be labour-focused, whilst HRM is resource-focused (Dessler, 2017:10).

Personnel managers mainly focus on the recruitment, training and remuneration of workers, ensuring that workers are aware of management's objectives, give reasons for management's decisions and address the workplace needs of employees (Dessler, 2017). Employees are considered the basis of the organisation; however, they are perceived as comparatively inflexible, unlike other resources such as money and materials (Dessler, 2017). In addition, personnel managers play a mediation role between managers and workers and endeavour to explain the views of both sides (Dessler, 2017). Table 5 illustrates the different stereotypes of personnel management and HRM.

Table 5. Personnel Management versus Human Resources Management

	Personnel Management	**Human Resources Management**
Time and planning perspective	Short term, reactive, ad hoc, marginal	Long term, proactive strategic, integrated
Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control systems	External controls	Self- control
Employee relations perspective	Pluralist, collective, low trust	Unitarist, individual, high trust
Preferred structures/systems	Bureaucratic/mechanistic, centralised, formal defined roles	Organic devolved, flexible roles
Roles	Specialist/ professional	Largely integrated into line management
Evaluation criteria	Cost minimisation	Maximum utilisation (human asset accounting)

Source: Guest (1987, cited in Dessler, 2014:10).

HRM is driven more by 'management needs for human resources not necessarily employees' being recruited and deployed (Dessler, 2017:10). Addressing human resources challenges is considered team effort undertaken with other managers as opposed to engaging the workers directly or through union representatives (Dessler, 2017).

4.9. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT TRENDS

Over the years, the growing practice in HRM has been to pay more attention to workers as 'strategic partners' in an organisation's efforts to achieving its goals (Entrekin & Scott-Lad, 2014; Dessler. 2015; Mondy & Martocchio, 2016). HRM is transforming the manner in which managers accomplish their tasks (Dessler, 2015). There is no clear concurrence between scholars about what constitutes the new human resources trends (Torrington *et al.,* 2014). However, a bundle of widely-accepted HRM practices is becoming apparent (Torrington *et al.,* 2014). The trends encompass changes in the labour force, the way work is done, technological advancement, globalisation and the economy (Dessler, 2015). In addition, there are a number of new trends, ideas and advancements in HRM, such as 'capital management, engagement, talent management, competency-based human resources

management, e-human resources management, high performance work systems and performance and reward management' (Armstrong, 2014:11).

Human resources managers are expected to contribute more value to the organisation through the resources that are availed to the human resources department (Armstrong, 2014). However, this does not mean that both developed and developing countries are applying HRM change strategies in the same manner. The uptake is different in various organisations – for example, in a national survey of HRM practices in Mozambique, it was found that there was limited implementation of contemporary human resource practices (Wood & Collings, 2005, cited in Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). A significant number of organisations had established human resources departments; however, they were characterised by 'personal networks for recruitment, informal training structures, poor pay' and managers using a top-down approach (Wood & Collings, 2005, cited in Wilkinson *et al*., 2017:304). In addition, their survey found that many organisations relied on 'traditional patriarchal authoritarianism' (Wood & Collings, 2005, cited in Wilkinson et al., 2017:304).

4.9.1. Strategic Human Resource Management
Strategic HRM is defined as a framework used to formulate and execute human resources strategies that support the business functions of the organisation (Armstrong, 2014). It is viewed as a way of 'systematically linking people with the firm' (Schuler & Jackson, 2007, cited in Armstrong, 2014:16). Strategic HRM attempts to explain how the objectives of the organisations can be attained by individuals through the implementation of human resources strategies (Armstrong, 2014). The main objective of strategic HRM is to strengthen the capacity of the organisation to employ highly skilled, driven, loyal workers that can position the organisation competitively (Armstrong, 2014). Ultimately, HRM strategy is a process of transformation as the organisation endeavours to move from a current position to a 'strategically identified future state' (Torrington *et al.,* 2014:45).

4.9.2. Globalisation
The impact of globalisation has resulted in 'a shift towards a more integrated and independent world economy' (Vance & Paik, 2006:62). The weakening of trade barriers paves the way for globally-integrated markets and manufacturing processes (Vance & Paik, 2006). Globalisation has intensified competition for customers across the world (Dubravska & Solankova, 2015). This pushes human resources managers to find innovative means of bringing value to the organisation by making human resources an integral part of business (Chambers, 2013, cited in Dubravska & Solankova, 2015). Organisations need to

continuously assess the products and services they provide as they cannot assume that those which appealed to consumers in the past will continue to do so in the future (Dubravska & Solankova, 2015). For example, in the postal sector, consumers now prefer quicker and dependable postal services with a wide variety of innovative products that meet individual preferences (Finger *et al.,* 2005).

4.9.3. Knowledge Workers

In order to design innovative products, 'knowledge and its commercialisation' becomes imperative for the survival of an organisation (Dubravska & Solankova, 2015:1016). Knowledge workers are defined as 'individuals whose jobs are designed around the acquisition and application of information' (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013:6). Accordingly, human resources provide a unique competitive edge (Tureckiova, 2004, cited in Dubravska & Solankova, 2015). The objective of knowledge management is to cultivate workers that will be able to create 'new knowledge – [that is,] knowledge workers' (Tureckiova, 2004, cited in Dubravska & Solankova, 2015:1016). Skilled workers with relevant qualifications and experience are becoming harder to retain in an organisation as competitors may offer them more attractive packages (Torrington *et al.,* 2014).

4.9.4. The 4Fs: Feminisation, Flexibilisation, Fragmentation and Financialisation

The classification of workers in organisations and management styles has changed (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). The changes have been categorised into four types known as the '4Fs', which are 'feminisation, flexibilisation, fragmentation and financialisation' (Rubery, 2015, cited in Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017:10). Feminisation involves a transformation in the demography of the workforce, characterised by a significant increase in the number of women employed by organisations (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). Whilst the number of women in the workplace has increased, issues of gender disparity, the gender pay gap and the lack of women in highly-skilled and top managerial jobs are prevalent (Muzio &Tomlinson, 2012; Rubery *et al.,* 2016, cited in Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017).

Flexibilisation entails changes in the labour market characterised by 'flexible' forms of work such as casual and temporary contracts (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017:10). It also includes more workers, particularly women, opting to work for shorter hours, working from home, technology-based work and minimum or no job security (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). Labour market flexibilisation is argued to increase an organisation's ability to respond to the rapid transformation of technology and customer needs (Eyck, 2003). Some trade unionists view flexible forms of employment as a way of ensuring that some workers are able to maintain

their jobs (Eyck, 2003). However, the downside of flexibilisation is a lack of job, financial and social security (Eyck, 2003). This transformation also presents challenges for human resources managers as they have to manage these stressful changes (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017).

Fragmentation in organisations is characterised by increasingly engaging external individuals or subcontracting companies to perform specific tasks (i.e., 'outsourcing') (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). Fragmentation also extends to other areas such as the work-life balance and human resources functions that involve public-private cooperation, as this has an effect on how people are managed. It results in the 'blurring of organisational boundaries' (Wilkinson et al., 2017:10). According to Wilkinson *et al.,* (2017), this extends to public organisations as they are also undergoing a process of fragmentation. This has resulted in the emergence of what is labelled 'new public management' (Wilkinson et al., 2017), which is defined as a means to modernise public-sector organisations and re-engineer business processes in order to improve efficiency (Armacost, 2000, cited in Kemp, 2001). Therefore, fragmentation is transforming the way human resources managers operate in order to attain organisational efficiency (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017).

At times organisations aim to make additional profits through investments made in other areas – for example, investments in real estate – and not necessarily from their core business (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017). In order to incorporate these changes, there is need restructure the workforce and it may involve some employees working part-time, whilst some human resources functions may entail stricter control of the workforce in order to attain better organisational performance (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017).

The fragmentation of work has a downside as it augments inequalities amongst workers and reinforces strategies that divide workers in employment (Flecker, 2010). Such strategies formulated to lower costs and increase flexibility include non-standard types of work for example, part-time or contract work, temporary work and seasonal work. These non-standard types of work may lead to the diversification of employment contracts for the same type of work and also demonstrate the precarious nature of work (Flecker, 2010). Flecker (2010:15) argues that 'employment relations within a single organisation become heterogeneous.' An example of such an arrangement is cited by Flecker (2010) of a national postal company which set up a subsidiary courier operator. This restructuring caused diverse forms of employment within the subsidiary. There were four categories of workers that included seasonal workers with four- or eight-month contracts, employees transferred from the

national postal company with a national postal contract, regular employees with a contract under the subsidiary contract and management hired externally. This fragmentation of work creates differences and discrimination amongst workers. This division and dissention amongst workers are discussed in section 7.4 below.

4.9.5 Work Process Engineering

To adjust to some of the changes that have been taking place globally, such as increased competition, organisations have been downscaling and restructuring to reduce the hierarchies between management and workers (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2017). Workplace re-engineering is defined by the originators of the concept 'as the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvement in critical contemporary modern measures of performance such as cost, quality, service and speed' (Hammer & Champy, 1993, cited in Kubicova, 2015:42). Organisations are finding ways to adapt to the change process quicker by utilising strategies such as improving quality of service management, 'business process re-engineering, performance management, modernisation, lean production and outsourcing' (Taylor *et al.,* 2014, cited in Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017:9).

Many organisations tend to focus on gradual change through innovative products and services. However, over time, organisations are experiencing unpredictable and rapid transformation in their operational environments (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013). To address this challenge, organisations are implementing workplace process engineering, also referred to as workplace re-engineering, which seeks to overcome the challenges of incremental change by re-organising operational processes to achieve organisational objectives (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013).

4.9.6 Organisational Restructuring

Organisations are under pressure to evaluate and adjust their structures to meet the new demands of business (Ogbonna & Harris, 2003 cited in van Graan & Ukpere, 2012). The formulation of an organisational structure that is responsive to the needs of contemporary organisations is one of the most significant challenges that many organisations and leaders experience (van Graan & Ukpere, 2012). Whilst these experiences are not new for organisations, globalisation has intensified these processes.

Organisational restructuring is defined as a 'process of making major change in organisation structure that often involves reducing management levels and possibly changing components of the organisation through divestiture and or acquisition, as well as shrinking the size of the workforce' (Kurgat, 2016:627). Organisational restructuring can also be defined as the

process of changing the 'legal, ownership, operational or other structures' of an organisation to enable if to generate more revenue and meet the needs of the market (Harwood *et al.,* 2016:43).

In a study conducted on organisational restructuring and performance in the banking sector in Kenya, Harwood *et al.,* (2016) note that banks have been restructuring to become 'leaner' and create more customer value whilst managing operational costs (Harwood *et al.,* 2016:43). This also enables the organisation to concentrate on its core functions (Harwood *et al.,* 2016). In addition, restructuring of an organisation does not always have to entail the loss of jobs for employees (Casio, 2002 cited in Kurgat, 2016). Employers who perceive their employees as a financial burden are more inclined to downsize their labour force when restructuring (Kurgat, 2016). By contrast, employers who perceive their workers as assets, rather than liabilities, are more inclined to exploring ways to restructure in a manner that will ensure that employees' skills are utilised more efficiently (Kurgat, 2016). At times, organisations can also use outsourcing as a means of restructuring the non-core functions of their operations (Kurgat, 2016). This enables the organisation to concentrate on the key areas of its mandate (Kurgat, 2016).

Advocates of organisational restructuring in the postal service argue that postal organisations should conduct business in the same manner that private organisations do, rather than the 'political environment' in which post offices operate (Baxter, 1994:16). It is argued that the idea of postal organisations operating as government entities must be dismissed and instead stand-alone, self-sufficient entities should be created to transmit mail (Adie, 1989 cited in Baxter, 1994) Based on the tenets of efficiency theory, post offices can be argued to be 'inefficient and wasteful of public resources' (Baxter, 1994:16). This is attributed to the view that market competition between private sector organisations is more effective than the 'allocative economics of public sector organisations' (Baxter, 1994:16).

In many countries, the government owns and controls postal administrations (Baxter, 1994). This structure, which Baxter (1994:9) describes as 'controversial', puts force on the public sector organisations to achieve 'politically defined goals as well as economic ones' (Batstone, Ferner & Terry, 1984, cited in Baxter, 1994:9) – for example, postal administrations fulfilling universal service obligations even if it is not viable to do so. The effect of bureaucracy and government policies is substantial and may result in 'irrational' results that support the views of those who claim that private organisations are more efficient than public sector

organisations (Baxter, 1994). This makes 'postal policies contentious and postal performance is always evaluated through an ideological lens' (Baxter, 1994:9).

In an attempt to respond to manage costs, some organisations are reducing the size of their labour force (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013). To be more efficient and flexible, some organisations are reducing organisational hierarchies by cutting back on staff (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013). Downsizing is being undertaken to create smaller sections that can quickly address change dynamics (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013). At times, organisations may increase staff in certain areas as a way of ensuring that the organisation changes to meet its objectives (DeCenzo *et al.,* 2013).

4.10 MANAGING CHANGE

Organisational changes are an inevitable feature in many organisations including public postal organisations. A 2011 Work Employment Relations Study (WERS) survey conducted in the UK indicated that at least 50% of organisations experienced technological transformation over a period of two years (Torrington *et al.,* 2014). A third of these organisation experienced changes in various areas such 'work techniques, work organisation and product /service innovation' (van Wanrooy *et al*., 2013 cited in Torrington *et al*., 2014:255). Leaders are tasked with the role of being change agents, and even motivating organisational change with a conviction that the change process can be managed (Torrington *et al*., 2014).

However, the change process does not always succeed in attaining its objectives (Balogun & Hailey, 2004 cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017). However, this is not the same across different categories of change as it depends on the type of change being implemented for example structural or cultural change (McDermott & Conway, 2017). According to Ulrich (1997, cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017:35), there are three categories of organisational change:

(i) Quality improvement: quality improvement initiatives are undertaken frequently in an organisation and are based on initiating 'new projects, programmes or procedures' (Ulrich, 1997, cited in McDermott and Conway, 2017:375).

(ii) Process changes: process changes involve redesigning work processes by making work more efficient in meeting the goals of the organisation.

(iii) Cultural changes: cultural transformation of an organisation is central to the survival of a business, and it involves continuous assessment of the mission, and goals of the organisation. It also entails aspects of how the core functions of the organisation are going to be executed.

Many change initiatives may involve all the above-mentioned categories of change (McDermott & Conway, 2017). The role of human resources practitioners in the different categories of change is that of being change agents (McDermott & Conway, 2017). Change agents are defined as people or groups, who are internal or external to the organisation and 'champion and guide organisational members toward change' (McDermott & Conway, 2017:381). This function can be conducted by human resources managers, or it can be outsourced to consultants or change teams (McDermott &Conway, 2017). Studies conducted by Ottaway (1983, cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017) identified three groups of change agents. There are change agents who 'generate, implement and adopt change initiatives' (Ottaway, 1983 cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017:381). However, more recently, scholars have added another category of entrepreneurial change agents (McDermott *et al.,* 2013 cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017:381). Entrepreneurial change agents 'adapt and add to the planned change process (McDermott et al., 2013 cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017:381).

In public sector health organisations studied in the UK, these categories of change agents were identified in the implementation of government-led public sector reforms (Wallace *et al*., 2011, cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017). The study indicated that half of senior managers were identified as implementers of government-led public sector reforms, two-thirds adapted government change initiatives to the local setting and two-thirds identified themselves as generating change initiatives (Wallace *et al.,* 2011 cited in McDermott & Conway, 2017). Human resources practitioners, as change initiators, have the responsibility to be responsive to the change process (Torrington *et al.,* 2014). They have the challenging role of anticipating change and reorganising work processes in order to develop a 'built-in capacity to change' (Torrington *et al.,* 2014:257).

4.10.1. How are Workers Affected by the Change Process?

There is growing recognition that employees' experiences of change processes are critical in managing the change process (Torrington *et al*., 2014). However, it has also been noted that there is inadequate research on employee's reactions to organisational change (Torrington *et al.,* 2014). Many narratives on organisational change tend to concentrate on managers' views of organisational change and not those of employees (Bryant, 2003). Employees' experiences

of change may be influenced by the state of the organisation; that is, whether it is successful or not (Torrington *et al*., 2014). There is also an assumption that workers resist change because it is a natural aspect of human behaviour rather than the perception that 'resistance stems from legitimate reasons and is partly a result of the way that change is conceived and led in the organisation' (Torrington *et al.,* 2014:259).

Oreg (2006, cited in Torrington *et al*., (2014) suggests that people respond to change in a number of ways. A cognitive and emotional reaction involves a worker undertaking a cost and benefit analysis of continuing to work for an organisation in the event of change such as a merger (Torrington *et al*., 2014). A highly skilled worker may then choose to look for another job if unsatisfied with the change process (Torrington *et al*., 2014). In a situation where organisational restructuring or rationalisation occurs, a cognitive and emotional response may be experienced by a worker (Torrington *et a*l., 2014). Rationalisation and downsizing may result in a worker losing their 'role identity' (Jones *et a*l., 2004, cited in Torrington *et al.,* 2014:260). Workers may experience uncertainty about their relevance to the recent changes and this may affect their self-confidence (Torrington *et al*., 2014). The unpredictable work situation may cause an array of emotional responses (Ibid.).

Some workers, in particular middle managers, may find it challenging to cope with the conflict stemming from change initiatives from senior managers and change pressures from low-level workers (Conway & Monks, 2011, cited in Torrington *et al.,* 2014). The findings of a study by Worrall & Cooper (2006, cited in Torrington *et al,* 2014) conducted in the UK amongst managers, indicated that some managers felt overwhelmed with the change process, had limited time and inadequate resources to execute their work according to the quality they deemed appropriate. Organisational changes were deemed to create 'work intensification and increased pressure to perform' for some managers (Worrall & Cooper, 2006, cited in Torrington *et al.,* 2014: 331). High levels of absenteeism were reported amongst workers in organisations where budget cuts were being implemented (Worrall & Cooper, 2006 cited in Torrington *et al,* 2014).

A logistic regression analysis conducted amongst 355 employees from a diversity of organisations in Greece indicates that change, even if it is small, can be opposed by employees (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012). Therefore, the way change is instigated in the organisation by change agents is critical (Halkos & Bousinakis, 2012).

A cross-sectional study of the impact of organisational change on employee performance at selected banks in Bujumbura indicated that structural changes had a significant impact on the performance of employees (Methode *et al.,* 2019). Employees' performance improved due to structural changes that removed replication of jobs, formulation of new policies that quickly respond to customer needs and formation of new departments in line with the needs of the market (Methode *et al.,* 2019). Improved performance amongst workers was stated to be positive if they were incorporated in the development of an organisation's mission, goals, culture, before implementing the change process (Methode *et al.*, 2019).

For many organisations, change has become identical with budget cuts and retrenchments (Tefera & Mutambara, 2014). This has fostered a negative perception of change amongst workers, particularly those adversely affected by the change process (Tefera & Mutambara, 2016). A descriptive study of organisational change on workers' motivation in KwaZulu-Natal showed that motivation amongst employees was affected negatively due to management treating workers homogenously and neglecting their involvement in the change initiative (Tefera & Mutambara, 2016). Employees indicated that that they have diverse needs and managers should seek to understand those individual needs (Tefera & Mutambara, 2016). Workers also indicated that the change process was not effectively communicated to them, and this had a negative effect on their performance (Tefera &Mutambara, 2016).

Whilst change is carried out in organisations to make them more effective, the results are not always successful (Jones *et al.,* 2008). Workers often resist change due to the uncertainty of change processes (Ibid.). The major reason why workers resist change has been attributed to the poor success rate of organisational change (Ibid.). However, it is imperative that assumptions are not made that employees just resist change (Jones *et al.,* 2008). Rather, there is need to assess the employees' subjective experiences of change, which may show that they are not just opposed to change but the negative results of change (Ibid.). A study was carried out by Jones *et al.* (2008) to assess employees' perceptions of wide-scale planned organisational change at a hospital in the United Kingdom indicates that perceptions about change were more or less similar across different levels of employees, including senior managers, supervisors and non-supervisory staff (Ibid.). The different levels of employees all highlighted communication challenges during organisational change.

However, variances were noted in the importance that was placed on different aspects of change by the different types of employees (Jones et al., 2008). The differences were

attributed to the roles that are assigned to employees. For example, senior managers have strategic leadership roles and the effects of change are 'less dramatic for them' than other levels of employees (Jones *et al.,* 2008:27). This research challenges one of the major limitations in organisational research: the experiences of varied levels of employees are not considered. According to Jones *et al.* (2004), cited in Jones *et al.,* (2008:6), 'organisations provide members with multiple group membership, for example work units, professional groups, divisions and the organisations as a whole' The historical analysis of postal services in Zimbabwe in this thesis seeks to emulate this approach to ensure that the voices of the different employees are included in the research.

4.11. OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYEE RELATIONS IN ZIMBABWE

4.11.1. Employee Relations during Colonialism

In developing a historical analysis of postal services in Zimbabwe, it is imperative to undertake an overview of industrial relations in order to infer its effects on postal workers over time. The State has played an important role in the development of industrial relations in colonial and post-independence Zimbabwe (Sibanda, 1989). A historical account of the development of industrial relations needs to be undertaken in the 'context of the evolving political economy' (Sachikonye, 1986, cited in Sibanda, 1989:3). Therefore, it is argued that 'the state, capital and trade unions play significant roles in varying degrees in the determination and modification of industrial relations and ultimately the social and political relations in society' (Sachikonye, 1986 cited in Sibanda, 1989: 3).

In the process of primitive accumulation in Southern Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was known then, the colonial state exploited cheap labour through the British South Africa Company's Native Department (Sibanda, 1989). The earliest colonial efforts to control workers were put in place through the formation of labour offices in various provinces in 1895, which were then merged to form the Labour Board of Southern Rhodesia in 1899 (Jazdowska, 2001). As the colonial state transformed into a formidable force, African were forced into wage labour (*chibaro* system) through use of an array of legal instruments such as the Master and Servants Act of 1901, Pass Law of 1902, Private Locations Ordinance of 1910, Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1943, amongst others (Sibanda, 1989:2, Van Onselen, 1976). In addition, tax systems were applied to transform peasants into wage

labourers for example the Hut Tax in 1894 (Jazdowska, 2001; Sibanda, 1989). During this period, no formal workers' organisations were formed.

After World War I, some protest associations were established; however, they were mainly about political participation and did not only comprise workers (Sibanda, 1989). Whilst workers did not form exclusive working-class associations it does not mean that there were no forms of resistance by workers. Workers engaged in various forms of passive resistance, particularly at mines, which included malingering, wasting resources on purpose, faking sickness, work delays, self-harm, and vandalism of work property (Sibanda, 1989). Working-class consciousness revealed itself in various forms 'submerged' within an intricate colonial class struggle (Sibanda, 1989:5).

Formal workers' associations began to sprout in townships and mining areas. They were 'ethnic-based, religious and cultural movements' (Sibanda, 1989:6). In 1922, employers raised concerns about these workers' associations and how they would lead to the formation of larger labour movements (Sibanda, 1989). The formation of labour movements in Zimbabwe was divided along racial lines. According to Arrighi (1973, cited in Sibanda, 1989:6), the colonial-capitalist economy emerged on the foundations of the availability of cheap African labour with 'a skilled white aristocracy of labour'.

In 1927, the antagonistic relationship between capital and labour led to the formation of a formal labour organisation called the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (Sibanda, 1989). It was unique in that it was not based on particular industrial sectors such as mining but on urban locations in Harare and Bulawayo (Sibanda, 1989). Over time, the demand for cheap labour instilled fear amongst white aristocratic workers, who were afraid that they would be replaced by 'cheaper' black workers (Sibanda, 1989). This anxiety led to a 'racist militancy of the white labour aristocracy which came to provide an important internal social base for the state' (Sibanda, 1989:8). As a result, the colonial government passed a law that excluded African workers from employment in the public service and, in 1934, the Industrial Conciliation Act was enacted. It only recognised white labour as employees, who were allowed to participate in collective bargaining (Sachikonye, 1990; Sibanda, 1989; Jazdowska, 2001).

Around the 1930s and 1940s, important advancements took place in Rhodesia's political economy with manufacturing becoming dominant through significant government subsidies (Sibanda, 1989). The number of African workers grew from 254,000 in 1926 to 377,000 in

1946 and 600,000 in 1956 (Sibanda, 1989:8). The boom in manufacturing required a constant supply of skilled and semi-skilled (urbanised) labour whilst on agricultural plantations unskilled labour was required. The colonial government put in place strategies to 'further proletarianise peasants and depress their independent productive activities' (Sibanda, 1989:9).

In 1944, African workers formed an industrial trade union called the Rhodesia Railway Employees Association (RREA) followed by the Milling Employees Association in 1945 based in Bulawayo (Sibanda, 1989). Associations were formed because trade unionism amongst African workers had been banned by the Masters and Servant Act of 1901 (Sibanda, 1989). The forms of resistance amongst workers, particularly strikes by railway workers, led to the formation of workers' boards to address issues affecting labour in the workplace. Minimum wages were awarded as well as more paid leave days (Sibanda, 1989).

Whilst these concessions were put in place, the oppression of black workers continued. The conflict between workers and capital deepened as nationalism also advanced (Sibanda, 1989). In the 1950s, the relationship between trade unionism and nationalism was so intertwined that is became difficult to separate their development (Sibanda, 1989). Labour unions became aware that the political structure had to be revolutionised in order to address the labour conditions of black workers (Sibanda, 1989). Trade unions put pressure on the colonial state to address working conditions, such as accommodation, education, racial segregation in tribal trust land, amongst other issues (Sibanda, 1989). Another significant development that restricted the advancement of trade unionism over the period 1965 to 1979 was the colonial state's unilateral declaration of independence (Jazdowski, 2001). This period was characterised by heavy state suppression of political action and a significant number of workers were arrested and put in prison (Jazdowski, 2001). Trade unions became more of political organisations and the heads of these unions perceived themselves as nationalist leaders (Jazdowski, 2001). Workers were divided into two major categories composed of skilled and unskilled labour (Sibanda, 1989). As a result, trade unions for skilled workers were controlled by whites whilst unskilled workers unions were led and controlled by blacks (Sibanda, 1989).

4.11.2. Employee Relations Post-Independence Zimbabwe

Following independence, the 1980s were characterised by a 'set of constraints, ambiguities and opportunities' (Raftopoulos, 2018:47). It was a period of great optimism and a complex

colonial heritage. Trade unions were perceived by the government with disdain as they were regarded as not having effectively contributed to the liberation struggle (Raftopoulos, 2018). The intertwined relationship between labour unions and nationalism created an atmosphere of suspicion with the new government bringing into question the autonomy of labour unions (Raftopoulos, 2018). However, the government wanted to move away from repressive labour practices that were imposed during the colonial period (Schiphorst, 2002). Proposals on workers inclusion were made in various 'policy statements and the need for collective bargaining became apparent' (Schiphorst, 2002:1).

The government committed to a tripartite negotiating forum where representatives of labour, government and capital sought to resolve the concerns of labour (Schiphorst, 2002). The Commission of Inquiry into Incomes, Prices and Conditions of Service was established in September 1980. The objective of the committee was to investigate and propose a new industrial relations model (Raftopoulos, 2014), and deliberate on whether the focus should be on advancement of workers' participation or consolidation of collective bargaining (Schiphorst, 2002). The Commission was opposed to swift change and recommended that workers' participation at advanced levels can only be guaranteed if trade unions and workers committees are well established and have been operating for a significant period of time (Schiphorst, 2002).

Capital also supported this proposal recommending the establishment of trade unions in addition to more established means of worker participation (Schiphorst, 2002). The Commission therefore recommended the reinforcement of labour representation 'through their unions in the collective bargaining machinery' (Schiphorst, 2002:2). In addition, the Commission recommended the removal of laws that hinder workers' participation in the workplace (Schiphorst, 2002).

New trade unions were established but some were not able to maintain their positions. The government also noted that it would take a significant period of time before trade unions could strengthen their positions and determine the wage-setting process. The Minimum Wages Act of 1980 was introduced and allowed the Minister of Labour to determine minimum wages for employees in the following sectors: agriculture, domestic work, mining and industry (Schiphorst, 2002:3). Soon after independence, there were extensive strikes by workers all over the country (Sachikonye, 1986 cited in Raftopulos, 2018). Workers demanded better salaries, fewer working hours, less work, timely remuneration of workers,

rental allowances, payment for work done outside the stipulated working hours and an end to abusive management. The strikes were noted to be 'contagious and spontaneous' and indicated an effort by workers to evade established processes of appeal and petition government directly (Sachikonye, 1986 cited in Raftopulos, 2018:52).

In 1985, the government enacted the Labour Relations Act, which was a highlight of the advancement of industrial relations in the country (Schiphorst, 2002). At first, the government played a dominant role in the collective bargaining process, particularly in the five years after independence (Schiphorst, 2002). The government continued to set minimum wages and these government-determined wages would override bargaining agreements made by boards and councils (Schiphorst, 2002). The government's involvement in determining wages was became unpopular over time. Trade union leaders, such as Morgan Tsvangirai, criticised the government for the lack of a comprehensive policy on labour. Different government ministries addressed 'components' of wage packages and there was no overall harmonisation amongst them (Tsvangirai, 1990 cited in Schiphorst, 2002). The government was criticised for taking over the role of trade unions, thereby rendering the unions ineffective.

Post-independence relations between the government and trade unions have been described as 'corporate paternalist' (Raftopoulos, 2018:49). Paternalist state corporatism is explained as 'extensive government controls over unions and labour relations as being a combination of authoritarianism and benevolence' (Nordlund, 1996, cited in Raftopoulas, 2018:49). The government experienced enormous difficulties in formulating a coherent policy for handling labour relations (Raftopoulas, 2018). The challenges included weakened state capacity. Moreover, conflicting new labour practices overshadowed racial legacies and contradictory 'constructions of professionalism' (Raftopoulas, 2018:49).

The period after 2000 was characterised by weakened trade unions (e.g., Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions) due to 'de-industrialisation and economic crisis that then contributed to the partial disintegration of the working class' (Chagonda, 2011 cited in Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018:26). This was attributed to the decline in the number of workers in formal employment (Chagonda, 2011 cited in Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018). This, in turn, had a negative impact on trade unions as there was a remarkable decline in unionisation and subscriptions thereby limiting the work of unions (Chagonda, 2011; 2016 cited in Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018).

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was unable to play an active role in public coalitions as it did from the late-1980s to 2000. Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, (2018:24) argue that the combined processes of 'de-industrialisation and de-proletarianisation in Zimbabwe were amongst the deepest and most rapid ever experienced in Africa or in any developing country in contemporary times.' The economic downturn between 2000 and 2008 had a significant and negative impact on workers and trade unions. Workers' class consciousness declined and there were very limited opportunities to protest as workers were preoccupied with issues of survival against a background of runaway inflation and rampant corruption (Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018:28).

The working class was described as 'pauperised' (Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018:28). Workers would double in both formal and informal work as a means of survival. Informal work included activities such as cross-border trading and illegal trading of foreign currency, amongst other activities (Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018). Many workers migrated to other countries as the economic crisis worsened (Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, 2018).

4.12. CONCLUSION

ICTs and HRM strategies play an important role in how industry evolves in different phases of capitalism. This contextual chapter discussed literature on the dynamics of change in ICT and HRM. The chapter also discussed the drivers of organisational change as conceptualised in literature. The changes instigated by organising types- Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism were also discussed. The contextual chapter will inform the discussions on HRM and ICT throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE 'GOLDEN YEARS' OF POSTAL SERVICES IN ZIMBABWE

5.1.   INTRODUCTION

This empirical chapter provides the descriptive accounts of interviews conducted with participants who were part of PTC before it was unbundled. As indicated in Section 1.4. which outlines the goals of the thesis, the overall goal of this study is to undertake a socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost using Taylorism, Fordism, crisis of Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories. This chapter traces the socio-historical developments of organisational change at PTC during the 1980s and 1990s. The historical narratives in this chapter, show that the 1980s and 1990s can best be described as the 'golden years' of postal services in Zimbabwe. This is because PTC enjoyed a monopoly over postal business and the economy was fairly stable. PTC workers recalled that their salaries were competitive and enabled them to provide for their families. Trade unions were powerful and militant, enabling workers to demand better salaries and benefits. Towards the end of the 1990s signs of crisis began to emerge mainly driven by deteriorating national economic and political conditions.

In the year 2000 legal reforms were enacted which facilitated the unbundling of PTC. Whilst the period of analysis is from 2010 to 2020, these historical accounts were included in the thesis to shed light on the background of organisational changes at ZimPost. The role of national politics and economics in shaping Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism is illustrated in this chapter. The chapter also highlights the different elements that align with, Fordism and post-Fordism in the descriptive accounts of the interviews. This chapter shows that the 'golden years' point to a period largely dominated by elements of Fordism.

5.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF FORDISM AT PTC

To frame the evolution of postal services at PTC, this section identifies the organisational changes that align with elements of Fordism in the evolution of postal services at PTC as discussed in literature (sections 3.2. and 3.3) of the thesis.

5.2.1. Mass production of mail products and services

Mass production of goods is characteristic of the Fordist regime of accumulation. PTC workers described the uptake of postal products and services during the 1980s and 1990s as high with large numbers of customers accessing the post office in demand of mail products and other services. From the narrations of the participants, there was mass production of stamps and other mail products as they were the most common communication services available during this period. All 11 respondents, who joined PTC in the 1980s and 1990s, described the nature of postal business as vibrant, exciting, and busy. Mazimba, who joined the organisation 35 years ago, stated that the nature of postal business focused on three main areas: telecommunications, banking and mail services.

The participants noted that payments for government services was administered through post offices. This included bus licensing fees, dipping fees for livestock on behalf of the veterinary services department, payment of school fees for all government schools, pension disbursements and payment of hospital fees for all government hospitals. This made post offices extremely busy, characterised by very long queues and long working hours for postal workers. Parents and guardians would flock to post offices at the beginning of each school term to pay fees. As Joshua, who worked as a postal clerk at that time and has been a member of the organisation since 1985, stated:

> There were long and winding queues at post offices on a daily basis. School opening days were hectic in the post office. You can imagine all the rural farmers paying dipping fees for their livestock at the post office. (Joshua, 21/05/20)

The nature of postal business also involved selling stamps and delivering large volumes of mail, money orders, prepaid international coupons and postal orders. PTC had monopoly over the mail delivery business and enjoyed a large market share of the postal business. As Sevenzai remarked: 'Letters were the in-thing! It was a busy time day in day out especially for us postal clerks.' Gloria who has been an employee of the organisation for 22 years, stated that the nature of postal business was predominantly letters. She noted that there were large volumes of letters and postal staff would have to clear post boxes on an hourly basis at the main post office, and every two hours in the central business district. Some post boxes were located in high-end departmental stores, such as Meikles, to cater for customers who wanted to send first-class mail. Gloria described postal services during this period as 24-hours, seven-days-a-week type of business, as highlighted by Gloria, stating 'the front office would

open at 8 a.m. but there was an industry at the back which was not supposed to close and one which generated more income'.

Postal workers would work on a shift basis and sorting offices would not be closed. Shifts would start at 04h00 at the circulation branch. By the time post offices opened to the public for business at 08h00, mail bags would have been sorted, full and ready for delivery at suburban post offices. Most of the mail was ordinary mail. There were also large volumes of utility bills that were delivered through the post offices. Large volumes of parcels were also part of postal business. Letters and parcels were sorted manually. General joined the organisation in 1982 and he stated that the core business of PTC was mail: 'Our core business was mail and the volumes were so big because everybody was using letters as a form of communication'

5.2.2. Manual and Routinised Work Processes

The type of work predominant in the post office during PTC management was mainly manual work. Most of the work carried out in the post office involved paperwork as transactions had to be done manually each day by postal clerks. The routinisation of work was achieved through a rigorous training system where the entry position for most postal workers was that of a postal clerk. Workers generally performed the same tasks each day, which involved staffing counters and administering postal transactions. As General stated:

> Most of the transactions were done over the counter and it involved manual work. We were recording everything on paper. It would take more time to serve a customer because of the manual work. (General, 21/05/20).

Workers were expected to start from the bottom level so that they could learn all aspects of work in the organisation. This was noted by Gloria: 'We would start at the grass-roots level and it gave us an idea about everything that was happening in the organisation and how the system works.'

Participants described work as intense and involving during this period. Joshua stated that he joined PTC as a trainee postal clerk. He described his work as busy and manual. It involved collection of payments for different government services over and above the day-to-day postal transactions of selling stamps and banking services. As recounted by Joshua: 'People knew the post office and they never knew that there was a bank somewhere. There were long and winding queues at the post office on a daily basis.

These experiences were also mentioned by Faith, who joined PTC in 1995. She stated that as a postal clerk, the volume of work was high, and it involved considerable manual work. All the transactions in the post office were processed manually and there was considerable paperwork. A counter clerk would process a variety of transactions. At the end of the working day, the clerk had to ensure that the transactions and money received were accounted for. Faith also noted that each counter would have a specific function and stated that work was well organised. Most of the participants described their work experience as counter clerks in a nostalgic manner. The job was described as motivating and worthwhile because of the attractive remuneration packages that PTC offered its workers,

> Working for PTC was an honour, people admired our smart uniforms. The PTC uniform was well known because it was similar to the uniform worn by pilots. We were well respected in our communities. I could even afford to take good care of my family because my salary was competitive. (Gloria, 27/05/20).

5.2.3. Vertical Integration

The work performed by different departments describes an organisation that aimed at maintaining a bureaucratic and functional model where each department had a specific function to play in the organisation. Each worker had a specific role to play and the reporting structure was clearly outlined to workers during training programmes. Each department had a clearly laid out reporting structure and workers were expected to adhere to the reporting structure even when reporting a grievance. Training of workers was of great importance during this period as the organisation expected workers to (among others) comply with operating procedures. Participants concurred that there were no significant changes in departments apart from streamlining and (insignificant) mergers. The organisational structure was largely maintained.

Another department identified by participants with a specific role to play in the organisation was the Telegrams office. Nikita joined the organisation in 1983 and explained that there was an office called Reclaimed Letters where telegrams were typed. At the time, there were large volumes of telegraphic money orders. Participants noted that the telegrams office was vibrant under PTC management. Postmen were kept busy delivering telegram messages to customers, particularly death and money order notifications. This office was later disbanded and workers who were part of the department were transferred to other departments. Some of the workers became postmen. The gradual disbandment of the office started in 2000.

The Investigations Department during the 1980s and 1990s was noted to be a revered, independent and well-resourced department. Auditors had vehicles which they would use to carry out audit work at different post offices throughout the country. Spot checks were mandatory, and auditors would ensure that they were undertaken.

General noted that prior to the unbundling all strategic business units operated under one umbrella body, which was PTC. However, after the unbundling all business units started to have their own independent operations. For example:

> Under PTC we were one company. However, with the unbundling each strategic business unit had to make its own money. Prior to this, people were not focusing on the profit margins or making money because we were controlled by government. But now each unit had to make its own money without subsidies or assistance from government. It is very tough because now we are business like. The mindset has changed. Previously, one would just say my salary will come. Now, this is no longer guaranteed. We have to put in the work. (General, 21/05/20)

5.2.4. Antagonistic Labour Relations

Eight participants described management as being dominant, powerful and strict on workers. Managers were also responsible for ensuring compliance with operational procedures so that the flow of mail would not be delayed or interrupted. The role of managers was to meet delivery mail standards. Whilst managers were described as rather heavy-handed, they were also perceived as hardworking and having a clear vision for the organisation. The approach to management was noted to be in line with the bureaucratic model of the organisation during that time. Tsamba stated: 'PTC was more of a civil service; a bureaucracy and managers did not entertain any funny stories from workers.'

PTC management was also perceived as being increasingly tough on workers as the frequency of strikes increased over the years. Joshua narrated: 'There was a time in 1999 when workers went on strike and one of the managers, who was the head of human resources, said: ["fire them all; we can replace them overnight!]'. As the working conditions deteriorated, managers also became strict with workers as a way of discouraging them from engaging in strikes. For example, workers would be threatened that if they went on strike thy would be fired from their jobs. This accounts for why workers at times perceived PTC management as strict and tough on workers.

5.2.5. Increased Unionisation of Workers

The role of trade unions was described as important because the union was powerful. All participants agreed that trade unions were strong in the 1980s and 1990s. PTC's employees were represented by a trade union known as the Communication and Allied Workers Union of Zimbabwe (CASWUZ). Participants described the trade union as powerful, militant and well-organised: John recounted: 'Trade unions were more than active in the 90s; they were very militant and well organised'.

> During PTC times, the labour unions were very aggressive and sometimes they lacked objectivity. There was one strong union, and they would use a lot of tactics to arm twist the government. The union would simply present its demands and threaten to go on strike if those demands were not met. (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

Participants agreed that management took trade unions seriously because they were powerful and independent. Mazimba, who talked about the relationship between trade unions and the government in the 1990s, noted that during PTC management, trade unions were powerful because they were recognised by the government. PTC workers were able to negotiate better working conditions and salaries through the power of the union. In addition, workers were united and recognised themselves as a class that could demand better salaries and conditions. Workers had confidence in the ability of the trade union to represent them and address their needs. Gloria recalled: 'Our trade union was feared. If PTC went on strike, Zimbabwe was paralysed'. PTC was recognised as a powerful government organisation that had a significant role to play in the communications sector. Therefore, any threat to strike was taken seriously as industrial action had a negative impact on communication services in the country. The relationship between the government and labour unions was tolerant during this period, thereby enabling the unions to thrive.

All former PTC workers interviewed recalled that employee relations among workers were strong during PTC the PTC era. Workers were perceived as a united force and there were hardly any divisions amongst workers. Participants noted that it was not difficult to engage in industrial action as workers understood the importance of unity and fighting for decent working conditions. Workers would support each other, even when experiencing personal grievances.

All ten respondents agreed that during the PTC days workers' grievances such as salary increments were attended to and resolved. This is because there was a powerful and militant

trade union. Tsamba recalled: 'The union would simply present its demands and threaten to go on strike if these demands were not met, then workers would go on strike'. Workplace grievance procedures would be followed, and the workers' council together with union representatives would approach management with workers' grievances. If a worker had a grievance, he or she was required to follow the reporting structure starting with the immediate supervisor. If the supervisor could not resolve the matter, it would be escalated to the next level supervisor.

This militant role of trade unions was noted to have changed when the labour movement, led by Morgan Tsvangirai, fell out of favour with the government. John narrated:

> When Morgan Tsvangirai became the MDC president, that is when the government became very tough with trade unions. A number of ZCTU members were targeted and arrested by government. Since then, trade unions have not been as strong as they were. (John, 20/05/20).

Participants noted that the most notable change about trade unionism took place in 2004 when workers, who had embarked on a strike were fired and not reinstated. Participants noted that about 800 workers were fired from their jobs. This strike shifted the power relations between workers and management. Workers felt that management was ruthless and from then onwards, workers became afraid to engage in strikes for fear of losing their jobs.

5.2.6. Economic growth and a demand for better salaries

The economy was described as relatively stable in the 1980s and early 1990s and workers could demand reviews on their salaries. Participants concurred that salary negotiations were done through the workers representatives and trade unions. The salary proposals would be presented to management and the negotiation process would begin. All participants indicated that the workers' representatives committee was aggressive and would ensure that the demands of workers were fulfilled. Workers were also represented by one powerful trade union that would ensure that management would commit to salary negotiations. Another tool that was used in the negotiation process was industrial action. If the negotiations were not going in the favour of workers, workers would at times engage in strikes. These strikes would push PTC management to negotiate with workers. Workers would shut down post offices so that customers would not be able to send or receive mail and parcels.

5.2.7. Stable Market Share

Participants noted that PTC enjoyed a monopoly of the postal business during the 1980s and 1990s. Participants who joined PTC in the 1980s and 1990s reported that most of their work had largely remained the same under PTC management as they had large mail volumes to process and a substantial number of stamps were sold on a daily basis. There were also other high volumes of transactions that were processed by postal clerks, which included banking and telephone transactions. A substantial number of customers and businesses used telephones and would frequent the post office to pay their bills. Landline telephones were common during the 1990s. Participants noted that there was a lot of work to be done in the post office as PTC offered services that were in demand with consumers.

5.2.8. Job Security and High Wages

All participants agreed that salaries and benefits under PTC management were competitive. Salaries enabled them to send their children to decent schools, buy food at home and even save for any emergencies that could arise. Mazimba recalled: 'You could actually receive the salary for the next month before you finished spending the salary for the previous month. Participants stated that benefits included a transport and housing allowance. Staff development was mandatory, and the organisation provided incentives for those who were interested in advancing their educational and professional development. All the former PTC employees also noted that they joined PTC as full time and permanent employees. It is important to note that these participants had served the organisation for s significant period of time with the employee with the longest working experience having joined PTC in 1982.

However, participants noted that they started to experience dissatisfaction with their salaries in 2000 and 2001 when management refused to honour an agreed salary increment and slashed it to a much lower percentage. Participants noted the economy was not performing well and fuel costs were on the rise. This resulted in workers embarking on a strike.

5.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF POST-FORDISM

Participants recalled that there was a notable shift in the fairly stable and predictable postal business from 1998 onwards. These changes were attributed to the declining economy, a tense political climate and declining postal business. One of the notable changes that was recalled by participants was the unbundling of PTC.

5.3.1. Unbundling of PTC

The most significant transformation noted by all participants who joined PTC in the 1980s and 1990s was the unbundling of PTC. Participants explained that, in 2000, PTC was unbundled to form four private companies wholly-owned by the government:

(a) Zimbabwe Post,

(b) Telone, for telephone and internet service provision,

(c) People's Own Savings Bank (POSB), and

(d) Netone, a cellular network operator.

All participants expressed negative views about the unbundling of PTC and concurred that the unbundling ushered in several negative changes. The negative changes are outlined below as articulated by participants and these were unfair distribution of assets, loss of experienced staff, loss of customers and lack of meaningful involvement by workers. The separation of business units was described as unnecessary. Participants also mentioned that the unbundling of PTC marked the end of the most productive years of the organisation. Participants highlighted that since the unbundling, ZimPost has struggled to sustain its operations. The unbundling was noted to be imposed on workers, as they were not consulted about this major organisational change. Four participants stated that workers were informed; however, they were not engaged or consulted to seek their buy-in into the process.

> Workers were consulted – however, it was cosmetic. The decision to unbundle had already been made. Workers were used to rubber stamp something that had already been decided in the board room. The leaders involved were trying to push their agenda (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

> Workers were not consulted. It was more of a directive and there was no room for negotiations. Workers did not want the unbundling of PTC. Even up to this day some guys still wish they could go back to the old system (Mazimba, 21/05/20).

> Workers were not consulted about the unbundling. There was no input from workers. This change was not necessary. If they had consulted workers, workers would have rejected this move (Gloria, 27/05/20).

Participants felt that they were excluded from meaningful involvement in the unbundling process. They were of the perception that it was a top-down approach and a government directive that needed to be implemented. The views of workers were not considered or were simply pushed to the side-lines. It is also important to note that different categories of

workers expressed dismay at the unbundling of PTC. The process was even considered to be unfair, and participants said that ZimPost did not benefit equally in the distribution of assets during the unbundling of PTC. The participants indicated that they are not aware of how the assets were shared as they were excluded from the process. Senior manager, John recalled:

> ZimPost did not get a fair share of assets in the distribution process. Everything came from ZimPost as the mother company, yet the assets were not shared fairly. Workshops were taken over by TelOne and ZimPost did not get any workshops. TelOne got more vehicles than ZimPost. ZimPost got a new CEO, and she was not privy to what was happening in the company. (John, 20/05/20).

The negative effects of the unbundling process were also highlighted by a manager, Tsamba, who explained:

> During the unbundling of PTC, we lost a lot of government business. Some of the government departments started to do the work themselves. Some of the work was even taken over by banks. Even courier operators took over our business. Some companies were not happy with a number of things: for example, ZimPost was left with a lot of junior inexperienced staff at the head office (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

PTC workers were opposed to the unbundling of PTC as recalled by Joshua:

> Workers did not want the unbundling to take place. Workers wanted to work for PTC and their identity as the esteemed members of PTC was lost. It did not go well with us workers (Joshua, 21/03/20).

Other participants expressed that there was a hidden agenda in the unbundling of PTC. They felt that it was a well-orchestrated process that created top management positions for those in power. Participants were of the view that the change mainly benefitted top managers, who were elevated to senior positions:

> The unbundling was not necessary. The world over posts and telephones are not separated yet in Zimbabwe the business units were separated. Each successor company now has a board and a management structure. This was a political trajectory to a certain extent. Possibly they wanted to have their cronies there as board members (Tsamba,22/05/20).

This move was made to benefit the top echelons of the organisation and to create positions for them (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

Participants also felt that the unbundling of PTC was unnecessary, and a number of reasons were raised to support this view. It was noted that it was not best practice to separate the post office from banking services. They argued that customers still access banking services in the post offices and participants questioned the rationality of separating these two companies.

How can you separate the bank from the post office? At least if they had put ZimPost together with POSB and NetOne with TelOne. POSB is not in all locations across the country; therefore, ZimPost provides that service as part of the agency services and does not fully benefit from the revenue (Faith, 21/05/20).

The unbundling was an unnecessary change meant to create jobs for management. In other countries, the post office and Postbank are not separated; they are run as one entity. All these companies are wholly owned by the government; therefore, they should not have been separated. ZimPost is still doing a lot of transactions on behalf of other government departments (Nikita, 04/06/20).

Another reason raised by participants was that the unbundling of PTC did not benefit postal workers. Participants stated that the postal sector was not performing as well as other sectors such as banking, internet services and mobile communication as recalled by Mazimba:

Postal workers are particularly disadvantaged because the postal sector is not doing very well in comparison to TelOne and POSB. If one department was not doing well, the other departments would support it. Now if one company goes down, it does so on its own because now the different companies have their own CEOs. Maybe they fell into better management (Mazimba, 21/05/20).

Participants were envious of their colleagues working at the separated companies unbundled from PTC. They stated that, when they compare themselves with their other counterparts, they are faring the worst. There was a perception amongst workers that TelOne, POSB and NetOne are better and more stable companies than ZimPost. The unbundling of PTC seems to have divided workers who were once united under PTC. Before the separation, PTC workers shared the same work challenges. However, the unbundling created divisions amongst workers since they can no longer come together as a united front to confront the challenges that they are experiencing.

Participants indicated that the unbundling of PTC was a major event in the change process, as it led to the formation of ZimPost. The unbundling of PTC did not yield immediate positive results or success. There was loss of business as customers were not happy with the effects of the changes such as dealing with inexperienced workers at the head office. The unbundling was perceived by workers to have been unfair and an unnecessary process that left ZimPost vulnerable to poor financial performance.

Five participants noted that the appointment of a new managing director, was not strategic for ZimPost as the managing director was not privy to internal organisational politics. The appointment of an external person to this position was also perceived as negative because the director did not to have any experience of working in the postal sector.

5.3.2. Training of Employees

Respondents noted that, in the 1980s and 1990s, the Training School was a fully-fledged department with several support staff. Faith explained that the Training School used to have a principal, administrator, secretary and lecturers. An induction course was undertaken by all workers who joined the organisation. Workers were familiarised with the expected work practices. Training programmes also encompassed familiarisation with products and services offered by the post office, its accounting procedures, the marketing of products and customer service.

Staff development was mandatory within PTC and each worker was expected to participate in training programmes that were offered at the Training School. Workers who enrolled for professional diplomas or degrees, such as accounting or marketing, would be motivated through incentives to complete their studies. These included a refund of fees if the employees were successful in their studies. The worker had to produce a copy of the results and the invoice of the fees paid. A substantial number of workers, particularly those who rose within the ranks, benefited from this staff development policy.

Counter clerks had to go through an intense, "hands-on" training process that required them to be well versed with all the products that were sold in the post office. The training period was 18 months. It involved both the theoretical and practical aspects of work. Training of counter clerks was done at the Training School. Counter clerks would also learn practical aspects of the job from "mentors" who were senior, experienced postal managers. Each counter clerk would have a mentor who would provide hands-on training to new employees.

Postal clerks had to be well versed in knowledge of the different products in order to be efficient in their work.

5.3.3. New Managerial Practices

Management practices that involved worker participation and sharing of knowledge and skills were identified by participants. Nine participants noted that PTC management was well organised and had a clear vision of where the organisation was going. PTC management was perceived to be hands-on and engaging with workers. Managers were perceived as mentors who were prepared to impart their knowledge and skills to unskilled members of staff. PTC managers would be involved in all the tasks that were performed in the post office. As stated by Gloria: 'The manager would even push trolleys of mail from departmental stores like Edgars to the post office'. (Gloria, 27/05/20)

Managers were seen as willing to do the "dirty", ordinary work that was done by clerks in the post office. Respondents also noted that PTC managers were receptive to ideas from workers in lower grades. They would also expose workers to the different types of work done in the post office. She explained:

> I joined PTC as a cleaner. However, the manager expected me to learn what the clerks were doing. At times, if the clerks were busy, I would accompany the manager to look for clients at other organisations. I learnt a lot about postal business under PTC management. (Gloria, 27/05/20)

PTC managers were also credited for playing a positive role in fostering team spirit amongst workers. As Tsamba stated:

> The team spirit, that the manager encouraged us to have, was good. It brought workers together. Managers would teach that the organisation is like a body. If one part goes wrong, then everything in the organisation will go wrong. (Tsamba,22/05/20)

General recalled that management under PTC was well respected:

> Management was very much respected. It was also coming back to the people, the worker. Everything was centralised in Harare, but I would say things were moving correctly. It was a good set-up. (General, 21/05/20).

5.3.4. Customised Services

Participants also recalled the existence of a department called Organisation Methods. Ndebele stated that when he joined PTC in 1985 the Organisations Methods department was responsible for carrying out research of new products and also consulting workers about their perceptions of these products.

> When I joined PTC, the Organisational Methods department would actually consult us concerning the products that the department was considering to introduce on the market. They valued our input. I think this was an important department because marketing involves learning what customers and even the employees think about a product before introducing it on the market. (Ndebele, 08/06/20).

Considerable work was put into doing research of different products before introducing them to the market. Overall, the department was responsible for research and development of products and services. This department was later dissolved when PTC was unbundled.

5.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter presented descriptive narratives of organisational changes from participants who were part of PTC before it was unbundled. The chapter identified elements of Fordism and post-Fordism as conceptualised in literature that were experienced at PTC. The role of national economic and political factors in shaping these changes was highlighted, seen in how the economy played an important role in creating a fairly stable environment in which change was experienced. The militant and powerful nature of trade unions experienced during this period is linked to the wider national political context where government was tolerant of trade unions after independence. Another notable change experienced with the decline of the economy, was increased strikes by workers as PTC was no longer able to meet the expected salaries and benefits demanded by workers. The legal framework that guides postal services in Zimbabwe change, making way for the unbundling of PTC into four separate companies.

CHAPTER SIX

THE TURBULENT YEARS: 2010-2020

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reported on the interviews that were conducted with workers who were part of PTC before the unbundling took place. The 1980s and 1990s were described as the 'golden years' of postal services in Zimbabwe, characterised predominantly by elements of Fordism. The economy was fairly stable, and PTC enjoyed a monopoly of postal and telecommunication services. PTC workers enjoyed high salaries, and unionism was high. In the year 2000, the government through the enactment of the Postal and Telecommunications Act [Chapter 12:05] of 2000, and in line with global trends, unbundled PTC to form four separate companies. The unbundling of PTC was conceptualised by participants as a major change in the history of PTC. Other notable changes experienced towards the end of the decade, were a declining economy characterised by rising costs in food, political unrest seen in the formation of a new opposition party, MDC, antagonistic relations between the state and labour, and the firing of about 800 workers who had engaged in industrial action which was deemed illegal by the supreme court. It is against this background that what can be characterised as the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost emerged.

This chapter presents descriptive accounts of the responses from ZimPost workers. The purpose of the chapter is to trace the major socio-historical developments that took place at ZimPost from 2010 to 2020. This period was perceived by ZimPost workers as a 'turbulent time' for the organisation characterised by declining markets for postal products, e-substitution, hyperinflation, changing customer needs, increased competition and shifting national economic policies which presented significant challenges for ZimPost. In response to these changes, ZimPost changed its business model to adopt a model that provides a diversity of services than a focus on mail services only. This shift corresponds to elements of post-Fordism, where ZimPost was aiming to develop flexible, innovative and customised services for its customers.

6.2. CRISIS OF FORDISM AT ZIMPOST

The crisis of Fordism at ZimPost was shaped mainly by economic factors. At outlined in the central argument for this thesis, national economics play a significant role in shaping how

Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve in different phases of capitalism. Hyperinflation cash shortages and the reintroduction of the Zimbabwe dollar, contributed to the poor performance of the postal operator. The discussion below explores the different elements of the crisis of Fordism experienced at ZimPost.

6.2.1 Declining Markets for Postal Services

ZimPost experienced a significant decline in mail services in the period under review. Data compiled and analysed from the UPU website, showed a continual decline of mail volumes over the period from 2010-2020.

Table 6. Mail Volumes 2010-2020

Year	Number of letter-post items, domestic service	Number of letter-post items, international service - dispatch	Number of letter-post items, international service - receipt
2010	18,834,453	3,891,521	5,034,983
2011	17,377,941	4,281,998	5,312,275
2012	17,105,386	3,915,271	5,752,922
2013	16,820,292	2,325,674	4,215,689
2014	9,074,477	272,767	938,110
2015	7,292,768	302,420	1,250,273
2016	5,575,827	244,077	1,401,304
2017	5,876,603	215,108	1,329,304
2018	10,984,369	296,655	1,304,165
2019	3,248,919	229,087	1,114,189
2020	1,238,291	49,268	511,396

Source: compiled from the https://www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-Union/Activities/Research-Publications/Postal-Statistics

These statistics were supported by accounts from mail clerks and postmen indicating that there was a sharp decline of mail volumes particularly utility bills. Brian, a mail clerk, indicated that when he joined ZimPost in 2008 there were high volumes of letters. Most of

the letters were utility bills that were delivered to customers. With increased use of ICTs, many organisations that used to provide their customers with hard copies of utility bills were sending soft copies of the bills directly to their customers on their mobile phones or emails. He stated:

> When I joined ZimPost in 2008, the mail volumes were still quite high, but now we have less mail to deliver. We used to deliver bills for large companies like Edgars, TelOne and even the municipality. These companies are no longer providing customers with hard copies of bills. They are using emails or text messages for their customers. this has really affected our mail volumes. (Brian, 26/05/21).

Counter clerks also confirmed the decline of mail volumes noting that there were few customers accessing the post office to send letters. Letters were no longer the most popular product in the post office. Nikita, who initially worked as a postal clerk when she joined PTC in 1983 explained:

> In the past we would be busy with customers sending letters especially job applications. Christmas time used to be a busy time in the post office as we would be delivering Christmas cards and post cards. This is hardly the case anymore. There are much fewer customers sending letters or buying stamps. (Nikita, 04/06/20).

The crisis of declining mail volumes due to e-substitution was also highlighted in the chairperson's statement of the ZimPost 2013 annual report.

> Zimbabwe Posts (Private) Limited (Zimpost), the designated postal operator for Zimbabwe, continues to be dogged by problems associated with technological substitution of the core product of letters. (ZimPost 2013 Annual Report:5).

This development is in line with the crisis of Fordism characterised by declining markets of products and services. In the 1980s and 1990s letters were in demand, however as indicated by participants, there was a marked decline in mail volumes in the decade under review.

6.2.2. Increased Competition

Postal managers and senior managers noted that there was increased competition particularly for courier services. Apart from the popular courier companies such as DHL and FedEx, there were also other local courier companies that were also competing for the postal market share. Ndebele explained:

We have new players on the market and ZimPost is no longer dominating courier services. Our customers used to prefer sending expedited mail documents with ZimPost as it was the cheaper in comparison to other competitors. There are new local players providing the same services and able to deliver documents on time. We are struggling to keep afloat, and the competition is bad for ZimPost. (Ndebele, 08/06/20)

POTRAZ quarterly reports also showed that ZimPost was experiencing competition from private courier operators, and this had a negative impact on the market share.

Table 6: Market Share of Postal and Courier Revenue
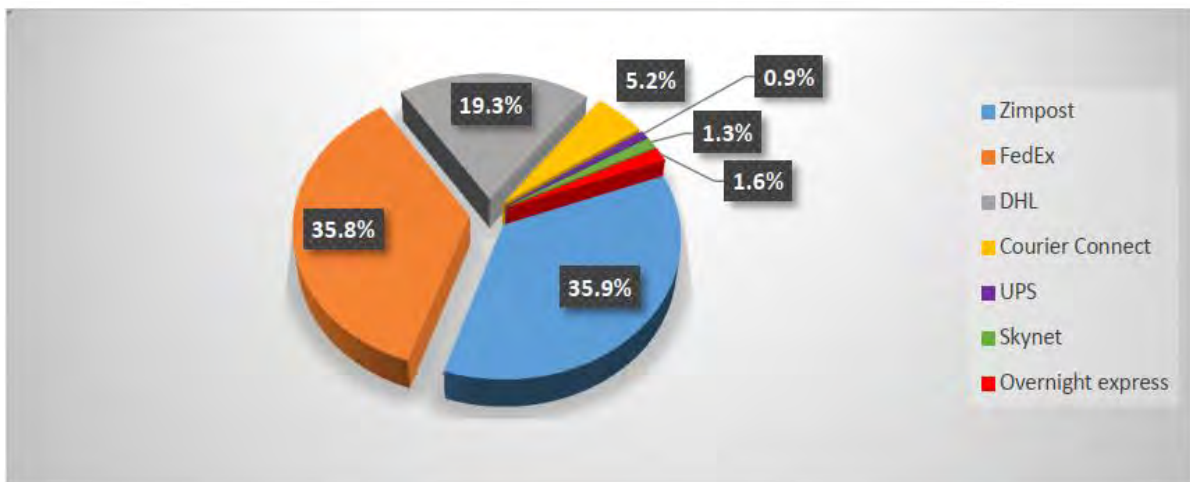
Source: POTRAZ (2019:19).

The POTRAZ 2019 first quarter report analysed showed that ZimPost revenue market share declined by 6.2 percent whereas FedEx market share increase by 6.5 percent. Increased competition is indicative of the crisis of Fordism particularly for organisations that enjoyed a monopoly or reserved share of the market for themselves.

6.3. SHIFTING NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICIES

Executive and Senior managers explained that one of the major challenges that affected ZimPost from a strategic planning perspective was the changing national economic policies which made the operational environment challenging. John, a senior manager noted that in 2009, the government introduced a multi-currency regime. ZimPost took advantage of this development and modified its marketing strategy to include in E-commerce services. Customers would order their products online such as AliExpress, Alibaba, and Amazon and ZimPost would deliver these products through the post office. These developments helped to sustain parcel volumes over the years. John detailed these developments:

In 2009, the government approved the use of a multi-currency system. This was a welcome development for ZimPost because the previous years had been terrible for business due to the hyperinflationary economic environment. There was steady revenue that started to be realised from e-commerce because of the improved disposable and stable currency in the market. (John, 20/05/20).

Executive and senior managers stated that ZimPost started to experience cash shortages towards the end of 2017. This was a national economic crisis that made it extremely difficult for ZimPost to sustain its operations. Customers were described to be hesitant to go to the post offices to send parcels or documents because they had less disposable income. Mambure, a senior manager, highlighted these developments indicating:

Customers are generally not keen to send parcels and documents because they hardly have money for food, let alone these other services. Customers are also holding on to the limited cash they have because it is difficult to access. People have to que at the banks for days to be given a few dollars. (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Senior managers also noted that it was difficult to come up with the most appropriate pricing system for mail products because of the illegal foreign currency market which was determining the USD rate. The hyperinflationary environment also requires the organisation to be constantly reviewing tariffs. In June 2019, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development introduced Statutory Instrument 142 of 2019 through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, which made the Zimbabwe dollar legal tender overriding the multi-currency system. When the government reintroduced the Zimbabwe dollar, the exchange rate with the USD was weak and it continued to decline.

We were hoping that we would go back to the USD to help us boost our mail business, but these government changes are a real setback. Right now, we are experiencing cash challenges and it is difficult to do business (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Nineteen participants stated that ZimPost tends to lag behind the quick-paced changes taking place in the economy and this was typical of government organisations. The participants noted that several private organisations were transacting in foreign currency, particularly in 2018. However, ZimPost continued to sell its products in the local currency, which is vulnerable to hyperinflation.

Our rate of keeping up with changes at ZimPost is very slow. Some companies made a lot of money selling their products and services in USD while we continued to transact with the worthless bond notes (Lameck, 05/01/21).

The shifting national economic policies contributed to the crisis experienced at ZimPost in the decade under review showing that different phases of capitalist developments are also shaped by national economics. The remarks made by Lameck, show that private organisations at times do not experience the same restrictions as public sector organisations. Public sector organisations are expected to provide a social service making it difficult for such organisations to operate like private entities. This makes the Zimbabwean context in which Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism is experienced unique because of these contributory factors. Other factors unique to the national context include the delayed tariff reviews by POTRAZ outlined below.

6.4. DELAYED TARIFF REVIEWS BY THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Unique national circumstances also contributed to the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. The regulatory authority contributed to the crisis through delayed approval of tariffs. ZimPost is required to seek approval from the regulatory authority, POTRAZ, before any tariff increments are implemented. It was noted that the approval process was time consuming and did not cater for rapid changes in the economy such as hyper-inflation. Shalome an accounting clerk, remarked:

By the time POTRAZ approves the price of a stamp, it will be worthless because inflation would have affected everything. POTRAZ takes too long to review the prices of our products. The delays are so bad such that customers come and hoard our products especially from the stationery shop because they will be much lower than our competitors. (Shalome, 03/06/20).

Some officers, controllers and managers were of the view that the delays to review tariffs were a deliberate move by POTRAZ to fulfil the political ideals of the government, especially during election time. The officers indicated that government overlooks the fact that public sector organisations also need to be viable, and they depend on the revenue from their operations for salary payments. Percy supported this view stating:

These tariff review delays by POTRAZ are intentional. They approve tariffs of private companies such as ECONET swiftly because they know they will benefit from the tax but when it comes to ZimPost, tariffs reviews are delayed. We are not donating

services; our salaries depend on the ability of the company to make money. These delays are just political for the government to be seen as providing affordable services to the public. (Percy, 09/11/20).

6.4.1 Universal Service Obligation

Member countries of the Universal Postal Union are required to fulfil their universal service obligations. These entail each country providing basic postal services at affordable rates to its citizens. ZimPost is bound by the universal service obligation. Therefore, ZimPost is required to operate a post office even in the most remote areas that are not profit making. With declining mail volumes, and a harsh economic environment, ZimPost was not able to contain the costs of maintaining post offices in locations that are not profit making.

> As the designated postal operator, ZimPost is charged with the universal service obligations but there are no funding mechanisms especially given that 40 percent of the 226 offices cannot even generate enough to pay for their own expenses, let alone contribution to shared costs. While closing them down would make business sense, this is not allowed under the Universal Service Obligations. No direct funding is also coming through; so, management is requesting that the shareholder directs business through these underutilized assets – for example, payments to chiefs and headmen, e-government and the establishment of a Postbank (ZimPost Annual Report, 2013:11).

The views contained in the annual report were also expressed by Executive Manager, Grace, stating:

> We have not received any capital injection from government since dollarisation of the economy, yet we are providing a universal service. These issues need to be revisited so that a sustainable solution is reached. (Grace, 24/02/21).

The universal service obligation has been characterised as an element of the crisis of Fordism in this thesis because of two factors. First, it is a model that works if there is financial support from the government to subsidise the postal operator for providing a service in a location that is not profitable to do so. In the absence of government support, the postal operator is burdened with the cost of operations. Secondly, the issue of universal service obligation has remained topical because of the economic challenges and poor performance of the postal business. This makes it difficult for ZimPost to maintain a service that is unsustainable.

6.5. POST-FORDISM

Outlined below are elements of post-Fordism that were identified from the descriptive accounts of responses from interviewees. In light of the declining mail volumes, the need to provide customers with customised products and services, ZimPost diversified its services to move away from solely focusing on letters but also provide agency services on behalf of government and the private sector. These developments are characterised as elements of post-Fordism as conceptualised in sections 3.2. and 3.3 above.

6.5.1. Innovative Products and Services

All participants reported that the nature of postal business was characterised by a significant decline of mail volumes, a shift from manual work to increased use of ICTs in work processes, a rise in agency services and other forms of diversification. Postal business was categorised as retail services, government services, mail services, financial services and E-Post services (these different types of products and services offered by ZimPost are discussed in detail below). E-services were noted to be a relatively new addition to the ZimPost business model. Participants concurred that the ZimPost business model had shifted from a focus on mail business to agency services, not only on behalf of government but also private companies. The rise in agency services had also been facilitated by an advancement in ICTs, which enabled transactions to be processed electronically and swiftly.

6.5.2. Agency Services

Agency services were identified as one of the core elements of the ZimPost business model. Respondents described agency services as collection of revenue or performance of a service on behalf of another organisation. Participants clarified that agency services were not necessarily new to ZimPost. During PTC tenure, agency services were provided on behalf of several government departments whilst the main form of business was letters and parcels. This, however, was noted to have changed significantly as business was now focused on agency services and not necessarily mail. The change in focus was attributed to declining mail volumes and the need to establish other means of generating revenue. The shift in business model was noted in the ZimPost annual report.

> In light of developments in the sector, the company is slowly moving from mail to agency services although growth is being retarded by the slow pace of automation and connectivity issues. (ZimPost Annual Report, 2013)

Mambure recounted that, in 2009, ZimPost started collecting revenue on behalf of the Zimbabwe National Road Administration. This was done manually. However, in 2012, the collection process migrated from a manual system to an automated system. Twenty-four participants noted that this particular agency service had been quite successful in generating revenue for ZimPost. Participants also indicated that the collection of Zimbabwe National Road Administration payments came at an opportune time as the newly-elected Government of National Unity (GNU) had introduced a multi-currency system at the beginning of 2009. The introduction of the USD provided some level of stability in business operations as the hyper-inflationary economic environment of previous years had created significant challenges and revenue losses.

> When the USD was introduced in 2009, every company wanted to secure revenue. ZimPost needed to recover the market share that it used to enjoy, which had been lost. ZimPost started to focus on agency services: in particular, ZINARA and vehicle registration on behalf of the Central Vehicle Registry (CVR). This revived business for ZimPost, and queues were back in the post office. (Mambure, 18/06/20)

Participants indicated that agency services played an important role in generating business for ZimPost. Due to the physical infrastructure that ZimPost has all over the country, some post offices provide the space required to access banking services on behalf of the People's Own Savings Bank (POSB). Other agency services identified by participants were airtime sales on behalf of mobile network operators that include Econet, NetOne and Telecel; collection of payments for vehicle insurance for different private insurance companies; electricity coupons sales on behalf of the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA); driver's license collection; collection of payments for car radio licenses on behalf of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation; and government forms and pension payments.

Not all participants were of the view that the organisation should be focused on agency services. Gloria, a postal manager and Percy, a controller stated that the ZimPost business model had become too focused on agency services whilst neglecting its core business, which is letters and parcels. The shift in focus was regarded as contributing to a further decline in mail volumes as resources are not being allocated to mail services. Gloria supported her view stating: 'People have been blinded by agency services. We are now focusing on other people's products other than our own product'. (Gloria, 27/05/20).

Most of the participants were of the view that agency services were a necessary aspect of the business model because there was need to make the organisation profit making. Mail business alone was perceived to be inadequate to sustain the organisation. Statistics on mail volumes support the need for diversified services as ZimPost cannot depend on a single service that does not provide the revenue to sustain its operations.

(i) Mail Services

Another category of postal business identified by participants was mail services. From 2010 to 2020, mail services involved delivering letters and parcels, selling postage stamps, philately, registered mail, provision of private letter boxes and bags, mail packaging, business reply service and mail room management services. Participants explained that mail business had been experiencing significant challenges as a number of changes had depressed mail volumes. This was narrated by Shalome, who joined ZimPost in 2001:

> When I joined ZimPost, mail was the core business, but they are now diverting a lot. It seems like at the moment mail business because of the trends that we have been experiencing people now have many options to communicate such as emails. There are also other competitors in the market, so mail business has been going down significantly. We are the post office yes, but mail business is longer the main thing that we do. (Shalome, 03/06/20)

Mail business was noted to have changed significantly. Whilst customers used to communicate mainly through letters this was no longer the case. Shalome also noted that in the past mail business was the only product that generated foreign currency for ZimPost. She explained that when letters and parcels from other countries are delivered in Zimbabwe, ZimPost is paid in foreign currency for the delivery service. When international mail volumes are high, it increases the amount of foreign currency generated by the organisation. Shalome further narrated the following concerning the billing and payment system for international mail:

> Parcels are paid on a quarterly basis and letters yearly. So, in order to generate revenue in between these payments, ZimPost has to find other avenues that enable the organisation to make money on a daily basis. (Shalome, 03/06/20)

(i) Financial Services

Participants noted that ZimPost has also shifted its focus from mainly mail business to provision of diversified financial services. Participants were of the view that the introduction

and modification of old financial services over the period 2010 to 2020 was a way of diversifying services and boosting revenue for the organisation. Services that fall under this category include agency banking services and pension payments which were mentioned by participants in their discussion of agency services. Sevenzai noted that in 2013, ZimPost launched an electronic money transfer system called ZipCash, which was developed in line with the principles of the universal service obligation that mandates public postal administrations to provide affordable services.

Prior to 2013, ZipCash was called a money order. This service was modified to meet customer expectations and needs. A money order was processed manually, and this involved time-consuming paperwork. ZipCash is an electronic money transfer service system for local and international transactions. The electronic money transfer system makes it more convenient for the customer as the transaction is processed in real time and it is affordable, unlike services offered by international money transfer agents. Many transactions in the post office were done manually. However, for the convenience of customers, postal orders were processed electronically. It was a much quicker process than manual transactions.

In addition to its own electronic money transfer service, ZimPost also provides agency services to international money transfer companies such as MoneyGram and World Remit for a commission. Some ZimPost managers interviewed indicated that due to the economic challenges prevailing in the country, remittances were very popular and providing such a financial service was strategic for ZimPost. However, a senior manager John noted that ZimPost was still experiencing challenges with this service as it is limited to a few countries. Managers also noted that more needed to be done to develop ZipCash, so that it is in line with technological developments and meets customer needs. This view was elaborated by Tsamba, a senior manager stating:

> At the moment, ZipCash is not accessible as an application or service on a mobile device such as other financial services that our competitors are offering. This makes money transfer more efficient and accessible to the customer. ZimPost should consider offering services that can be accessed from the customers' mobile devices. (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

(ii) Retail Services

Manager, postal clerks and auditors recalled that ZimPost embarked on a stationary business as a strategy to diversify its services. Participants noted that some post offices were selling

stationery that included textbooks for primary and secondary school children, novels, exercise books, envelopes and bond paper. Manager, postal clerks and auditors identified stationery business as another way that ZimPost was diversifying its services.

(iii)E-Services

In line with technological advancements, participants noted that over the period 2010 to 2020, ZimPost made deliberate efforts to adapt to ICTs in its operations and develop technologically-based products and services that appeal to customers.

> When I joined ZimPost most of the transactions were done manually and payments were on a cash basis. The business was modelled around the economy then. However, ZimPost is moving from a manual way of doing business to making use of electronic mediums. ZimPost is trying to ensure that all of its services can be made available electronically (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Mambure also explained that, when he joined ZimPost mail business, it was still the core of the business but this changed between 2010 to 2020. He stated that, in 2020, ZimPost started an online e-shop called ZimPost Mall. Customers can shop different products from vendors that include a large retail supermarket and a popular publishing company. When customers pay for these products online, ZimPost delivers them for a fee. This service was developed in consideration of the changes ushered in by the Covid-19 pandemic. This product was developed as part of the ZimPost digitalisation programme, as stated in the ZimPost Issue 1 of 2021. According to the newsletter the launch of the ZimPost e-shop marked the commencement of e-commerce within the organisation. The Newsletter stated that:

> Following the launch of the online Shop – zimbabwemall.post – in December 2020, ZimPost capabilities to offer last-mile delivery of goods bought online has come in handy in this era (ZimPost, 2021:3)

6.5.3. INTENSIFICATION OF WORK

The intensification of work was mainly experienced by mail carriers and audits. Whilst mail volumes had declined, the distance covered by each postman when delivering mail had increased. Derick, a mail carrier noted that, whilst mail volumes has declined, their work had remained cumbersome as the number of mail carriers at ZimPost has declined over the years. The number of postmen staffing a post office no longer corresponded to the work that was supposed to be done.

Mail volumes have declined, and this reduced the number of postmen working at post offices. The challenge is that I have to cycle large distances to deliver mail unlike before. This is the most difficult part of the job. (Derrick, 26/05/20)

I used to deliver approximately 500 to 1,000 letters a day. These were mostly bills from TelOne. This has changed because TelOne now delivers some of its letters in some areas. I now deliver approximately 300 letters a day. I still need to cover the same suburbs, even though the letters are fewer. (Takudzwa, 26/05/20)

Takudzwa also stated that, from 2010 to 2020, ZimPost did not replace mail carriers who retired or moved to other departments. He noted that postmen were short-staffed in the organisation. It was noted that another aspect of work that had changed for some mail carriers was the mode of transport used to deliver mail. The mail carriers noted that motorcycles were introduced some years back to aid in the delivery of mail. However, the motorcycles were few and not adequate for all mail carriers. Therefore, mail carriers used different modes of delivering mail that included bicycles, motorcycles and walking. In addition, the mail carriers were required to fund the process of obtaining their own motorcycle licenses. In the past, they could use the motorcycles with a learner's license. However, the government changed this regulation. Mail carriers without Class 3 licenses could no longer operate motorcycles. The mail carriers indicated that this made their work challenging as they did not have the funds to obtain the licenses. They also indicated that most of the motorcycles had broken down and there were no funds to repair them. Therefore, they are forced to cycle or walk, which made their work challenging.

For auditors, the existence of a dual system (manual and electronic) has intensified their work. The adoption of ICTs had made work more complex as there were still some post offices that had not been computerised and depended on physical checks. Auditors, Sarah and Mazimba noted that there were post offices in remote areas that present challenges and gaps in checking for misuse of company funds. The manual and electronic systems were not supporting each other well:

What appears in the computer system and what happens physically after a manual audit are two different things. There are post offices that have not yet been fully automated, therefore an electronic audit does not provide an accurate report unless the audit is also done manually (Sarah, 21/05/20).

Auditors were required to complete both the manual and electronic audits of post offices. Apart from the intensification of work, the department did not have adequate resources to carry out its work. Mazimba noted that in the past, the audit department existed as an independent section, and it had its own resources to carry out its work. The audit department had its own vehicles that would be serviced by independent mechanics. This had changed during the period under review. Audit work had become challenging because the department does not have its own resources to perform audit work. An audit officer has to request transport in order to travel to the post offices that have to be audited. This compromised the audit department. Mazimba noted that the department did not have any vehicles to perform audit work. Post offices had to be audited four times a year, yet some had not been audited in two years.

6.5.4. POLYVALENT SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

Some managers and officers indicated that their work had become more complex because they were required to perform a multiplicity of jobs which required different skills. The intensification of skills was necessitated by the restructuring of workers at ZimPost. A number of workers had not been replaced and a worker would end up performing a number of jobs in the department. Faith, a human resources officer, explained:

> I am the only one in the department in my region. In the past there was a principal, administrator, secretary and lecturers. I have to perform all these duties. I have to multi-task. It is very stressful. I need an assistant as the work is overwhelming. (Faith, 21/05/20).

Mambure, a senior manager indicated that there was a demand for workers in the marketing department to develop innovative products and services apart from letters to cope with the declining revenue. In addition, workers in the marketing department needed to acquire more skills because of the changes taking place in the field of marketing. He explained that digital marketing had become necessary as marketing experts require computer skills to interact with customers online including social media and other forms of web-based advertising. More skills and higher levels of education were demanded of workers, particularly in higher grades within the organisation. In addition, workers were required to be more innovative and think outside the box. Jeffreys explained:

> With the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone is looking to IT technicians for solutions. We are required to be innovative and come up with solutions to keep the work going even

with limited or no resources. Even before the pandemic, a lot is demanded from IT experts because post offices are being automated and we are required to ensure that agency services can run smoothly using ICT. (Jeffreys, 23/12/20).

The skills set required for a polyvalent worker are difficult to find particularly in the field of ICT. ZimPost experienced challenges in retaining workers in the IT department because of poor remuneration packages.

6.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter explored what can be termed the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. Declining market for postal services, increased competition, changing customer needs were identified as characteristics of the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. Unique national factors also shaped the crisis, and these include shifting national economic policies, delayed tariff reviews by the regulatory authority and the lack of a clear strategy to address the need to subsidise ZimPost for services provided under the universal service obligation. In an attempt to address the crisis, ZimPost modified its business model to shift from solely focusing on mail business but other innovative products such as agency services. These developments can be characterised as post-Fordism. Other features of post-Fordism recognised at ZimPost include the demand for a polyvariant worker and intensification of work. The next chapter will conclude the presentation of responses from participants by focusing on the second goal of the thesis which examines the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of HRM and ICT.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ORGANISATIONAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES CHANGES

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This empirical chapter concludes the presentation of descriptive accounts of the responses from ZimPost employees. The previous chapter explored the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost which was characterised by declining markets for postal services, increased competition from private courier operators, intensification of work and the demand for a polyvariant worker. National economic factors also shaped the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. These included shifting economic policies which included the introduction of a multicurrency regime, removal of dollarisation and the reintroduction of the Zimbabwe dollar. These developments presented significant challenges that made the operational environment challenging for ZimPost.

This chapter addresses the second goal of the thesis which examines the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of HRM and ICT. The discussion will identify the features of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as conceptualised in literature. A number of HRM changes were experienced most notably staff rationalisation, declining unionisation, casualisation of labour, deteriorating salaries and benefits. These changes are indicative of post-Fordist features. The second part of the chapter will focus on the dynamics of organisational change in ICT. There was increased use of ICT at ZimPost in the decade under review.

7.2. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES: 2010–2020

HRM plays an integral role in how broad organisational types are shaped in each society. At ZimPost organisational changes were shaped by national economic policies which made it difficult for HR practitioners to execute their duties effectively. Declining unionisation, deteriorating salaries and benefits, the establishment of three labour unions to represent postal workers were topical and contentious issues that affected unskilled, skilled and technical workers at ZimPost. The discussion below will categorise the changes using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as analytical categories.

7.2.1. TAYLORISM AND THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN HRM

The study noted that decision making and meaningful worker participation was limited in the period under focus. Participants indicated that decision making was centralised at ZimPost with the head office making strategic decisions on behalf of members of the organisation, limiting workers' participation in the decision-making process.

7.2.2. Vertical Decision-Making

Worker involvement in decision making was limited in the period under review. Managers, controllers and officers reported that there were limited decision and changes initiated by workers. Strategic decisions were made by the Executive at the head office and the implementation of decisions would be cascaded to the rest of the members in the organisation. there was little room to suggest changes particularly by lower ranking members of the organisation. However, managers not based at the head office appeared to have more room to make decisions or initiate changes as opposed to their counterparts based at the head office. One of the reasons given was the fact that they were not in close proximity to the head office where they would be under constant supervision by their superiors.

> When I was based in Harare at the head office, I was always under constant supervision from my superiors. For those of us based outside the head office, the supervision is reduced. You are able to make decisions without consulting superiors constantly because they are not on the ground. (John, 20/05/20).

Controllers, postal managers and officers reported that they were required to adhere to organisational procedures and there was limited room to be innovative, indicative of formal substantive rationality. Changes initiated by workers mainly occurred between 2016 and 2020 when there was a change in leadership. The previous leader was described as autocratic and not receptive to changes initiated by employees. In contrast to the previous leader, the new leader was perceived to be committed to improving workers' (managers and skilled workers) workers) autonomy and giving workers power to make decisions within the confines of their roles.

John a senior manager not based at the head office noted that he was able to initiate and implement a number of changes. These included introducing a performance-reward system to motivate workers to perform better in their work. The top three best performing post offices and three best performing employees were rewarded for their work. The best performing workers were also motivated through an extra day off from work. The reward system was

funded by revenue accrued from commercialising of the staff canteen. The manager noted that he had made the decision to commercialise the staff canteen and make it accessible to external customers.

Revenue from the canteen was also used to assist workers with transport fares, where possible. The manager also noted that he had increased the number of staff meetings conducted. Instead of having quarterly meetings, he would have monthly meetings with staff. He explained that he wanted to increase workers' involvement and participation in the decision-making processes. These innovations and flexible management style- (a form of management that fosters worker participation) was unique to his region.

Some workers noted that they had suggested some changes in their work, but these had been rejected only to be repackaged and implemented by management. Managers would behave as if the initiatives were their brainchild. Some officers and managers indicated that they felt cheated because they were not rewarded or recognised for their ideas that had been hijacked by management.

> I suggested an idea to improve our accounting procedures and improve our billing system. My supervisor said that it was not a good idea, but I was surprised to hear the idea being suggested by my superior in a meeting (Chengetai, 18/06/20).

Other experiences describing lack of worker participation characteristic of post-Fordism were noted when standalone companies were created without meaningful engagement with non-managerial staff. These will be discussed in more detail under that section.

7.3. POST-FORDISM AND THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The dynamics of change in HRM were particularly influenced by national economic and political factors discussed in Section 1.1. of the thesis. The government introduced a number of failed economic policies that did not improve the livelihoods of citizens. The reintroduction of the Zimbabwean dollar failed to stabilise the economy and hyperinflation soared together with the cost of living. The deteriorating working conditions discussed in the section below, clearly indicate the role of a weak economy in contributing to poor salaries and benefits, delayed payment of salaries and salary freeze experienced by ZimPost workers. The tense political climate, also contributed to the unwillingness of ZimPost workers to engage in industrial action against the poor working conditions that they experienced. The

situation was also worsened by declining unionisation of workers and infighting of trade union representatives which saw ZimPost workers not being represented effectively.

7.3.1. Decreased Unionisation of Workers

The role of trade unions was described as weak and fragmented. This is a key feature of post-Fordism characterised by non- unionised labour. It is important to also note the role of economic and political factors in the weakening of unionism in Zimbabwe. The dominant role of the State in repressing strikes, dismissal of large numbers of workers after engaging in strikes and imprisonment of protesting workers are some of the strategies used by the State to weaken unionism in Zimbabwe. Hyperinflation, rising cost of living, retrenchment of workers also contributed to the lack of subscriptions to support trade unionism.

Participants identified a number of factors that led to the weakened role of the trade union at ZimPost, which included the formation of splinter trade unions, union leaders clinging to positions of power, the union failing to fulfil the demands of workers, a previous strike which led to the firing of many workers and trade union leaders, declining government support and unions aligning themselves with management as opposed to workers. Under the PTC leadership, former PTC workers noted that there was one strong trade union that represented workers. However, this had changed in the past decade. As John recalled:

> Trade unions were more than active in the 90s. They were very militant and well organised. From 1980 to 2005, trade unions were very powerful; then they were diluted a little bit from 2005 onwards. There was some kind of interference. There was a major industrial action that took place around 2004 and it resulted in a lot of union leaders being fired. This weakened the unions somewhat (John, 20/05/20).

Participants indicated that, from 2012 onwards, workers started to withdraw their membership from the union because they felt that it served the interests of management and not workers. ZimPost workers were represented by three splinter trade unions. Participants complained that this had weakened the bargaining process as all three unions had to negotiate with management before any resolutions were adopted. In terms of negotiations with trade unions, executive manager, Grace noted that the role of trade unions had not changed over the period under focus. It is important to contextualise this view and note that the mandate of trade unions which is to represent workers had not changed. However, the effectiveness of the union had certainly been reduced. The most notable change was that trade unions had

been 'diluted' because of the splinter trade unions representing ZimPost employees. This had compromised the effectiveness of the trade unions.

> It [trade unionism] has been diluted because we now have more players in terms of trade unions within ZimPost. As a result, the effect of competing for membership has also affected their effectiveness (Grace, 24/02/21).

It was also highlighted that negotiating with three different trade unions was cumbersome and time consuming. Instead of having one quarterly meeting with a single union, HR management would have to have meetings with all three unions. Finalising resolutions was difficult because some trade union would be adamant about an issue that the other trade union would have agreed to. Frustration with the cumbersome process may also hinder management and weaken workplace negotiations.

The relationship between trade unions and management had also changed under ZimPost leadership. Whilst the trade union under PTC was militant, the current trade unions encouraged workers to be productive in order for salaries to improve.

> Another change is that unionists are now talking about production; that in order to negotiate higher salaries, workers need to be productive. This was not the case during our time under PTC. The union would simply present its demands and threaten that if the demands were not fulfilled then workers would go on strike. Now, there is a partnership of some sort with management. Both the unions and management understand that salaries can only be increased if production is taking place (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

Such 'productivity coalitions' are a feature of post-Fordist organisations. Senior Manager, Mambure shared similar views:

> Unions were mainly focused on increments of salaries and benefits without considering organisational performance. There is now a shift in their approach, and they are now encouraging workers to be productive, so that when the company makes profits, workers will also benefit. This is different from the approach in the past where trade unions would demand salary increments, whether the money was there or not (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Executive manager Grace also noted that the process of collective bargaining had changed in the period under focus. In the past, workers would simply demand an increase in their salaries

without considering other factors. This changed as trade unions were being availed with reports on the financial performance of the organisation to give them a broader understanding of organisational performance and also to increase transparency.

Former PTC workers, Gloria and Mazimba indicated that the role of trade unions had weakened because of the unbundling of PTC and the formation of subsidiary companies under ZimPost management. During PTC tenure the company was one large conglomerate incorporating posts and telecommunication services. The split had divided workers and significantly reduced the effectiveness of trade unions within the organisation. These were their sentiments:

> Before the unbundling, we were one united workforce but with the unbundling ZimPost workers were split from telecommunication workers. We no longer have a common cause with our counterparts at NetOne or TelOne. It is as if we were never one company (Gloria, 27/05/20).

> Our colleagues at NetOne and TelOne are paid better salaries than us. This divides us. I do not think our colleagues will ever support our strike because their problems are probably different from ours (Mazimba, 21/05/20).

Participants also noted that the role of trade unions was affected by the economic crisis, which reduced subscriptions through job losses. Participants reported that they were not motivated to update their subscriptions because their salaries were low and inadequate for their upkeep. They also accused the unions of being 'lukewarm' or colluding with management instead of representing workers effectively.

> Our trade unions are very weak. They seem befriend management instead of demanding better salaries. This is why we have not made progress with management. We are not being properly represented. There is no need for me to support any of the unions representing us (Ndebele, 08/06/20).

Another factor that was attributed to the weakening of trade unions was the 2004 strike that led to the mass firing of workers. Some participants noted that the 2004 strike and subsequent firing of workers had left a lasting effect on trade unions and workers. The strike gave the impression that the trade union was powerless and could not protect workers from being fired if they engaged in industrial action.

When I joined ZimPost in 2008, workers who had participated in the 2004 strike had been laid off in numbers and the trade union wings had been clipped off. Workers started to view the trade union as a toothless bulldog (Sarah, 21/05/20).

Participants highlighted another challenge that was experienced by the trade union: a leadership crisis. After the 2004 industrial action, some union leaders were fired but they continued to maintain their leadership positions in the union. This was not in line with the trade union's constitution, which stipulated that a trade union leader had to be employed by ZimPost. The union leaders were not willing to relinquish their leadership roles, and this caused conflict within the union. Management also refused to recognise the union leadership stating that they were in breach of their constitution. For other trade union leaders, their terms of office had expired but they continued to hold on to their positions of power. This crisis took a long time to be resolved.

Participants indicated that workers started to re-join the trade unions around 2019 to 2020. Some participants noted that, whilst ZimPost workers were starting to participate in trade unions, the level of participation was different from the standards in previous years. Some participants indicted that they were not satisfied with the trade union because it had failed to effectively represent workers, particularly with regard to salary increments. They explained that it was frustrating that working conditions continued to decline despite ZimPost employees being represented by three different unions. Management took advantage of the disorder created by the trade unions and used it as a means to avoid addressing workers' grievances.

A final reason attributed to the weakening role of trade unions was the lack of government support of unionism. Postal workers explained that, during PTC management, trade unions were recognised by the government. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the government was somewhat tolerant of trade unions. This changed when former Zimbabwe Congress for Trade Unions leader Morgan Tsvangirai, formed an opposition political party-the Movement for Democratic Change which became Zimbabwe largest opposition party. Participants agreed that from 2010 to 2020, trade unions performed badly and failed to negotiate salaries or push management for tangible results.

7.4. DETERIORATION OF SALARIES AND BENEFITS
Participants highlighted that the period 2009 to 2019 was a particularly difficult time for ZimPost workers as there were no salary increments during that decade. Participants

explained that salary negotiations only commenced towards the end of 2019. Several explanations were provided for the lack of salary increments. Participants highlighted that the weakened salary negotiations had been an ongoing process of the declining power of workers over a period of time. The 2004 strike, which resulted in hundreds of ZimPost workers being fired, was pinpointed to be one of the major events that marked a shift in power relations between workers and management.

Whilst workers noted that there were no salary increments during the above-mentioned period, management noted that this was inaccurate. The position stated by management was that during this period there was no signed collective agreement. However, there was cushioning of workers in the form of increases on allowances such as transport and housing allowances. Executive Manager, Grace noted that salaries were not increased because ZimPost did not have the financial ability to pay.

Since the 2004 strike, workers had not initiated industrial action until 2020. Industrial action had been politicised. At a national level, the government threatened workers from engaging in strikes or any form of protests. This was seen in the arrest and incarceration before trial of teachers who engaged in protests and strikes against the government for better salaries. In 2018, the government fired 16000 nurses who went on strike in demand of better salaries. Workers were silenced and they felt discouraged and afraid to initiate industrial action: 'The current political environment is restrictive, and we feel government is always monitoring government companies to make sure there are no strikes' (Faith, 21/05/20).

Workers were hesitant to engage in any significant industrial action as they were afraid to lose their jobs in a country that was already experiencing extremely high unemployment rates (unofficial rates estimate unemployment rate to be between 80 percent and 90 percent). However, the official government unemployment rate was estimated to be 16.8 percent in 2019 (Zimbabwe Labour Force Survey, 2019). Participants noted that the salary negotiation process was vastly different from how salary negotiations were conducted under PTC management. PTC had a strong workers' committee. They explained that their demands were usually fulfilled because of the militant stance of the trade union and workers' willingness to engage in industrial action. Salary negotiations under ZimPost management were described as weak and dominated by management.

The process has not improved. Management always has an upper hand. They also misled union leaders by giving them wrong figures about financial performance. They also use delay tactics like postponing salary negotiation meetings (Linda, 12/08/20).

Secondly, salary negotiations had also been hampered by infighting within the trade union, which divided workers. Union leaders held on to leadership positions even after they had been fired or left ZimPost. These fights spilled over into the courts. One trade union was deemed 'illegal' and management took advantage of this to stop negotiations with workers.

Even after the formation of the three splinter trade unions, participants noted that management was still dismissive of the unions, stating that they were unregistered and would not consider negotiating salaries with them. The infighting resulted in no salary increments from 2009 to 2019. The foiled salary negotiations were a significant source of disgruntlement and frustration for ZimPost employees interviewed. In 2020, postal workers went on strike for one day.

Workers were afraid to strike but on that on that day they decided that they were not going to work and demanded money because their salaries were only enough for transport. Management responded positively and the issue was attended to (Linda, 12/08/20).

Workers reported that, after the strike, their transport allowance was increased. Thirdly, participants noted that there had been many economic changes that had affected their salaries. In 2009, the multi-currency system was introduced, and there was an improvement in workers' salaries as the USD provided the much-needed stability to workers' salaries. Other participants recalled that whilst their USD salaries were lower than those in other organisations, workers were appreciative that the salaries were in a more stable currency. However, the re-introduction of the local currency in 2019, further deteriorated their working conditions. Without a strong and organised trade union, ZimPost employees interviewed noted that it became very difficult to negotiate salaries. Participants highlighted that the hyper-inflationary economic environment required constant back and forth negotiations with management as salaries were rapidly eroded each month.

Another change noted by participants was that the HR department devised a strategy whereby workers' salaries would be paid in batches, starting with the lowest grade going upwards. Managers explained that disbursement of salaries in batches was necessitated by poor organisational performance.

From 2009 to 2019, workers were not able to negotiate salary changes. The changes only occurred in 2019, after the trade unions was revamped. Salaries remain low and are coming in batches. We were put on half salaries for one and a half years (Nikita, 04/06/20).

Workers were also frustrated that their counterparts employed at subsidiary companies were enjoying their full salaries whilst ZimPost salaries were delayed, cut back and paid in batches. The organisation had also not honoured the payment of bonuses. Managers interviewed also stated that they had experienced salary cuts and delays in the disbursement of salaries.

There was serious cost-cutting in the organisation. As management, some perks depend on whether the company is making profit or not. A number of allowances were cut back: for example, education allowances and quantities of our fuel allocation were reduced (John, 20/05/20).

Workers who were part of PTC noted a dramatic difference in salary benefits in comparison to the benefits under ZimPost management. Worker's benefits under PTC management were noted to be competitive. Workers complained that they had been reduced to destitution under ZimPost management. A number of workers were noted to have migrated to South Africa for greener pastures. Workers who had not left the organisation were noted to be failing to do so because the job market in Zimbabwe is very tough. The economic and political environment played a significant role in the deterioration of ZimPost salaries as these conditions made the operating environment challenging for ZimPost.

Workers of all categories noted that salaries were very low. One participant noted that his salary was not enough to pay school fees for one child's school term whereas in the past the salary was enough to pay school fees for three or more children. Sarah, a postal worker with a postgraduate qualification, stated that her salary remained stagnant at USD 560 for ten years. When the currency changed, the converted salary in local currency was not equivalent to the USD value and had devalued significantly.

Participants noted that during the dollarisation of the economy and salaries, some workers were able to pursue further studies and be effective breadwinners for their families. However, with devalued salaries, some participants stated that they were no longer able to afford the basics of life.

My salary is not enough to cover my basic expenses such as food, shelter, transport, and school fees for my children. I have to find other means of survival because depending on one job is not enough in this country (Derrick, 26/05/20).

All categories of postal workers indicated that they were demotivated. Some workers particularly skilled workers indicated that they were only coming to work to access the Internet and phones or do their personal business. Recent graduates, who had joined ZimPost, particularly in the IT department were reported to be only interested in getting work experience and would leave the organisation as soon as an opportunity arose.

Other cuts reported by participants included overtime and audit allowances, which were no longer being paid as the organisation stipulated that there were no funds to cater for such costs. The employees interviewed highlighted that the absence of salary adjustments affected workers' morale and caused further friction between management and workers. Participants were hopeful that the change in leadership, merging of subsidiary companies with ZimPost and the revamping of the trade unions would improve their welfare, particularly the payment of competitive salaries. The participants explained that there was a glimmer of hope since management and the trade unions had reached an agreement concerning salary increments. They indicated that the actual percentages were not yet clear since the payments were going to be backdated.

7.4.3. Unresolved Grievances

Participants were asked how workplace grievances and disputes were resolved during the period under analysis, and whether these processes had changed. Interviewees noted that grievance procedures had remained largely unchanged. The process of handling disputes involved informing the immediate superior of the nature of the dispute or grievance. If the supervisor could not resolve it, then it would be escalated to the next level of management until it reached the highest level. Participants reported that the process was long and sometimes disputes or grievances, especially those related to salaries, would get lost along the way and would not be resolved. The ZimPost workers interviewed noted that trade unions had been pacified by management and had not been able to resolve workplace grievances, such as low salaries.

The interviewees concurred that the manner in which workplace grievances were resolved over the period from 2010 to 2015 was 'unfair'. Management was accused of not being empathetic to workers' grievances and workers largely felt ignored or not taken seriously by

management. Managers were also accused of resolving disputes by dividing workers so that they would not be united to push for change at ZimPost. Managers were said to have achieved this through firing workers after strikes, constant hearings which created suspicions, and allegiance to managers as opposed to unity with workers. The procedure of reporting workers' grievances had not changed; however, the lack of resolution had changed from the time of PTC.

Participants noted that the major grievance workers had raised from 2010 to 2020 were centred around salaries. Workers complained that their salaries were low, and there had not been salary increments during the period under review. Participants also complained that their salaries were paid late, particularly from 2015 to 2020 because this period was characterised by deteriorating economic environment. Workers singled out salaries as the most contentious issue between management and workers from 2010 to 2020. Respondents clarified that the introduction of the USD in 2009 had provided some stability, although workers desired a regular increment to make their salaries 'more competitive'. The decline in the real value of salaries coincided with the deteriorating economic environment which prevailed in the country. Managers noted that they had not been spared from the grievances affecting other lower-level workers. They pointed out that their salaries had also been affected by the economic changes that occurred in the country.

Some managers noted that at the time of the PTC, managers were well supported and benefited from being part of a management team. Under ZimPost management, this had changed. John stated that working conditions for managers worsened between 2010 and 2015. He noted that, from 2010 to 2015, most workers were stripped of many benefits they used to enjoy:

> Workers noted that salary grievances and disputes were not resolved, and this had remained an ongoing dispute between workers and management. They noted that ZimPost still owes them salaries dating back to 2014, and with changes in the economy caused by hyperinflation, the salaries dispute was not going to be resolved amicably.

Some participants noted that, during the period from 2016 to 2020, there was a slight improvement in how workers' grievances were handled. Some workers also noted that the resolution of grievances depended on the particular manager the workers reported to. Some managers were noted to be more receptive to workers' grievances and would try to resolve

the grievances, whereas other managers were nonchalant about resolving them. As Takudzwa stated: 'Our manager is different and addresses issues. He has frequent meetings with staff. The manager who was there in 2008 did not address issues' (26/05/20). Based on these sentiments from workers, there was no uniformity in how managers resolved grievances as some managers were seen to offer more assistance than others.

7.4.4. Staff Rationalisation

Post-Fordism is characterised by a decline of large-scale bureaucratic organisations to lean organisational models. Staff rationalisation is one of the approaches used by organisations to reduce staff. Managers and non-managerial members of the organisation recalled that, in 2015, there was a significant shift in employee relations after the Supreme Court handed down a judgement that enabled employment contracts to be terminated by either party after giving notice. This judgement is popularly known as the ZUVA judgement. Many parastatals in Zimbabwe, including ZimPost, took advantage of this judgement to carry out staff rationalisation exercises. There were mixed views about the staff rationalisation exercise. Some participants narrated that over the period 2015-2016, Executive Manager Grace noted that ZimPost embarked on a staff rationalisation exercise. Some participants (both managerial and non-managerial members) described it as unexpected, painful and unfair. Eighteen participants perceived this exercise as a negative development and ten participants, managers in particular, had positive perceptions about it. Mail Clerk, Troski, recalled that, in his region, workers were called to assemble at the circulation branch. The workers, who had been selected for 'rationalisation' (i.e., retrenchment), were individually called to an office where they were issued letters of termination.

> Workers affected by the staff rationalisation were not informed about it, neither were they prepared. There was a team of managers that came from the head office. We were told to assemble at the circulation branch. The managers would simply call names of people to one of the offices where a person would be advised that their contract had been terminated (Troski, 22/05/20).

Participants identified two main categories that were used in the staff rationalisation exercise. First, long-serving workers due for retirement and, second, workers with a poor work record or disciplinary issues.

> The executive took advantage of this judgement to terminate workers' employment contracts without packages; even for workers who had been part of the organisation

for a long time. The criteria which were used was first of all the age of the worker. Workers that were about to retire were affected by the staff rationalisation. The other strategy that was used was to repackage the jobs to make them appear like they had changed. Workers were then asked to apply for these repackaged jobs. Interviews were conducted, and those whom were targeted, failed the interviews and lost their jobs (John, 20/05/20).

Some participants indicated that there was nothing in particular that changed about the jobs that were advertised, but it was just a strategy that was used to get rid of workers and reduce the staff complement without paying workers proper retrenchment packages.

Long-serving workers were just dumped without preparation. They were only given letters and were not prepared mentally for the change. It was a bombshell for workers (Wayne, 09/11/20).

Another aspect that frustrated employees was the manner in which the staff rationalisation was conducted. They indicated that it was 'cold and calculative'. Most managers and workers concurred that workers were not informed or prepared for the impending change. It is important to note that general labour practices require the HR practitioners to prepare workers for retrenchment.

However, in this case, Executive Manager Grace confirmed that workers were not prepared and this was a process that was hastily done to take advantage of the window of opportunity that had arisen and offload excess staff. She noted that in 2015, ZimPost retrenched close to 200 employees. Retrenchment was conducted after the ZUVA judgement, and many organisations perceived it as an opportunity to cut back on 'excess' staff and reduce organisational costs.

If I look at the 2015 one [staff rationalisation] following the ZUVA judgement, there was no engagement with workers. Communication just went to their representatives advising them that this is what the organisation is going to do to reduce the cost the company was experiencing. So, really there was no engagement (Grace, 24/02/21).

Participants also felt that the HR department could have done more to prepare workers for 'staff rationalisation'. They indicated that management was solely focused on reducing the number of workers and overlooked the consultation and mitigation process. One participant noted that staff rationalisation could have been implemented in a more strategic manner.

Another negative outcome of the staff rationalisation noted by participants was the reduction in the number of post offices in profitable geographical locations:

> When rationalisation was done, it reduced the number of post offices, and this affected revenue. Unfortunately, post offices in areas that do not make profits were not affected due to the social services obligation. This affects the overall performance of ZimPost (Sarah, 21/05/20).

In addition, the staff rationalisation exercise was noted to have negatively affected the quality-of-service standards. Participants reported that management thought that they were cutting back on costs, yet the strategy had resulted in a failure to comply with quality-of-service standards. From 2010 to 2020, ZimPost struggled to meet the quality-of-service standards for both mail delivery and retail business. Mail was taking much longer to be delivered – for example, five to seven days instead of two days for urban-to-urban mail. Universal Postal Union standards stipulate that 80% of international mail is required to be delivered within five days after the mail was posted. Participants reported that ZimPost had failed to comply with the standards because there was drastic reduction of staff at post offices; for example, a post office which has ten workers was left with only three workers. The post office would be downgraded to a lower grade. This affected the organisation's capacity to meet standards. Concerning retail standards, Tendai explained:

> Customers do not want to wait for long at the counters. The standard is three minutes per customer. With limited capacity a customer may wait for 30 minutes to be served. This chases away customers (Tendai, 03/06/20).

Some managers explained that staff rationalisation was a necessary process as there was excess staff within the organisation. Tsamba, a senior manager, noted that staff rationalisation was an uncomfortable process, but it had to be done. In 2015, ZimPost reduced its staff complement from around 2,000 to 750. The change was argued by management to be necessary because the staff complement was not in line with the performance of the organisation. The idea was to ensure that young staff members have an opportunity to change the prospects of the organisation through fresh and innovative ideas.

A positive view of staff rationalisation was provided by a senior officer:

> Staff rationalisation was in order. This was good for ZimPost. We were now streamlining operations and also making sure we only have staff that will be

contributing to the success of the organisation. Excess staff is a serious cost to the organisation (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

Overall, participants had mixed views about staff rationalisation, particularly the manner in which it was conducted and the failure by the HR department to prepare workers for the imminent changes. Most participants indicated that the exercise was a negative development, and it did not improve workers' salaries. They indicated that management was not sincere about cutting back staff. After the rationalisation, workers were hired to join subsidiary companies.

Table 7. ZimPost Staff Compliment 2010-2020

	Total number of staff	Number of full-time staff	Number of part-time staff	Number of posts	Percentage of delivery staff
2010	1210	704	506	1197	41.00
2011	1166	671	495	ND	45.00
2012	1136	639	497	1194	29.67
2013	1182	687	495	1182	41.37
2014	1071	637	434	1071	23.00
2015	787	451	336	1210	28.70
2016	803	753	50	778	25.90
2017	791	439	352	791	29.84
2018	772	430	342	823	29.00
2019	757	408	349	853	37.60
2020	769	522	247	853	28.70

Source: compiled from the https://www.upu.int/en/Universal-Postal-Union/Activities/Research-Publications/Postal-Statistics

Executive Manager, Grace noted that for subsequent staff rationalisation exercises, workers were advised in advance. In 2015, companies rushed to retrench workers and take advantage of the opportunity created by the judgement. The rationalisation affected all categories of workers including general managers, technical workers, skilled and unskilled employees. The objective of the rationalisation was to create a 'lean' organisational structure designed to meet the goals of the organisation. This is a feature of post-Fordism, meant to create organisations that are flexible and able to respond to market changes.

Over the period 2010 to 2020, the structure of the HR department changed as it was affected by the rationalisation process and some gaps were not filled resulting in structural changes in the department. Prior to 2010, the department comprised of a Director HR, and there were two managers that reported to the director, namely the Industrial Relations and Employment

Benefits Manager and a Resourcing Manager. Below the Resourcing Manager there was a Senior Management Salaries Officer as well as a Salaries Administrator who was responsible for overseeing the junior payroll (non-managerial payroll). On the resourcing side, there were two resourcing officers and one performance management officer. From an HR perspective, the structure was beneficial to the organisation for monitoring performance and analysing performance gaps. The structure also catered for the labour-intensive nature of the organisation since there was a need to ensure that the organisation was adequately staffed. This was the responsibility of the two performance management officers, who addressed issues of recruitment and management of the establishment.

The current structure of the department comprises the Head of HR, with two managers, which is Talent and Development Manager and Manager Industrial Relations and Employee Benefits. Under industrial relations, there was the Welfare Officer and Occupational Health and Safety Officers. There was also the Industrial Relations Officer. Under Talent Manager there was the Resourcing Officer, the Administrator, and the Training Officer. The Department also reintroduced the Performance Management Officer, who reports directly to the Head of HR. The recruitment of a Talent and Development Manager was necessitated by the changes taking place in HR practice whereby HR managers were going beyond recruitment to identify and develop talent in employees and making sure the organisation is adequately staffed by trained workers able to achieve the goals of the organisation.

The changes noted in the structure of the HR department indicate a shift in HR practice to a post-Fordist practices which are not centred on just recruitment of workers but also on identifying an employee that is highly skilled- and has the capacity to develop, hence the role of the Talent Manager.

7.4.5. Casualisation of Labour

A key aspect of post-Fordist workplaces is the divide between a (shrinking) 'core' of permanent employees and a (growing) 'periphery' of precarious workers, who were mostly appointed on non-standard contracts. An additional dividing factor that was noted by some participants was the relationship between contract and permanent employees. In the period under review, mainly (2010-2015) ZimPost hired a substantial number of contract workers, especially in lower grades. Managers noted that contract workers were recruited by ZimPost to fill in the staff compliment gaps temporarily when the volumes of work would be high. Contract workers were noted by managers to be a more 'affordable' source of labour as they

were hired on demand. A human resource officer, Faith noted that contract workers were treated differently, especially by management. They would be threatened with termination of contracts. The differentiation between contract and permanent employees created a lack of unity amongst workers. Management was also noted to be 'successful' in using different strategies to separate workers.

> Management has found a way of infiltrating workers using the divide-and-rule tactic. They target the most vocal workers. Such workers are often transferred to a post office deep in the rural areas to frustrate the individual. At times, the individual is promoted because they will be noticing that the person is influential (Linda, 12/08/20).

The negative treatment of casual workers highlighted by Linda and Faith could be indicative of the precarious nature of work under post-Fordism. Mail clerk, Brian noted that he joined the organisation in 2008 when he was 22 years old as a casual worker. He was only made a permanent employee in 2020 after serving 12 years in the same position. Brian stated:

> I have been a casual worker since I joined ZimPost. I do not know why it took so long for me to be confirmed as a permanent worker. I have also maintained the same job since I joined. I am still a mail clerk (Brian, 26.05/20).

7.4.6. Reduced Training of Workers

Post-Fordism is supposed to require more training as workers are expected to be 'functionally flexible' (require to do many different tasks). Moreover, the pursuit of 'numerical flexibility' (adjusting the workforce size to changes in customer demand) led to an increase in non-standard employees, who are usually excluded from internal training programmes. There was a significant decline in training for ZimPost workers in the decade under review. It was noted that, in the past, there was a pool of trainers who would only be engaged when there was a need for training. There was a mandatory module called the Postmaster-Generals course, which was taught to all employees who joined the organisation before they commenced work.

However, over the period 2010 to 2020, there was a shift in the approach to training whereby employees would be trained after they had joined the organisation and started working. This change was attributed to high staff turnover. Another challenge reported was that, because of limited staff, it was difficult to remove a worker from their post to attend training. There would be no one to attend to customers at the post offices. Therefore, training was being

conducted in a phased approach to ensure that there would be employees available to attend to customers.

Executive manager, Grace noted that whilst the training had declined, ZimPost provided various training modules using the classroom method. This involved workers attending lessons offered at the training school for different modules. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, workers were being trained online. Assessment tests were also being conducted online and follow-ups were made with training officers and controllers.

Lack of training was noted to have particularly affected counter clerks (also known as tellers) who were described as the face of the post office.

> A counter clerk comes from home to start work without any training. The clerk is almost empty in terms of product knowledge and caring for the customer. The clerk is even taught by customers (Ndebele, 08/06/20).

Postal managers indicated that their work involved staffing counters in the post offices. The work of a counter clerk entails selling and promoting postal products and services, handling cash transactions accurately, maintaining correct records, and having good interpersonal skills with customers.

Counter clerks are required to have significant knowledge of products and services sold in the post office, particularly agency services. Postal managers noted that, in the past, the human resources department placed considerable emphasis on training counter clerks on the different products sold in the post office, particularly during PTC days. Counter clerks were subjected to intense training prior to starting work. However, in the period under focus, this had changed.

7.4.7. Outsourcing of Human Resources and Information Technology functions

Outsourcing is a characteristic of post-Fordism where organisations engage another company to provide a service that can be performed in-house, as a way of creating flexibility where non-core functions can be performed elsewhere. The HR department outsourced training programmes for board members on corporate governance, enterprise and risk management. These training programmes were outsourced because the department did not have expertise to provide the service in-house. Grace noted that outsourcing of work was hampered by lack of funds to engage external companies. This explained the limited outsourcing that the department was able to conduct.

In the period under focus, ZimPost outsourced some of its IT functions. Jeffreys reported that the development of the front-end system was performed by an external company. The service was procured through a tender. Jeffreys explained that outsourcing was utilised as an option where the ZimPost did not have the expertise in-house or it would be cheaper to engage an external service provider. Without a good staff-retention capacity, it was deemed necessary to outsource software-based systems in case the programmers leave the organisation before the process is completed. Therefore, in-house software development was perceived as a challenge.

7.4.8. Staff Turnover

Post-Fordism is based on high wages for polyvalent skilled workers; therefore, it is not surprising that ZimPost was unable to retain workers with such skills. Two executive managers noted that ZimPost experienced high staff turnover in the period under review. This was attributed to poor remuneration, which resulted in workers looking for employment elsewhere. Executive manager, Grace noted that ZimPost had skills gaps that were yet to be filled mainly in the area of IT. Skills gaps were identified for database management and IT security. In the period under analysis, the IT department experienced high staff turnover due to poor remuneration. IT workers were noted to spend an average of two to three years with the organisation before finding work elsewhere. About the time IT workers had developed from the learning curve to the maturing stage they would be leaving the organisation for better paying jobs elsewhere. In essence, the department was perceived as training ground for graduates coming out of university.

However, Grace pointed out that a substantial number of ZimPost employees were more than highly qualified for the positions they occupy in the organisation. This could be suggestive of an economy with a high number of qualified workers but limited employment opportunities. It is also important to note the role of a poor performing economy in contributing to high staff turnover in organisations. These attributes point to unique factors shaping the evolution of post-Fordism at ZimPost and in Zimbabwe.

7.5. ROLE OF HUMAN RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS IN ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

Human resources practitioners have the role of being change agents in organisations. The HR practices adopted by ZimPost are in sync with contemporary human resources trends and practices mentioned in section 4.55 of the thesis. The HR department was expected to play an

important role in ensuring that it addresses the business concerns of the organisation, in particular improvement in productivity. In the past, the focus was only on ensuring that salaries were paid, employees' records were in place and workers had protective clothing. The department was expected to play a greater role in contributing to improved financial performance of the organisation through hiring the most productive workers, negotiating salaries and assessing the return on investment (if the organisation invests in human capacity development). In addition, two policies were formulated in the period under focus. There were Performance Management Policy introduced in 2018 and the Succession Planning Policy of 2019. Other existing policies mainly focus on employee welfare.

7.6. LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIES

Fordism depended on a virtuous circle of growth that matched increases in production with enhanced social reproduction (i.e., increased output matched by higher salaries – to purchase the increased output). The neoliberal dimensions of post-Fordism weakened or severed the Fordist links between economic production and social reproduction. As a result, increased productivity now co-exists with increasing inequalities and deteriorating conditions for those at the lower end of the labour market and the unemployed.

The declined output affected all ZimPost workers interviewed. The participants agreed that the period 2010 to 2020 was particularly difficult and they had to look for other methods of coping with the tough economic environment. A combination of factors was noted to have contributed to the poor performance of postal business and these economic hardships had an adverse effect on postal workers. Participants noted that, as more companies closed, many post boxes were not being rented, yet these were a major source of revenue in the past.

In addition, ZimPost did not receive any capital injection from the government during the period under analysis resulting in the organisation's inability to capacitate its transport fleet. A manager reported that some mail carriers were using bicycles that were ten years old. Participants also noted that ZimPost did not adequately prepare for some of the changes that were taking place and missed business opportunities such as money transfer services for the millions of Zimbabweans who had migrated and were sending money back home. All these factors were attributed to the demise of the postal business and the economic challenges experienced by postal workers.

The postal workers interviewed noted that they had formulated livelihood diversification strategies where s wage labourer also engages in informal activities for survival. The most

common strategy highlighted by participants was distribution, commonly referred to as 'buying and selling'. Participants noted that most postal workers were involved in the distribution of different products such as clothing, blankets, kitchenware, groceries, cosmetics, car spares, stationary, and school uniforms. These products were mainly obtained from South Africa, Botswana, Dubai, China or locally for resale. During the interviews, one participant advertised the perfumes she was selling to me.

Another common coping strategy identified was borrowing loans from banks to cover expenses such as school fees and medical bills. Participants highlighted that many banks were keen to offer civil servants loans because they could easily be deducted from their salaries for repayment. A person could borrow a loan that is worth four or five times their salary then pays back over a period of time before borrowing again for pressing needs.

> We are surviving through borrowing loans from the bank, a couple of months down the line we borrow again to pay bills and survive (Joshua, 21/05/20).

Other participants indicated that they were also selling fresh farm produce. They noted that they depend heavily on horticulture activities and make use of land in their rural communities or backyards. Selling vegetables was perceived as a quick way to remain afloat as vegetables were paid in cash and this would subsidise the worker's transport costs and other expenses.

Some postal workers noted that the economic hardships had forced them to be innovative in finding other means of survival. Five participants admitted that the lack of meaningful remuneration had pushed them into illegal forex trading. This coping mechanism was perceived to be a common means of survival. These workers noted that they buy and sell foreign currency on the black market. The profits were used to pay rentals and other expenses such as school fees and food. The participants noted that their landlords required rentals in foreign currency yet their salaries were paid in local currency which was continuously devalued by hyperinflation.

> Workers have been forced to think outside the box. A worker has to be enterprising and develop several revenue streams. There is a lot of buying and selling! A postal worker cannot rely on the salary because sometimes it does not come (Wayne, 09/11/20).

Older postal workers who had managed to be homeowners indicated that they had been forced over the years to rent out some rooms in their homes to obtain extra income. Other

participants stated that they had started small projects such as poultry and fish farming. One participant noted that she uses the internet at work to engage in online trading. She also buys clothes online and sells them to customers in town as a means to make extra income.

Some participants noted that workers were not fully committed to their work. Some workers show up for work each day but spend the day being preoccupied with their own personal business using organisational resources such as vehicles to ferry the products that they were selling. An example was given of one postal worker who was fired for selling the insurance book to non-ZimPost customers and collecting the money.

7.7. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Executive Manager, Grace reported that technology had transformed the way work was performed in the HR department over the period 2010 to 2020. Whilst a HRM system was in place, there were some aspects that were not automated (for example, RBM was still being done manually). Grace noted that there was also no software for HR data matrix. HR data matrix is software that aids organisations in keeping track of their human resources and assessing if HR initiatives are being effective. Salary and establishment administration was automated. Technology was noted to have changed the way work is performed in the post office. In the past, postal clerks would stay after working hours to balance cash books. However, the new front-end system was noted to be a matter of running the system, and transactions of the day would be clearly accounted for.

Uneven automation of work discussed in the literature review was also experienced by some participants such as Grace. She highlighted that flexible work was not possible for all workers, as there were some aspects of work that required human interaction or presence.

> When you want to process a request where someone has submitted a hard copy. For that you have to be in the office. Some other authorisations, which have been automated, can be done online. In our case, requests for staff recruitment and approving acting appointment are still being done manually (Grace,24/02/21).

7.8. CHALLENGES IN MANAGING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE
(i) Resistance to technological change
One of the challenges experienced in managing organisational change was resistance to technological change particularly by older an older generation of workers. Grace gave a specific example where a worker resisted use of new technology:

One post office was given a computer and it was connected. The controller locked the computer in the storeroom fearing that the younger workers would damage it. We also found out that, in terms of age, the controller might be older and would not want to be seen not to understand, [and], as a result, would shy away and not expose the younger ones to the issue of using new technologies (Grace, 24/02/21).

The human resources department realised that resistance to technological changes was an area that required HR practitioners to assist workers through equipping workers with the knowledge and skills required to adapt to new technology.

(ii) National economic policies hindrance to organisational change

The economic hardships experienced in Zimbabwe over the period 2010 to 2020 presented significant challenges for HR practitioners. Grace noted that the period under analysis had been extremely difficult for HR managers, as they had to deal with limited resources that did not meet worker's basic survival and expectations.

People look up to you as the employer and they expect the human resources department to solve or resolve all their problems. But not being in the production line where you produce, you are also in the receiving end where you have to be given funding, that "this is what is in the coffers, you can go ahead and pay". But without that you feel stressed because you are not able to meet the employee requirements where they have to be paid on time or be provided with PPE [personal protective equipment] on time or motivate them (Grace, 24/02/21).

Grace noted that HR practitioners found themselves in a precarious position where they had to represent the employer knowing that the organisation was not performing well and at the same time motivate employees with no resources. Grace stated that salaries were not paid on time over the period 2016 to 2020 with the exception of the years 2017 and 2019. In 2020, salaries were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Grace, these challenges could be addressed if ZimPost received a capital injection from the shareholder. She also noted that there is need for recapitalisation.

ZimPost is expected to service areas which are not profitable to the organisation because of the universal service obligation. However, the regulator – i.e., POTRAZ – has not provided any funding towards meeting the universal service obligation. Grace recommended that the government should compensate ZimPost for providing universal access in areas that are not profitable. This would enable the organisation to focus on areas that actually contribute to

sustaining the operations of the postal operator. This is a reactionary position that entails leaving the poorest communities to their own devices. While it is clearly in line with the prescripts of neoliberalism, it should be the position of a public service organisation committed to universalism. An obvious option is that poorly performing offices should be subsidised by better performing ones. In terms of operations and marketing, the key informant recommended that there was need for change because ZimPost has to wait five to six months for the tariffs to be reviewed by the regulator and in the meantime ZimPost will be incurring debt.

7.9. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

Post-Fordism is based on a flexible production system and provision of services that are in demand not supply driven like Fordism. in the period under focus, ZimPost established smaller flexible units that offer specialised services. The discussion below explores the flexile standalone companies that were established by ZimPost and how economic challenges influenced ZimPost to shift from flexible specialisation to vertical integration in the change process.

7.9.1. Flexibility And Innovation at ZimPost
(i) Post Properties
In 2016, a standalone real estate company wholly owned by ZimPost was formed to manage a significant real estate portfolio of properties owned by the postal operator throughout the country. Participants expressed that ZimPost had a number of properties dotted around the country and there was excess space not being utilised. A subsidiary company was created to manage the properties. Post Properties was issued a license to operate by the Estate Agents Council of Zimbabwe. There were divergent views between senior management and workers concerning Post Properties and the perceived benefits to ZimPost.

Two senior managers explained that Post Properties was formed to unlock value from the real estate owned by ZimPost and offer specialist services. As one senior manager stated:

> The idea for Post Properties came about because ZimPost has a lot of properties. In terms of physical footprint, we are one of the biggest. The rationale was that, if the company offers specialist services, the company can compete better (Mambure, 18/06/20).

It was noted that ZimPost had excess space that was not being utilised to full capacity. Participants recalled that initially there was an Estate Department. Over time it was realised

that to increase the effectiveness of the department and offer more professional services, there was a need to register a company with the Estate Agents Council of Zimbabwe. The idea was to monetise excess space. This would also create revenue for the maintenance of ZimPost properties.

Whilst senior managers were clear on why Post Properties was formed, other categories of workers were unclear about why the standalone company was established. Participants in non-managerial positions angrily stated that the formation of Post Properties was irrational and they did not understand why a separate company had to be created. They highlighted that, in the past, ZimPost benefited from the rentals collected from properties. This had changed as the revenue no longer benefited ZimPost employees. Instead, ZimPost was required to pay Post Properties rentals for the post offices they occupied. Workers had expressed their dismay to management about this development and demanded that management reverse the arrangement. According to Shalome,

> This has always been an outcry from workers that Post Properties just inherited properties from ZimPost, which they never paid a cent for. They are the ones benefiting. ZimPost is in arrears. They even owe workers a lot of money. Yet, they are paying rentals to Post Properties, which is a baby that came out of us (Shalome, 03/06/20).

Another factor that frustrated participants was the hiring of external workers to join Post Properties. They noted that they could not understand why, on one hand, ZimPost management cut staff through the rationalisation exercise and then, on the other hand, hired new workers to join Post Properties. Furthermore, participants highlighted that there were clear differences in how ZimPost and Post Properties employees were treated. Post Properties employees' salaries were paid on time, whilst ZimPost salaries were lower and not paid on time.

Participants were disgruntled that the revenue from properties owned by ZimPost was only benefiting a few workers. They also felt that they had done all the groundwork for the establishment of Post Properties, such as looking for tenants and processing of leases. However, they did not reap any benefits such as an improvement in their salaries.

> Workers did not benefit the same. Workers who joined Post Properties really benefited because real estate business is doing well, but mail business is going down. It's really unfair that a company just comes from nowhere and is said to own

properties. ZimPost workers, who have contributed to the ownership of those properties, do not have anything to show for it (Tonderai, 09/11/20).

Another factor that frustrated participants was the formation of a board to manage Post Properties. They noted that it appeared the board was created to benefit the managing director as he was a member of the board. They explained that board members were paid board members' fees each time they held meetings. This was noted to be an opportunity to benefit from scarce company resources. Participants also noted that Post Properties was also a strategy that was used by management to create employment opportunities for relatives, who lost their jobs due to staff rationalisation.

> Management had an agenda because soon after the workers were laid off, new workers were recruited for the new company Post Properties. They employed outsiders, yet they had said the staff rationalisation was necessary. Nepotism is the biggest challenge. Experienced workers were laid off and inexperienced workers were recruited (Sarah, 21/05/20).

Another source of contention noted by participants was that employees were not consulted about the establishment of Post Properties and Courier Connect. They stated that they were excluded from the decision-making process. Whilst there is no legal basis for this demand, it appeared workers expected to be consulted and that process did not take place. Participants expressed that if management had consulted them, they would have rejected the proposal because it was not in the best interest of ZimPost employees. They highlighted that they had made it clear to management that they wanted all standalone companies to be merged with ZimPost because the subsidiary companies were more of an expense to the organisation.

It is important to note that the study could not establish evidence that standalone companies were an expense to the organisation. On the contrary, they provided the organisation an opportunity to compete with players on the market that provided similar services. To contextualise these demands made by workers, it is important to understand the economic environment in which these changes were experienced. The changes took place at a time when ZimPost employees were experiencing poor remuneration packages, salary freeze, and delayed disbursement of salaries. ZimPost workers were of the perception that their counterparts at subsidiary companies were in a better financial position than them. To support my view, the participants did not indicate that when Courier Connect was established, they were opposed to the idea. From the interviews, these negative perceptions of change initiative

surfaced later, when the economic situation had changed for workers. These negative views were not raised during the dollarisation period.

Workers indicated that they had demanded that the mergers be expedited hoping that the revenue from Post Properties and Courier Connect would benefit ZimPost employees since their salaries were not being paid on time and were low. These demands were made through the workers' representatives committees and also expressed in other work-related meetings with management. Management was noted to have agreed to the mergers; however, participants were frustrated by the time it was taking for the mergers to be made. Some participants were of the view that management was intentionally delaying the process so that they could continue to benefit from the arrangement.

> We have been waiting for Post Properties and Courier Connect to be merged for a long time. we were told that the process will be complete by the beginning of the year [January 2020] bit we are still waiting (Chengetai, 18/06/20).

(ii) Courier Connect
Participants recalled that, in 2005, ZimPost launched a standalone courier company, and this business model was focused on the provision of specialised services through subsidiary companies. Some participants noted that ZimPost attempted to adopt a business model that was similar to the arrangement between the international courier company, DHL and Deutsche Post. They noted that DHL is a private courier company owned by Deutsche Post. ZimPost management was of the view that a similar model could enable Courier Connect to be strategically positioned to offer expedited mail services that compete with international brands such as DHL and FedEx. The managers interviewed indicated that ZimPost had a large physical network that could compliment the subsidiary company. Whilst ZimPost management perceived the creation of Courier Connect as a strategic and necessary change, workers had different perceptions.

Participants in non-managerial positions noted that the creation of Courier Connect as a standalone company was unnecessary. It was seen as a suspicious move that was meant to divide workers.

> ZimPost introduced from within another divide-and-rule strategy through the creation of Courier Connect. Workers remain divided and cannot unite for a common cause as they have different management systems and boards. At the time ZimPost workers were struggling and not being paid on time, workers at Courier Connect were

enjoying better salaries and they were being paid on time. Yet, we are said to be one company (Tsamba, 04/06/20).

Other participants were of the view that Courier Connect was created to benefit those close to management as their salaries are better than ZimPost salaries. They noted that there was no need for a separate company because Courier Connect uses ZimPost infrastructure for its services. Clearly, there was a disconnect between workers and managers concerning aspects of organisational change. The ideas and comments above reveal the antagonistic and low-trust relations between management and workers, which are hallmarks of Fordist employee relations.

In 2020, the process of merging ZimPost with Courier Connect had commenced. However, when the interviews were conducted, the merger was not yet complete. Some participants were anxious about the merging of the three companies because they were unsure of the impact it would have on the staff complement. Participants expressed fear that some workers were likely to lose their jobs, as it was not possible for all the workers to be allocated positions within ZimPost. A senior manager, John highlighted the following:

> More staff rationalisation is likely to take place because of the merging of the three companies. Some workers are likely to lose their jobs as it is not possible for all workers to be absorbed into the company. Job titles are also likely to change. It is not yet clear. It is also possible that all workers may be absorbed as gaps may be there (John, 20/05/20).

Employees were hopeful that the merging of ZimPost with Courier Connect would address the financial gaps in the organisation and ultimately improve their salaries. In 2020, courier services were modified through the introduction of logistics services. The managers interviewed explained that the introduction of logistics services was necessitated by the need to diversify services and offer customised services to clients. They explained that ZimPost was already in the logistics business and was not offering delivery of other goods apart from letters and parcels. Provision of such services was expected to boost revenue and utilise the systems and resources already in place. Diversification of services was observed to be necessary in light of the declining mail volumes.

> Since our mail volumes have declined, there is need for us to diversify our services and offer products that are attractive for the market. This is why we have a whole

range of agency services so that we have multiple revenue streams. Other counties have adopted the same strategy (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Some managers highlighted that ZimPost could not rely on one service but had to adopt a business model that offers a multiplicity of services within the delivery business.

Executive manager, Grace clarified that whilst workers expected to benefit from the revenue generated by standalone companies, such as Post Properties, these companies were not obliged to support ZimPost in terms of revenue because these were independent entities with their own boards and management.

> Management of the funding is done by the particular authorities within each and every single entity. I know that employees say we would want the money to come to ZimPost and assist in the payment of salaries. They are correct, [but] there are ways which companies are run, and you just don't dip your hand in other companies' coffers without following the proper procedures. There are situations where funding has come from Post Properties and funding has come from Courier Connect after following proper procedures (Grace, 24/02/21).

In 2020, the staff establishment comprised of 769 employees. Of these, 29.5 percent were female (227 female employees and 542 male employees).

Dynamics of change in human resources indicated elements of both Fordism and post Fordism. these changes show how both organising principles are fully developed at ZimPost. The national economy and politics played a critical role in shaping these developments seen by the 'pauperisation' of workers in the period under focus. The following section examines the dynamics of change in ICT at ZimPost.

7.10. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AT WORK

ICTs are regarded as key drivers of the transition from Fordism to post-Fordist. The advent of micro-electronics-based ICTs contributed to the introduction of flexible tools to use in the production process. The use of microprocessors in the workplace enabled countries such as Japan to develop lean production models whilst at the same time increasing the volume of production. ICTs have contributed to the decline of mail volumes in a process known as e-substitution. This section presents responses from ZimPost on the dynamics of change in ICT. Automation of post offices, and the introduction of various IT applications contributed to changes that took place at ZimPost. This section will categorise changes that took place

under the subheadings, Taylorism, Fordism and Fordism to make sense of the dynamics of change in ICT at ZimPost.

7.11. FORDISM AND THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN ICT AT ZIMPOST

(i) Automation of Production

A Fordist regime of accumulation is associated with increased automation of production systems. The automation of post offices was noted by Executive Manager, Jeffreys to be an on-going process with post offices in urban areas automated whilst those in rural areas still lagging behind. From 2010 to 2015, the uptake of ICTs was not as advanced as it was from 2016 to 2020. The automation of post offices had mainly started in late 2006. By the end of 2020, almost 80% of post offices had been connected to the wide-area network and 30% of post offices had been connected to the front-end system. Automation of post offices was noted to have been necessitated by a number of factors. Executive Manager, Jeffreys explained that the world was going digital and automation served many purposes, as it enabled all post offices to be linked to the head office in real time. Information could be disseminated quickly from one central position.

Secondly, automation of work processes removed the disadvantages of manual ways of doing business and foster more vigorous controls that eliminate fraud. Thirdly, automation of post offices enabled the ZimPost systems to interface with external business partners. Jeffreys noted that ZimPost had lost business in the past because it did not have a system that could be linked to an external partner. He gave an example of the disbursement of pensions, which was performed manually by ZimPost. The National Social Security Agency required ZimPost to have a computerised system that would make disbursements more efficient. Information would easily be relayed about the funds that had been disbursed without going through a cumbersome manual process. Having such a system in place, would improve the post office in terms of service delivery, particularly agency services.

Fourthly, Jeffreys clarified that not automating post offices created the wrong perception that they are archaic. Therefore, ZimPost needed to shift away from a manual system to an automated one. Lastly, automation of post offices would improve business processes by making tasks easier and cut unnecessary costs. Jeffreys noted that ICT developments had opened new revenue streams for ZimPost. ICTs had made a positive impact on the organisation as a significant number of processes had been made easier by the system. ZimPost was also able to compete with other companies because of automation.

Jeffreys reported that ZimPost did not use an automation system to sort mail. Mail was sorted manually. This was attributed to two reasons: firstly, there was no funding to invest in an automated mail sorting system and, secondly, mail volumes had dwindled so significantly that there was little financial rationale to invest in an automated system.

7.12. POST FORDISM AND THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE IN ICT AT ZIMPOST (2010-2020)

7.12.1. Use of Micro-processors in the workplace

The increased use of ICTs in the workplace and adoption of 'flexible' practices is characteristic of post-Fordist regime of accumulation. Jeffreys noted that, prior to 2010, the IT department was focused on infrastructure development, which entailed installation of communication links, purchasing of networking equipment such as switches and routers, and other basic computing hardware.

> ZimPost was coming out of a very manual set-up and they needed to have the backbone of computing infrastructure in place. As the years progressed when the basic infrastructure was kind of taking route, emphasis started changing now to focus more on deploying more advanced computerised systems or business models (Jeffreys, 23/12/20).

Jeffreys noted that, the functions of the IT department changed.

> There is now a new dimension where we are now required to lead again in seeing how we can use technology to come up with innovative ways of improving the top and bottom line for the organisation (Jeffreys, 23/12/20).

In the period under review, there was increased used of ICTs in the workplace. The different applications and systems that were introduced are discussed below. However, implementation of IT applications and systems was hampered by inadequate resources. Jeffreys noted that the IT department was noted to be heavily underfunded. ZimPost was not able to meet the budgetary requirements for the department. In the past 13 years, ZimPost had only managed to meet close to 50 percent of the budgetary requirement three times. At no point was the IT department allocated its full budgetary request. Jeffreys noted that IT budgetary allocations were also affected by how executive management perceived the department. IT was perceived as a 'guzzler' of finances and the executive did not see the connection between investing in ICT and revenue generation. IT developments were perceived as 'IT issues' and not organisational responsibilities.

(i) Front-End System

In the last five years, ZimPost was preoccupied with deploying a front-end system. This is a system that front-end workers use to perform transactions in the post office. The absence of a front-end system was becoming a serious bottleneck for the post office to continue operating without supporting information for front-end processes. This made pricing difficult. The front-end system enabled mail clerks to assist customers with information on the products and services offered in the post office as well as the pricing structure. Through this system, cashiers or mails clerks in the post office have workstations which are computerised. The IT department was working to ensure that each post office was centrally connected through a computerised system to the head office, so that information on daily transactions could be relayed utilising back-end financial systems.

(ii) ZIPFOUND, International Financial System and International Postal System

ZimPost introduced a number of applications to improve business operations. ZimPost introduced an application called ZIPFOUND. This is a facility where ZimPost partnered with the Central Vehicle Registry in the distribution of drivers' licenses across the nation using the postal service's large physical network. Upon obtaining a driver's license, citizens could then check the ZIPFOUND system to see if it had been issued and at which post office it could be collected. This makes it convenient for customers to access their driver's licenses.

ZimPost also made improvements to penetrate the financial sector through use of the Universal Postal Union application called the International Financial Service (IFS). Intensified efforts to implement IFS started in 2013 and, during the period under analysis, IFS enabled ZimPost to provide money transfer services and payment of other postal financial services. In addition, over the period 2010 to 2020, the IT department had continued to implement upgrades for other UPU IT applications such as the International Postal Service (IPS). ZimPost used IPS for mail management, for example, mail dispatch and track and trace.

(iii)Virtual Post Office

In 2020, ZimPost introduced a virtual post office. Jeffreys noted that the virtual post office could be accessed through the ZimPost website. This provided customers with an experience of the products and services offered in the post office. Customers could download the necessary forms or documents in the comfort of their homes, check postal charges for parcels according to weight and ask questions virtually about different products and services before

going to the post offices to finalise a transaction such as sending parcels. Customers could easily access information about specific products and services on the virtual post office.

(iv) National Addressing and Postcode System

ZimPost worked with the regulator, POTRAZ, to develop a national addressing and postal-code system. This was described as a big project that would make it easier for emergency service providers (fire and ambulance) to locate people in distress. The project was also noted to be beneficial to other companies as addressing information was critical for their services. Jeffreys noted that the project was almost complete and was expected to be operational in the near future.

(v) Communication and Information Centres

In collaboration with POTRAZ, ZimPost established 147 Communication Information Centres (CICs), mainly in the rural areas. Only a quarter of the CICs are located in urban areas. The CICs are housed in a post office. This programme was initiated by government to facilitate digital literacy. The project was part of the universal service obligation meant to bridge the digital divide. Members of the community were also provided with basic computer literacy skills at the CICs. Wi-Fi services could be accessed at a much cheaper rate than other service providers because of the universal service obligation.

During data collection, I observed that there was hardly any activity at a CIC in an affluent suburb in Bulawayo. During the four hours that I spent at the CIC, there was not a single customer that came to access its services. I observed that the computers had been locked up in a safe room. After further inquiry, I was provided with conflicting reasons for the lack of business at the CIC. One participant explained that the lack of activity had been caused by the Covid-19 lockdown. The participant noted that customers preferred to use their mobile devices in their homes to avoid being exposed to Covid-19. Another participant noted that the lack of activity had been caused by the prolonged handover process between ZimPost and POTRAZ. POTRAZ was in the process of handing over management of the CICs to ZimPost. CICs were noted to be more popular in rural communities than urban areas.

(vi) E-Commerce

From 2010 to 2020, ZimPost incorporated e-commerce into its business model. ZimPost also appointed an e-Services manager to foster a market share for e-commerce services and demonstrate the organisation's commitment to modernising the post office.

ZimPost has been getting into e-commerce big time. E-commerce is the next best thing in the postal business. We are trying to make sure we are properly positioned. We are targeting to get business for the last mile delivery (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

It was noted that ICTs had opened up new opportunities for the postal sector. They have revived the relevance of the post office to society, as customers can access a variety of modern services such as e-commerce and financial services through post offices. Jeffrey noted that plans were underway for the provision of postal financial services on mobile devices. This would make the services more accessible and meet changing customers' needs.

The postal workers interviewed noted that, during the USD era, there were more customers accessing the post office to collect parcels ordered online. When the multiple currency system was officially replaced with the local currency, many customers were unable to sustain online shopping. To expand e-commerce activities, ZimPost set up a website with large retail stores and publishers where customers could shop online for groceries, books and art. ZimPost would deliver the products to customers in different locations. The Covid-19 pandemic had also stimulated interest in this service because customers were confined to their homes and required groceries to be delivered at their doorsteps. Some participants reported that other postal workers, particularly older staff members, were slow to embrace e-commerce. It was noted that a significant number of post offices were being managed by an older generation of workers, who were perceived to resist technology, which hindered the organisation from fully adapting the available technologies.

7.13. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND LABOUR

ICTs have been argued to be agents of transformation in the workplace, however workers have different experiences about the effects of ICT on their work. This section provides accounts of responses from participants concerning technology and postal work. Technological changes in a public sector organisation are influenced by a number of factors including limited investment in technology, structure of the organisation and nature of the technology,

(i) Manual Work to use of ICT in work processes

Postal workers with the exception of mail carriers and mail clerks reported that the introduction of ICTs, such as computers and mobile phones as well as increased use of the Internet, had changed their work. There was a shift from manual work to increased use of ICT in work processes. However, mail clerks and mail carriers reported that they did not use

ICTs in their work, neither did they have computers to use at work. Mail carrier, Derrick stated:

> I do not use a computer in my wok, I do not even have an email address. Maybe it is because my job is to deliver letters door to door. I wish I could also have a work email like others (Derrick, 26/05/20).

Counter clerks noted that their work had changed due to increased use of ICT. The counter clerks interviewed noted that they were using computer system known as Post Global, which eliminated to a greater extent manual work processes. Prior to the advanced use of ICT, work involved significant paperwork and balancing transactions physically. The postal clerks noted that manual transactions were time consuming, and this frustrated customers, who had to wait for long periods of time.

Officers and managers indicated that their work changed from predominantly manual work to increased use of ICTs in work processes. They noted that in the past, work involved considerable paperwork and a tedious process of communication with the head office. When information, such as updates on sales, was requested, it would involve going through an extensive amount of paperwork in order to write a report. Use of extensive paperwork is characteristic of a Taylorist model.

> When I joined ZimPost, most of the work was done manually. However, this has changed as most of the work is now being done electronically using mobile phones and laptops. We used to have physical meetings; however, this has changed. Meetings are now being held online. Online meetings have become increasingly common due to COVID-19 (Mambure, 18/06/20).

Senior manager, John noted that these changes were necessitated by the need for the organisation to modernise and cope with the changes taking place in the IT sector. Most participants expressed positive experiences with the automation of work processes, highlighting that work had become less cumbersome, particularly for postal managers, counter clerks and accounting clerks who had to submit daily entries for all the transactions performed on a particular day. Increased use of ICTs was also attributed to improved communication and dissemination of information within the organisation.

> It has become much easier to send reports through WhatsApp and email. You can submit information in minutes, if not seconds. Dissemination of information is now

swift. Between 2010 and 2015, the use of ICTs was not as advanced as it is now; not everyone had an email address or WhatsApp (Ntando, 27/05/20).

Faith, a human resources officer noted that ICTs had improved her work as she could quickly prepare training material without making tiresome trips to the library. She noted that she had also improved her training sessions with videos to demonstrate concepts, making training lively and interesting for workers.

Internal auditors and some postal managers reported that there was conflict between the manual and automated systems, which was mainly caused by the incomplete automation process. This had caused auditors to go back and forth between the manual and automated systems, thereby making their work more difficult. An internal auditor, Sarah explained that the use of ICT had not totally eliminated paperwork because some post offices were still offline or not yet automated. Similar experiences were shared by postal managers and stock controllers who reported that, despite advances in technology, they were still required to submit work manually.

> The system is not yet in place that enables managers at head office to access information from post offices instantly. An expensive software [program] from India was purchased. Some IT workers were [also] sent to India for training. There was massive training nationwide, but we never used the software (Gloria, 27/05/20).

One participant stated that she was frustrated that the use of some applications, such as International Financial System, were interrupted by regular power cuts at the Central Sorting Office. This affected all the operations, as counter clerks would not be able to assist customers adequately. Gloria, a postal manager noted that when the system was down, counter clerks would not be able to track and trace mail for their customers.

> Technology is a bother. It depresses you. It's irritating. At least with manual work, I have peace of mind. It's now a month without network. The postal clerk at times uses his own data to hotspot the work computer and carry out transactions for customers (Gloria, 27/05/20).

Network challenges were attributed to frequent power cuts, and participants noted that there was a need for ZimPost to invest in solar voltaic systems to avoid disruptions during power cuts.

(ii) ICT replacing workers

Most participants were of the view that ICTs had not replaced any category of postal workers in the period under review. Instead, postal workers had benefited from training programmes offered by the IT department. This department carried out a number of training programmes to capacitate workers with knowledge on how to use the different IT applications. It was noted that postal workers were eager to be trained and there were few incidents of worker resisting the introduction of new products.

> The resistance sometimes happens when it comes to the actual use of the system as workers sometimes fear that they will lose their jobs. Workers just need to be reassured that their jobs will not be lost (Tonderai, 09/11/20).

Some former PTC workers were of the view that ICT had replaced employees who worked in the Telegrams Office. The participants stated that the telegrams office was staffed by a telegram officer. The office had a telex machine and telephone. The office had number of delivery messengers. The emergence of the Internet had actually closed down the telegrams office and made messengers redundant. Those who were physically able were promoted to work as postmen. Other participants explained that workers who manned the telegrams office were older and due for retirement, so they did not necessarily lose their jobs. All the workers were later absorbed into other departments when the office ceased to function. Therefore, the workers did not lose their jobs, they were reassigned.

Other participants were of the view that ICTs had not replaced jobs but had reduced the number of postal workers.

> People are no longer writing letters as they used to in the past because of ICT. Back in the day, a post office would have 30 to 40 postmen. Now they have been significantly reduced, maybe three per post office. This is because the mail volumes have declined (Tsamba, 22/05/20).

Technology was also noted to have reduced the number of workers in some departments, for example messengers. Most of the communication was now being done through e-mail and this had reduced the number of messengers required in offices.

7.13. Impact of ICT on postal business

All categories of workers noted that ICTs had presented both opportunities and challenges for postal operators. Mail carriers, mail clerks and counter clerks stated that postal workers used

to deliver a substantial number of utility bills on behalf of local councils, clothing retail stores such as Edgars, the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA), and TelOne amongst other companies. With the introduction of mobile phones and the Internet, customers started to receive utility bills in electronic format on their cell phones or computers. This affected ZimPost mail volumes as companies no longer required post offices to deliver bulk bills. This shift had caused a decline in mail volumes and a few postal workers were of the view that it would make some postal workers lose their jobs as there would be limited work available for them to do.

A change in the modes of communication affected postal administrations. The inception of instant communication methods such as emails also contributed to the decline in mail volumes. Participants explained that, from 2010 to 2020, there was a significant decline in mail volumes as customers opted to use emails to send documents instantly as well as social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook to communicate. Postal workers interviewed reported that the younger generation of customers had most likely never written or received letters, yet this was a very popular mode of communication in the past. Around Christmas time, the post office would get extremely busy with postal workers working hard to deliver Christmas cards and parcels in time for Christmas day. The festive season used to generate significant mail volumes. The advent of the Internet and other faster means of communication had contributed to declining business for ZimPost.

7.14. CONCLUSION

The historical accounts from participants showed that changes in HRM were mainly shaped by economic and political factors. Organisational changes experienced by ZimPost employees were staff rationalisation, salary freeze, casualisation of labour, high staff turnover, decreased unionisation of workers, decreased training of staff and unresolved grievances. Human resources practitioners found it difficult to manage change in light of the economic hardships in Zimbabwe. ICT changes were centred on automation of post offices, and increased use of ICTs in work processes. The chapter also clearly categorised the organisational changes that fit under Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism, and the national economic factors that contributed to change.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ZIMPOST: FROM TAYLORISM TO POST-FORDISM?

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this analysis chapter is to reveal the historically-specific and strategic patterns of organisational change at ZimPost in line with the first objective of the thesis, which is to trace the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost over the period 2010 to 2020. Using the processual perspective, this chapter provides a socio-historical analysis of the major developments that were experienced at ZimPost. In addition, the historical developments that took place at ZimPost will be discussed using the broad organising principles: Taylorism, Fordism and its crisis, and post-Fordism as analytical categories.

Whilst the discussion will dwell mainly on the organisational changes that took place over the period under focus, major historical events that took place prior to this period will be analysed as they enable and constrain the change processes that took place in the period under analysis. Using the processual perspective, the thesis demonstrates that organisational changes at ZimPost were not undertaken in a rational, linear approach, rather organisational changes were complex, unpredictable and (somewhat) chaotic. The study illustrates that organisational change research informed by a processual perspective shows that radical and extensive change does not take place over time and should not be treated as an event (Dawson, 2005). In addition, the chapter explores the decisions of managers and workers that formed the combination of coercion, conflict and compromise in the change process. Furthermore, this chapter examines political, ideological and economic forces that played a role in the organisational changes implemented at ZimPost (as outlined in the processual perspective).

8.2. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The processual approach, as conceptualised by Dawson (2003), consists of three main areas which are politics, context and substance of change. These concepts will be used to analyse the socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost. The first part of the discussion will focus on the political and economic context of organisational change at PTC.

Understanding the context in which change is experienced is critical for studies focusing on organisational change. The context in which organisational change occurred at ZimPost was influenced by a combination of factors, mainly economic and political ones. As highlighted

in previous sections, this thesis argues that national economics and politics, shape the way organisations, particularly public enterprises evolve. In addition, national politics and economics qualified the forms that Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism assumed at PTC. Using the processual perspective, this section explores the historical developments at PTC within the context of the political and economic environment prevailing within that time frame.

According to the processual perspective as outlined in Section 2.5.2. context refers to historical events, the present internal and external environment and future expectations. The processual perspective also argues that consideration of the context in which organisational change is experienced is a research area that has been neglected as stated by (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999, cited in Ahmad & Cheng, 2018). The processual perspective places value on a historical approach in the understanding of both the internal and external factors that influence the context of organisational change. Therefore, the history of organisational change at ZimPost in this thesis, was traced back to the 1980s and 1990s. In 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a postal service designed to serve the white settler populace. Postal services were provided by the Posts and Telecommunications Company (PTC) which operated as a government department under the Ministry of Posts. Posts and telecommunication services were combined under one large conglomerate. This is referred to as vertical integration, common in Taylorist and Fordist systems. The economy during that period was relatively stable enabling public enterprises to thrive as they were operating in a relatively stable economic context.

Postal workers who were part of PTC described the nature of postal business as vibrant, characterised by delivery of large volumes of letters, high sales of postage stamps as well as other products accessed in the post office on behalf of government. The popular product in the post office as recalled by participants was stamps because letters were the most common means of communication. Participants also described post offices as being accessed by large numbers of customers, pointing to an economy where citizens could afford to buy mail products. This made the post office an integral aspect of citizens lives as communication services were accessed at post offices. In the 1980s, PTC enjoyed a monopoly of postal, services with the exclusive rights and privileges of mail delivery services (Zwizwai *et al.,* 1995). PTC also enjoyed a monopoly of telegram services, as private companies required the approval of the Minister of Posts to transmit telelgrams. As highlighted by (Trinkner & Grossman, 2006, cited in Finger, & Jaag, 2015) in Section 3.2.2. of the thesis, given the

government monopoly, postal administrations experienced massive growth in mail volumes in several countries and PTC was no exception.

The relatively stable economy, and the monopoly enjoyed by PTC encouraged the mass production and standardisation of mail products and the development of a 'mass production system', which, in turn, encouraged particular forms of production. In an attempt to explain these phases of stability and uncertainty, regulation theorists state that economic stability and transformation can be understood using two concepts, which is a regime of accumulation and mode of accumulation as discussed in section 3.3. of the thesis. The regime of accumulation states that there is need to link economic production to social production. Fordism describes a regime of accumulation characterised by mass production and mass consumption. Factories or offices could produce uniform products at a large scale over and over again through bureaucracies. There was no variety in the products being produced. The regime of accumulation refers to how economic production, which is how surplus is divided between profits and wages.

Fordism worked because workers' salaries were increased drastically from the Taylorist system. If workers are paid decent wages, they are able to buy products. This enables organisations to make profit and invest again. This is the virtuous cycle of growth created by Fordism. As discussed by (Labrousse *et al*., 2018), an analysis of economies shows that accumulation goes through extensive periods of stability then these periods are interrupted by long periods of uncertainty and crisis.

As highlighted by Giddens *et al*., (2018) Fordism also describes a historical period after the second World War characterised by the steady growth of macro-economics, thriving labour unions, permanent employment, collective bargaining agreements, salaries based on productivity, increased automation in production and promotion based on seniority. The relatively stable economy in Zimbabwe and monopoly of postal services encouraged these characteristics of Fordism to be realised at PTC. As shown in chapter 5, former PTC employees recounted a phase at PTC where these elements of Fordism were experienced as discussed in the following sections of the thesis: 5.2.1. mass production of mail products and services; 5.2.5. increased unionisation of workers; 5.2.6.; economic growth and a demand for better salaries; 5.2.7. Stable market share; 5.2.8. job security and high wages.

Participants noted that during the PTC era, workers enjoyed competitive salaries which accorded them a relatively comfortable lifestyle where they could buy goods and services on the market to sustain their livelihoods. Some former PTC workers indicated that they would be paid a monthly salary whilst there was still a balance in their bank accounts. A senior manager, John indicated that his salary and benefits which included a housing allowance and vehicle loan afforded him a decent lifestyle. Non-managerial workers also confirmed that salaries were decent, and they could afford basic commodities including education for their children. Therefore, mass production of mail products, the monopoly enjoyed by the public postal operator, as well as a relatively stable economy contributed to the virtuous cycle of Fordism at PTC in the 1980s and early 1990s. All the 10 former PTC workers indicated that they joined the organisation as permanent employees, and an employee was guaranteed job security. Participants also stated that, when they joined PTC, their contracts were for long-term employment and full-time work. None of the former PTC employees noted the existence of casual or part-time employment in this period. The longest serving member of both PTC and ZimPost interviewed, was General, an administrator for a regional office joined PTC in 1982.

The 1980s and 1990s were also characterised by increased unionisation of postal workers. Participants reported that PTC workers were represented by a powerful and militant trade union called CASWUZ. Former PTC workers recalled that PTC workers would engage in strikes whenever negotiations with management broke down. The relatively stable economy, mass production of mail products and monopoly over mail business enabled PTC workers meant that PTC workers could demand better salaries. Economic growth and a demand for better remuneration is a characteristic of Fordism.

As indicated by Sachikonye (1986 cited in Raftopoulos), soon after independence in the 1980s, there was a substantial number of strikes as workers demanded better remuneration packages, standard working hours and timeous payment of salaries. It is important to note the relationship between trade unions and the state and the role it plays in shaping labour relations in Zimbabwe. The processual perspective also examines the role of politics in organisational change. It is also critical to note that since independence, the relationship between the State and labour unions was of disdain as the government was of the view that trade unions had not supported the liberation struggle effectively. Raftopoulos, (2018)

clarifies that the entangled relationship between trade unions and nationalism created an atmosphere of mistrust between the State and labour unions.

According to the processual perspective, external actors have the power to influence and control the process of change for example, regulatory authority and government ministries, regional and international bodies such as the UPU. The State also influences the process of change seen in the relationship between the State and trade unions in Zimbabwe. Trade unions were somewhat tolerated by the State during the 1980s and early 1990s as the government was keen to shift from the exploitative labour practices that were imposed by the colonial government. To demonstrate this shift, the State, in different policy statements indicated the need for increased workers participation and collective bargaining (Schiphorst, 2002).

The processual perspective also recognises that internal actors have the power to influence change within an organisation. Internal actors in this study include for example, trade union leaders, managers, supervisors, mail clerks and mail carriers. Former PTC workers interviewed indicated that negotiation for salaries involved the trade unions, workers' representative committees and management. Since PTC was a government bureaucracy, salaries had to be approved by the ministry. For the first five years after independence the government played an overriding role in the collective bargaining process, even setting minimum wages despite the agreements made by boards. The dominant role of the state in employee relations played a significant role in shaping how Fordism evolved at PTC.

PTC also enjoyed a stable market share of mail products. Participants indicated that during the 1980s and 1990s, there was limited competition from other players in the postal business. A stocks controller, Joshua, who used to work as a postal manager during the PTC era noted that whenever customers wanted to send letters and parcels, locally or internationally, PTC was the most viable option. A stable market share is characteristic of a Fordist regime of accumulation. The stable market for mail products was not unique to PTC. Developed countries also experienced a stable market for traditional mail products for mail products as stated by the UPU (2019).

Not all characteristics of Fordism were fully developed in the evolution of postal services at PTC. This was mainly seen in the area of mechanisation. One of the key aspects of Fordism is increased automation of production systems. Postal workers interviewed highlighted that

PTC did not invest in the mechanisation or automation of mail. The large volumes of mail were sorted manually. Gloria, a postal manager recalled that mail was sorted manually, and mail clerks had to collect mail in at different post boxes in the city centre and departmental stores with trolleys for physical sorting. The sorting offices operates on a 24-hour basis. The lack of mechanisation or automation of mail services shows that Fordism does not evolve in the exact same manner as it does in developed countries like the USA where the assembly line was an integral aspect of the production process.

However, it is also important to recognise the existence of (non-mechanised) production processes such as the incorporation of time-and motion studies also incorporated in the sorting of mail. Postal manager, Gloria noted that the sorting of mail was conducted in a timeous manner in order to meet quality of service standards. She explained that postal business is dependent on being able to deliver letters in a timeous manner therefore sortation of mail had to be conducted in a systematic manner and within the stipulated time frames.

A telegram service, which made use of a telex machine, was introduced at PTC to facilitate faster communication of notifications to customers such as money orders or death notifications. Participants noted that the telegrams office was very vibrant during the PTC era and postmen were kept busy delivering telegram messages, particularly death and money order notifications, to customers. This suggests that there was partial introduction of technology in some parts of the production process and not in the major areas where it was required such as sorting large volumes of mail. This again points to a Fordist system that was partially implemented.

Another interesting development at PTC more inclined to post-Fordism than Fordism was increased training of postal workers. PTC operated a vibrant training school with a principal, lecturers, administrator and secretary. Before starting employment, workers were subjected to an intensive training and induction programme. The training programme for postal clerks was 18 months and it involved both theoretical and practical activities. Managers were perceived as mentors, who were prepared to impart their knowledge and skills to unskilled postal workers. Participatory managerial practices are characteristic of post-Fordism. This characteristic of post-Fordism in a predominantly Fordist organisation, shows that organisational should not be treated as a series of linear steps, where when one phase is complete another begins. Rather, change is contradictory as argued by the processual perspective.

The economic and political situation in Zimbabwe began to deteriorate in the late 1990s and early 2000. With the rising economic crisis, the fast-track land reform programme and political instability, labour relations in Zimbabwe were strained. Multiple strikes took place across different sectors of the economy, including the postal service. Participants noted that, under PTC management, workers embarked on industrial action on several occasions demanding better salaries. Participants noted that salaries started to deteriorate in the late 1990s and PTC management struggled to honour agreements made during collective bargaining negotiations. Workers would shut down post offices so that customers would not be able to send or receive mail and parcels, thereby contributing to the crisis in the economy. Towards the end of the 1990s, signs of the crisis of Fordist organisation began to emerge at PTC which spilled over into the establishment of ZimPost.

These were symptoms or indicators of a crisis, and as argued by regulation theorists no system of production is always stable or lasts forever. The crisis of Fordist organisation at ZimPost was narrated in detail in the following sections: 6.2.1. declining markets for postal services; 6.2.2. increased competition; 6.3.3. shifting national economic policies, delayed tariffs and lack of government support or compensation for the universal service obligation. As discussed in previous sections, the regime of accumulation refers to how economic production is linked to social production. The Fordist cycle broke down because the mode of regulation that is the society, social relationships, the State, the family and other social intuitions were unable to sustain the regime of accumulation.

In the midst of these national economic and political changes, the government implemented the most radical change in the postal service through the enactment of the Postal and Telecommunications Act [Chapter 12:05] of 2000. This resulted in the unbundling of the posts and telecommunication services thereby establishing Zimbabwe Posts, a private company wholly owned by the government.

8.3. SUBSTANCE OF CHANGE

Using the processual perspective, this section examines the substance of change experienced at ZimPost as outlined in the the processual perspective. Substance of change is the type and scale of change deemed necessary by management. The substance of change presents enabling and constraining possibilities which managers could possibly select or not. One of the group determinants of change is the scale and scope of change. According to Dawson (2003) change initiatives differ in scale and scope. Radical changes are more complex and

may cause discomfort amongst workers because they involve new work practices that workers may not be accustomed to. Radical changes were experienced at PTC and ZimPost including unbundling of PTC, shifting economic policies, the dismissal of a substantial number of workers after a strike.

Former PTC employees perceived the unbundling of PTC as the most radical organisational change that they had experienced during the PTC era. The unbundling made postal workers feel anxious about an unknown future within the organisation. Former PTC employees noted that they were opposed to the unbundling of PTC and deemed it as an unnecessary change. As highlighted by Sveningsson & Sorgade, (2019) large scale changes have the capacity to make workers evaluate what the change means for them.

The participants noted that there was no meaningful involvement of workers in the change initiative. The study established that there was no consensus on whether workers were consulted or meaningfully involved in the change process. Change initiatives tend to focus on the technical aspects of the initiative without also considering the impact of the change initiatives on workers. Whilst workers indicated that they were opposed to the unbundling of PTC stating that it was unnecessary, the unbundling of postal and telecommunication services is not unique to Zimbabwe. Section 3.6.1 of the thesis examines studies on how postal operators are liberalising and commercialising the postal service.

Another radical change experienced at ZimPost was the 2004 strike where ZimPost and TelOne workers engaged in a strike demanding salary increase. This strike had catastrophic effects on workers (as outlined in section 5.2.5. above). It marked a shift in employee relations as 800 workers were fired from their jobs. The strike was deemed illegal by the supreme court. After the firing of a substantial number of workers, participants indicated that workers were hesitant to engage in industrial action, fearing that they would lose their jobs.

Another radical change experienced by a substantial number of organisations in Zimbabwe including ZimPost was shifting economic policies. In 2009, the coalition government introduced the multicurrency regime. This economic policy stabilised the economy enabling with ZimPost engaging in e-commerce business. With the change of government, the multi-currency regime was abandoned. A detailed analysis of economic and political changes that took place in Zimbabwe in the period under focus are discussed in (section 1.1. of the thesis). after the abandonment of the multi-currency system, there were a number of economic policies introduced including the reintroduction of the Zimbabwe dollar in 2019. These

economic policies failed to yield the desired results and the country was plunged in another economic crisis characterised by cash shortages inflation, high cost of living and reduced disposable income for families. Zimbabwe's shifting economic policies made the operational environment challenging for ZimPost. Economic instability and crisis shaped post-Fordism organisation at ZimPost.

The study revealed that ZimPost experienced a significant decline in mail services in the period under review as indicated in mail volume statistics and accounts from participants. A number of factors were attributed to the decline including e-substitution and competition from private. ZimPost experienced increased competition most notably for courier services. The increased competition was not unique to ZimPost. Studies by (Finger et al, 2005) show that postal operators in developed countries started to experience increased competition with the rise of courier operators such as DHL and FedEx.

8.4. COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC PROCESS OF CHANGE

As indicated in (Section 2.5.) of the thesis, the processual perspective argues that organisational changes 'unfold over time in a messy and iterative manner' (Langley et al., 2013, cited in Palmer, Dunford & Buchanan, 2017:39). The process of organisational change at ZimPost was complex and involved repeating the same strategies in an attempt to develop a more suitable and relevant solution. For example, postal operators as discussed in Sections 3.5. and 3.6. of the thesis, have been implementing postal reforms in an attempt to liberalise and commercialise the postal service. Similar attempts were made at PTC which resulted in the formation of smaller business units that could operate as commercial entities.

In addition, ZimPost established two standalone companies as detailed in section 7.9.1. of the thesis. These innovative models were attempts to create leaner business structures that could provide specialised services and compete on the market. However, due to pressure from workers plans were underway to merge the standalone companies with ZimPost. For workers this was a positive development because there is an assumption that standalone companies were generating significant revenue that could aid in the payment of their salaries. This shift was driven more by economic needs than the organising maintaining a business model that was innovative. In a sense, ZimPost changed from post-Fordism organisation and reverted to Fordist organisation. This demonstrates the iterative manner of organisational change and how change is sometimes influenced by a need to address a problem even if it means reversing decisions made in the past.

Whilst elements of post-Fordist organisation were identified as outlined in (Section 6.5.) of the thesis this does not signal the arrival of an approach with lasting solutions to organisational challenges at ZimPost. The characteristics of post-Fordism identified were discussed in the following sections: 6.5.1. innovative products and services, 6.5.3. intensification of work, and polyvalent skills requirements. In light of declining mail volumes, the need to provide customers with innovative products and services, ZimPost diversified its services to move away from solely focusing on letters but also provide agency services on behalf of government and the private sector. Sections 6.5.1 of the thesis provides detailed accounts of characteristics of post-Fordism at ZimPost. As indicated by (Sweet, 1994), the concept of flexible specialisation places emphasis on a new approach to management characterised by innovation, diversity of products and customised services. As discussed in Chapter 3 of the thesis, post-Fordism is a broad organising type that is still unfolding and should not be perceived as having all the solutions in the evolution of the different phases of capitalism. Post-Fordism has negative impact on the worker such as the intensification of work due to restructuring as discussed in the interviews as well as a demand for multi-skilling (polyvariant worker), casualisation of labour and job insecurity.

8.5. ZIMPOST IN 2020: A 'POST-FORDIST' ENTERPRISE?

Whilst ZimPost implemented various reforms aimed at creating a 'flexible' business model that responds to internal and external changes, ZimPost remains a rigid bureaucracy. This study argues that, while ZimPost has undergone meaningful organisational changes, these reforms have not been radical enough to effect the necessary changes to transform ZimPost into a viable commercial entity. Organisational changes implemented transformed ZimPost from a public administration operating as a government entity to a statutory corporation organised as a statutory corporation under public law. These changes, whilst important, have not led to a full-blown commercialisation of ZimPost. ZimPost essentially maintained the existing bureaucracy but made significant attempts to implement reforms in the services provided by the organisation, ranging from traditional mail services to the provision of agency services, real estate business and e-commerce.

As noted above, the government, though POTRAZ, regulates postal tariffs. As such, ZimPost cannot increase tariffs without the approval of POTRAZ. Participants noted that POTRAZ takes a long time to approve tariffs, thereby derailing any commercialisation efforts that were implemented by ZimPost. Postal reforms also mean that postal operators need the liberty to price services in a commercial manner (Crew, Kleindorfer & Campbell, 2008). Government

remains the sole shareholder and there has not been any inclusion of other investors or the private sector in the ownership of ZimPost as a means to recapitalise the organisation. Liberalisation of the postal service may also defeat the purpose of basic social services being accessible, affordable and available to the populace.

Secondly, the reporting structure and organogram at ZimPost remains hierarchical and rigid. The Postmaster-General is required to report to the Minister of ICT, Postal and Courier Services on all aspects of the postal business. Furthermore, the Postmaster-General reports to a board appointed by the Minister. These structures create layers of authority and bureaucratic delays in the decision-making process. According to Guislain (2004), the future of traditional post offices is questionable in many developing countries as rigid and dominant forms of control common in postal bureaucracies are deemed outdated. The government expects ZimPost to thrive and make profit, yet it maintains significant control over the organisation making the required organisational changes challenging, if not impossible. Guislain (2004:5) argues that a 'more dynamic post office requires a management structure with the freedom and incentives to increase efficiency, client orientation and innovation'. The government wholly owns ZimPost, however, in the period under analysis, participants noted that ZimPost did not receive any capital injection from government.

Whilst countries in the European Union (EU), realised the need to change from a rigid postal bureaucracy to some 'flexible' organisational model that allegedly responds faster to changes in the market (see ITA Consulting & WIK Consult, 2009), developing countries such as Zimbabwe continue to maintain rigid bureaucracies. This could be attributed to the fact that postal reforms in developing countries have been more reactionary than well planned and proactive (Guislain & Lee, 2004:43). It could also be attributed to the need to fulfil political goals at the expense of business viability – for example, the government expects ZimPost to provide universal service in areas that are not commercially viable. At the same time, governments are not keen to implement these postal reforms that follow commercial logic at the cost of losing politically-popular services in areas of the population where it is not profitable to provide postal services (Crew, Kleindorfer and Campbell, 2008). The liberalist argument raised by (Crew, Kleindorfer and Campbell, 2008) does not consider that a public service (like post offices and hospitals) is not geared towards profits (although efficiency and cost-effectiveness remain important considerations) but rather aims to serve the needs of the citizens, especially those who cannot afford private services. On the logic of this claim, all schools, hospitals, post offices, etc. that do not and cannot 'make a profit' should be closed.

The challenges of efficiency and cost effectiveness point to the crisis in the broader political economy of Zimbabwe (fiscal constraints, chaotic monetary policies, nepotism, authoritarianism of State).

8.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter in line with the first objective of the thesis traces the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost in the period under focus. This analysis chapter used the processual perspective to trace the evolution of postal services at ZimPost. The study showed that national economic and political factors influenced the process of change at ZimPost. As highlighted by the processual theory, understanding the context in which change is experienced provides a deeper comprehension of change processes. The history of the organisation shaped the developments that were implemented at ZimPost including the unbundling of PTC. The unbundling of PTC was a radical change and an attempt to adopt a leaner business structure that is able to operate like a viable commercial entity. The discussion as argued by the processual theory, shows that that organisational change does not take place in a series of steps that are neatly concluded. Instead, this chapter shows that broad organising principles- Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism overlap each other and depending on the economic, political, and social context change and at times ay mean reverting to a previous organising principle. Whilst elements of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism were identified in the interviews with participants, the study shows that the process of change at ZimPost was incomplete as national economic, political and internal organisational changes hampered the evolution process.

CHAPTER 9: DYNAMICS AND DRIVERS OF CHANGES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, TECHNOLOGY AND WORK ORGANISATION

9.1. INTRODUCTION

This final analysis chapter explores the dynamics of organisational changes in the broad areas of human resources, ICTs; and drivers of organisational change in the period under analysis as articulated in the second and third goals of the thesis. The period 2010 to 2020 was described as a turbulent time for ZimPost employees, given the myriad of economic and political challenges experienced in Zimbabwe. Technological and HRM strategies characterised in the broad organising principles of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism were shaped by economic and political factors seen in the reduced training of workers due to restructuring. The study established that ZimPost largely maintained vertical decision-making and worker involvement and participation prescribed in HR literature. This study shows that ZimPost employees did not receive any salary increment from 2010 to 2020, despite the rapid and deleterious economic changes that took place in Zimbabwe. The collective bargaining process failed to yield a signed agreement between workers and ZimPost management. The period under analysis was also characterised by political and power wrangles within CASWUZ ZimPost employees. This resulted in the trade union -CASWUZ splitting into three distinct unions.

ICT presented both challenges and opportunities for ZimPost over the period of focus. Rapid technological developments and the subsequent e-substitution contributed to a sharp decline of mail volumes. ZimPost made significant attempts to change its business model to embrace the use of technology in the provision of postal services such as e-commerce, e-services, use of a front-end system for back-office work, a virtual post office and the automation of post offices (amongst other developments). The role of the IT department assumed greater importance from 2010 to 2020 in achieving organisational goals as ZimPost shifted from a business model that focused mainly on mail services to a model that adopted the provision of diversified services based on ICTs. The organisation of work changed from manual work to an increased use of ICTs. However, a dual system of both manual and automated work processes continues to obtain at ZimPost.

9.2. HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, PRESCRIPTIVE CHANGE OR REAL CHANGE

A number of changes were experienced in HRM as presented in section 7.2 above. HRM dynamics of change that were experienced at ZimPost include vertical decision making, decreased unionisation of workers, deterioration of salaries and benefits, staff rationalisation, casualisation of labour, reduced training of workers, outsourcing of work, high staff turnover and livelihood diversification of workers. These changes were mainly attributed to national economic factors.

The study established that the ZimPost largely maintained Taylorist and Fordist organising, seen in vertical decision making in the organisation. Participants noted that there was limited worker participation within the organisation. Non-managerial workers largely felt excluded from the decision-making process, particularly when change initiatives were being planned or implemented. This was mainly mentioned when ZimPost workers were narrating their involvement in the change process and the establishment of standalone companies. A survey conducted by Wood & Collings, (2005), cited in Wilkinson *et al.,* (2017) in Mozambique found out that that whilst organisations have established HRM departments, the top-down approach was still dominant. This shows the differences between what is prescribed as best practice and how worker involvement obtains in organisations. HRM practices characteristic of post-modern organising such as increased participation of workers require funding and in organisations that are experiencing financial challenges, this may not be attainable.

Secondly, staff rationalisation particularly the exercise implemented in 2015, indicated that the change initiative was implemented more by a drive to take advantage of supreme court judgement than a well-planned initiative where workers are informed and prepared in advance. Literature in HRM and change tends to prescribe an idealist state of HRM which often does not materialise in organisations. For example, studies by McDermott & Conway, (2017) state that human resources managers have the role of being change agents guiding organisational members towards change. However, in the case of ZimPost, workers who were restructured in 2015 were not prepared or guided for the impending change. In fact, this was one of the most contentious organisational changes made by HR department over the period 2010 to 2020. Organisational change, especially one where workers are unprepared causes negative feelings or views from workers. For ZimPost employees affected by the staff rationalisation exercise, the HR managers did not perform their role effectively as change

agents in the process of change. Participants noted that workers were just handed letters of termination of contract including long serving employees.

As highlighted by the processual theory, change initiatives do not always achieve intended results. At ZimPost, staff rationalisation was noted to have negatively affected some aspects of work such as quality of service, where the organisation did not have adequate members to multi-task and perform the work. The staff rationalisation whilst focused on creating a lean model that is cost effective, also has the unintended effects of compromising quality standards and also intensifying work. As indicated by (Worrall & Cooper, 2006 cited in Torrington *et al.,* 2014: 262) organisational restructuring may intensify work evidenced by the reports of mail carriers.

Studies by (Wilkinson *et al.,* 2017) indicate that the categorisation of workers and management styles have transformed in organisations into what are known as the 4Fs (feminisation, flexibilization, fragmentation and financialization). These characteristics of work are indicative of post-Fordist organising. However, this study established that not all aspects of post-Fordism management and changes in work are experienced the same in all contexts. What is experienced in the global north may differ from that is experienced in Southern Africa. Feminisation of the workplace was not realised at ZimPost in the changes that took place in the period under review. ZimPost is an organisation dominated by male workers.

Outsourcing of work is another characteristic of post-Fordism as outlined in Figure 3 of the thesis. Senior managers indicated that outsourcing of work and other services was limited at ZimPost. A few training programmes for board members and software development was outsourced in the period under focus. The lack of outsourcing was mainly attributed to the absence of funds to pay for the services. This development points to a distorted form of post-Fordism at ZimPost, mainly hampered by economic factors. As highlighted earlier, this study argues that national economics and politics shape how Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism evolve.

Declining unionisation, deteriorating salaries and benefits, are elements of post-Fordism organising as discussed in Section 3.5. of the thesis. These negative changes were experienced at ZimPost with workers reporting that their salaries and benefits had declined significantly. The deterioration of salaries and benefits affected all categories of workers. Post-Fordism organising is seen by the division of workers into classes where those with

polyvalent skills become high earners unlike unskilled workers who have to rely on temporary or seasonal work. At ZimPost all workers including those with polyvalent skills experienced poor remuneration. Workers with technical skills such as IT software developers, were reported amongst workers with the highest turnover in the organisation. These developments indicate that in post-Fordist organising, skilled workers in ICTs experience more opportunities for work than non- skilled, non-technical workers. However, in the case of ZimPost, it is important to the impact of national economic policies and the role they play in shaping how change is experienced by organisations.

Whilst training was integral to the organisation of work under PTC, from 2010 to 2020, the training of workers declined significantly. This is yet another indicator that post-Fordist production techniques – which depend on a skilled and adaptable workforce – have not materialised fully in ZimPost. The restructuring of workers reduced staff levels significantly and Executive Manager Grace, noted that it was difficult to release a worker for training as there would be no one to attend to customers or any other work that needed to be done. Post-Fordist production techniques such as increased training also require resources to support and sustain them. This was not the case at ZimPost. Postal managers reported that in the past they used to attend strategic planning management workshops, however due to resource constraints, the organisation had stopped inviting postal managers to these meetings. Gloria, a postal manager reported that the meetings were helpful in creating a platform for workers to contribute to the vision of the organisation.

The infighting of trade union leaders is indicative of struggles over power and resources. As highlighted by the processual perspective, political behaviour entails the use of power and comprises both explicit and implicit activities where people use power to advance their interests (Senior & Swailes, 2016). In a poor performing economy, it is not surprising that union leaders at CASWUZ became more interested in maintaining their leadership positions at the expense of those they are supposed to represent. In this case, trade unionism is treated as a source of income and work as opposed to a fight for workers' emancipation. The study suggests that union leaders used trade unionism as a survival strategy than a way of advancing the interests of workers.

Furthermore, a historical approach was necessary in understanding the sharp decline of the role played by trade unions at ZimPost. As presented in the thesis, CASWUZ was a dominant trade union during the PTC era. The split created three Unions (i.e., two CASWUZ unions

represented by different leaders and ZimPost Workers Union) show how divided workers are than the united workforce that represented workers in the PTC era. As stated by the contextual approach, a historical approach is necessary in the analysis of change to show that some changes unfold over a long period of time.

The dynamics of organisational change at ZimPost were dominated by national economics. The poor financial performance of ZimPost resulted in workers failing to secure an agreement with management in the collective bargaining process. Failure to remunerate workers competitive salaries had a negative impact on the organisation with managers reporting that there was high staff turnover at ZimPost. The poor financial performance of the organisation contributed to negative perceptions between managers and workers reported at ZimPost. Unresolved grievances were also noted to be a source of contention between management and workers. A historical approach shows that there was a sharp decline in workers' welfare at ZimPost. Against a context of a relatively stable economy, PTC workers stated that their salaries were competitive. This indicates that changes in the economy, also affect organisations negatively.

HR practitioners at ZimPost indicted that managing change was challenging because of the economic challenges both internal and external to the organisation. As highlighted by Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, (2018) deindustrialisation has affected workers in Zimbabwe and managing change becomes difficult in a context of this nature. These negative developments suggest that managing change successfully depends on the context in which change is experienced. The 10-year salary freeze at ZimPost and the failure by ZimPost workers to engage in industrial action such as strikes can be attributed to the suggestion by Sachikonye & Raftopoulas, (2018) that class consciousness declined amongst workers in Zimbabwe with workers focusing on survival than limited opportunities to engage in industrial action.

9.3 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND ICT: CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The dynamics of change in ICTs were presented in Section 7.11 of the thesis. The dynamics include, automation of production, use of microprocessors in postal business, shift from manual work to increased use of ICTs in work processes, use of a various IT applications in production, automation of post offices and e-commerce.

Whilst ICTs are regarded as integral in the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, for postal organisations the advancement of ICTs threatens the survival of its core product-

letters. Therefore, ICTs present both opportunities and challenges in the postal service. Lack of adequate resources to implement change initiatives hampered the evolution of ICTs at ZimPost. Executive Manager, Jeffreys reported that the IT department had not received close to 50 percent of its budgetary application in 13 years. The lack of funding to support IT development at ZimPost shaped the evolution of change. This partial implementation of IT development can be labelled as some form of deformed or incomplete Fordism. On the other hand, the advent of micro-based electronics associated with post-Fordism had also contributed to ICTs assuming a more integral role in the ZimPost business model as agency services, e-commerce and automation of post offices was based on investment in ICTs software development at ZimPost.

E-substitution contributed to a decline of mail volumes at ZimPost over the period 2010 to 2020. In the 1980s and 1990s letters were the mainstay of postal business however, the advent of mobile phones and the internet, provided alternative means of communication which are quicker and cheaper. This experience is not unique to ZimPost, as studies show that one of the major sources of change in the postal sector has been alternative means of communication (Anson & Helble, 2014). ICTs have also reduced the cost of sending documents significantly. The delivery of mail has become instant unlike the time it takes to deliver letters (Anson and Helble, 2014). Therefore, ICTs present significant challenges for postal operators. These findings were also confirmed at ZimPost where changes instigated by ICTs had negative effects on the financial performance of the organisation. This study established that the perceived benefits of ICT are not the same for all organisations. Most studies tend to focus on the positive effects of technology on organisations, however in the case of ZimPost, postal sector ICT have significantly affected a category of business that postal operators depend on. As noted by Jaag (2015), the use of advanced ICTs has seen a reduction of mail volumes in both developed and developing countries as customers are communicating more through electronic means such as e-mail.

Whilst mail volumes have declined significantly, technological advancements have also created opportunities for postal operators to be innovative and explore other markets for their products. The study showed that ZimPost has been in the process of automating post offices to facilitate interface with external partners in the provision of services such as pension disbursements, money transfer, and other agency services. ZimPost in conjunction with POTRAZ embarked on the development of a national addressing and postcode system. The use of advanced technology is being used to improve the delivery of postal services. It is also

important to note that the uptake of ICTs at ZimPost was negatively affected by the failure of the organisation to meet budgetary obligations. In Fordist organising, more automation is experienced. This case shows that broad organising principles are shaped by the context in which they are experienced.

The most notable change highlighted by participants was a shift from manual work to increased use of ICTs in work processes. The increased use of ICTs has become a common feature in workplaces as highlighted by Smith (2013). There was an increase in the work processes that were automated and no longer being performed manually. In addition, ZimPost made significant efforts to embrace the use of ICTs in work processes through use of IT applications and a front-end system for post office work. The increased use of ICTs in the workplace is a feature of post-Fordist organising. As suggested by Gough, 1992) ICTs are perceived as solutions to the challenges of Fordism of rigidity in production and ICTs are expected to enable diversity in production systems. At ZimPost the introduction of agency services and e-commerce can be suggested as examples of diversified services enabled by the increased use of ICT in the workplace. ZimPost managers noted that changes in ICTs at ZimPost were necessitated by the need for the organisation to modernise the postal service and cope with the transformation taking place in the IT sector.

Studies show that new technologies have also been used to improve business processes and services as well as promote the development of new products in the postal sector (UPU, 2012). Prior to 2010, ZimPost focused on infrastructure development however from 2010 onwards, ZimPost had implemented a front-end system to increase use of ICTs in work processes. Investment in ICT by public organisations is not unique to ZimPost studies show that over the years, public sector organisations have increased the use of ICT (Hengst and Sol, 2001). The impact of ICT on the workplace in public sector organisations is observed in the type of work being done, levels of productivity and improved service delivery (Nygren, 2010).

In line with global trends, ZimPost invested in e-commerce through the creation of an e-shop where customers can order various products online which are then delivered by ZimPost. These developments are in line with post-Fordism organising where business models are being developed around use of ICTs. As stated by Sweet (1994) concepts such as post-Fordism are often associated with a transformation in production systems.

In the period under focus, workers at ZimPost particularly internal auditors and postal managers experienced uneven benefits of technology. They reported that in some aspects of their work technology was hampering not aiding the process of work. Both auditors and postal managers had to switch between using the manual system and automated system in their work. Studies by Mia & Ramage (2018) show that the implementation of technological system in work processes or organisations do not benefit all workers the same. This suggests that workers experience technology differently in the workplace.

9.4 EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DRIVERS OF CHANGE AT ZIMPOST

As highlighted in the central argument of the thesis, national economics and politics are recognised as key determinants in the transformation of organisations particularly public sector organisations. The final goal of the thesis was to identify the internal and external drivers of organisational change at ZimPost in the period under review. Organisations are argued to be in a constant state of change Lewis, (2011) however, I wanted to find out the drivers of change in a public enterprise that could probably be unique to private sector organisations.

9.4.1 Economic Challenges

Studies by Alkaya & Hepaktan, (2003) show that organisations are shifting from national economies to global economies. However, the ZimPost case study showed that the drivers of organisational change at were mainly influenced by shifting national economic policies that failed to yield positive results. Organisational changes such as salary freeze, high staff turnover, staff rationalisation, failure to invest in new vehicles, insufficient resources to invest in ICTs, and poor performance of the postal business were all associated with a tough economic environment to conduct business. A difficult and changing economic environment presented significant challenges for ZimPost. The period 2010 to 2020 was characterised by macro-economic challenges that included 'high inflation, unstable exchange rates and unsustainable debt which constrained macroeconomic stability and productivity growth' (World Bank, 2020:296). The study established that these economic challenges contributed to the negative performance of postal business. The increasing informalisation of the economy (Mlambo, 2017) reduced disposable income creating a constraint operating environment.

9.4.2. Increased Competition

The increased market share of private courier operators such as FedEx, with more efficient quality of service than the postal snail mail made the operating competitive. Participants noted that ZimPost experienced challenges in meeting quality of service standards due to a

variety of reasons including lack of capital to reinvest into the business, use of an old transport fleet, rising operating costs amongst other reasons. These factors contributed to ZimPost losing business to its competitors such as FedEx. FedEx had the largest market share of postal and courier revenue at 53.2 percent in the last quarter of 2019 and ZimPost 36.3 percent (POTRAZ, 2019). Studies by the UPU (2020) also show that increased competition was a driver of change in the postal business.

9.4.3 Changing Customer Needs

The study showed that customers' needs shifted in the period under review with less demand for letters and more interest in e-services. Piore and Sabel (1984) suggest that industries are shifting from mass production to flexible specialisation in an effort to capture new markets and meet the changing needs of customers. ZimPost changed its business model to focus more on agency services. ZimPost collected revenue and performed services on behalf of other organisations such as government parastatals. Furthermore, ZimPost diversified its services to meet customer needs by utilising its real estate portfolio. In Harare at the main post office, ZimPost converted office space into a shopping mall to generate revenue from idle real estate. Diversification of services is not unique to Zimbabwe. studies show that post offices were offering diverse services for example in Australia, post offices sell a variety of goods such as food items, pens, books, presents and children's toys (Kiumarsi, Jayaraman & Isa, 2015:55). In 2016, ZimPost created a standalone real estate company called Post Properties to generate revenue from ZimPost real estate portfolio.

9.4.4 Technological Drivers

Postal operators across the world have been experiencing a massive downturn in mail volumes. This was attributed to technological advancements that replaced the use of letters with quicker means of communication such as e-mail also known as 'e-substitution' (Jaag, 2015:25). ZimPost experienced a significant decline in mail volumes over the period 2010 to 2020. Postal and courier volumes have been decreasing consistently for the past five years (POTRAZ, 2019). Scholars such as (Dawson 2003:15) argue that 'technology can both be an internal and external' driver of change in an organisation. Internally, ZimPost embarked on a drive to improve its service delivery through automation of post offices and a digitalisation programme. ZimPost opened an e-shop to provide services that are relevant to the needs of customers. In addition, ZimPost increased the use of ICTs in work processes. Therefore, technology was noted to be an important force of change.

9.4.5. Regulatory Drivers

Regulatory drivers contributed to organisational changes at ZimPost over the period 2010 to 2020. In 2015, the Supreme Court made a judgement that enabled employment contracts to be terminated by either party after giving notice. This judgement is popularly known as the ZUVA judgement. Based on this judgement, ZimPost carried out a staff rationalisation exercise and 200 employees had their contracts terminated. Furthermore, in June 2019, the government through Statutory Instrument 142 of 2019 removed the multi-currency regime and reintroduced the 'defunct Zimbabwe dollar' (Jefferis, 2020:5). Since the re-introduction of the Zimbabwean dollar, its performance has been dismal with the exchange rate declining significantly, officially and on the parallel market (Jefferis, 2020). The removal of the multi-currency system changed the pricing structure of products and services at ZimPost to comply with the new government regulation. Another regulatory driver that had negative organisational change in the form of lost revenue was delayed tariff reviews by the regulatory authority- POTRAZ. Participants noted that POTRAZ takes a substantial amount of time to review tariffs to the extent that customers come and hoard products from ZimPost for resale, particularly at the stationary shop. These delays were noted to be detrimental to the organisation in light of the hyperinflationary environment prevailing in the country. Post-Fordist organising is based on market forces determining price structures and a demand for services. In public organisations such as ZimPost, providing an affordable service is integral.

9.4.6 Political Drivers

Politics was noted to be an important driver of change at ZimPost. This was particularly seen in the intertwined relationship between the State and politics in Zimbabwe. a change of government in Zimbabwe also meant a shift in the economic policies that were implemented. In 2009, an unprecedented development took place in Zimbabwe as a power sharing agreement was signed between ZANU-PF and MDC. The coalition government introduced a multi-currency regime. This came against a background of a severely hyperinflationary environment in 2008. The multi-currency regime stabilised the Zimbabwean economy and public organisations such as ZimPost were able to pay postal workers salaries on time. participants reported that their salaries during this period were paid on time. The 2013 elections resulted in ZANU-PF winning elections and shifting economic policies that had been implemented during the GNU. Zimbabwe started to experience another economic downturn with severe cash shortages and hyperinflation. These developments had a negative effect on postal business at ZimPost as indicated in the 2013 annual report. Politics was a key

driver of organisational change at ZimPost as politics and the economy are closely tied in Zimbabwe.

Another relationship based on politics, is the relationship between the State and trade unions in Zimbabwe. As discussed in (section 8.2.) the relationship was built on suspicion, threats of dismissals and large numbers of workers losing their jobs. Participants noted that they were afraid to embark on industrial action for fear of losing their jobs. The tense political environment where protests are not tolerated by the state contributed to the weakening state of trade unions at ZimPost. This study suggests that he repressive political environment was a key driver in the weakening of trade unionism at ZimPost.

9.5 INTERNAL DRIVERS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AT ZIMPOST

9.5.1 Modernisation of Post Offices

Participants noted that ZimPost made several changes to modernise the post office and attract a more diverse market. Modernisation of post offices was mainly characterised by automation of post offices to shift from provision of traditional mail services, but agency services supported by ICTs. In addition, Senior manager, Mambure noted that ZimPost embarked on a renovation exercise of post offices to make them look more modern. The drive to automate post offices was also attributed to the need to modernise the post office and eliminate the perception that post offices are archaic. The need to modernise the post office and make them operate like commercial entities is part of the reforms that developed countries are implementing as stated by Guislain & Lee (2004). The modernisation efforts were not only focused on infrastructure but on the internal processes such as increased use of ICTs in work processes.

9.5.2 Resource Limitations

ZimPost made several internal changes due to lack of resources to operate efficiently. The staff rationalisation exercise, salary freeze, payment of salaries in batches, lack of investment in a new fleet of vehicles to deliver mail, incomplete automation exercise, failure by internal auditors to audit post offices as required by ZimPost regulations, high staff turnover, the absence of external auditing, were some of the changes necessitated by resource constraints. Limited or inadequate resources such as capital, machinery or technology can cause changes within the organisation (Sharma, 2007). Resource limitations had negative organisational changes at ZimPost.

9.5.3 Pressure from Employees

In the period under focus, ZimPost reversed two organisational changes mainly due to pressure from employees. Two standalone companies that is Courier Connect and Post Properties were merged with ZimPost in the period under review. ZimPost workers were of the view that revenue from the standalone companies could benefit ZimPost employees at a time when ZimPost was struggling to pay employees. This force of change was complex as it was also infused with a misunderstanding of the establishment of the standalone companies. Managers were of the perception that standalone companies enable the organisation to offer customers specialised and innovative services that allow ZimPost to compete effectively on the market. Workers, on the other hand were of the view that the standalone companies were created to benefit managers as they could create jobs for their relatives and managers also benefited from being board members at these subsidiary companies. creation of subsidiary companies within the postal service is not an uncommon practice. As indicated in chapter 3, subsidiary courier postal operators such as (DHL), a subsidiary of Deutsche Post have internationalised courier services. Therefore, this force of change was driven more by the need for workers to have reprieve over unresolved salary grievances than suspicions of corruption.

9.5.4 Power and Political Forces

Power and political forces were drivers of internal change at ZimPost. This was seen in the power struggles that were experienced within the trade union that represents ZimPost employees called CASWUZ. Leadership wrangles, and infighting split the union into three splinter unions. This organisational change was detrimental to the welfare of workers at ZimPost as it delayed salary negotiations. Executive manager, Grace, noted that management had to negotiate with three unions. This made the negotiation process complex and difficult to resolve issues. The struggle for power within the trade union as indicated earlier, could be a reflection of the economic challenges in the country where unionism is treated like an enterprise as opposed to representation of workers. Participants noted that the infighting within CASWUZ contributed to the delayed salary negotiations with management in the almost ten years that ZimPost workers did not receive a review of salaries. As shown by Palmer, Buchanan & Dunford (2017) power and political influence take different forms within organisations, including tussles for leadership positions.

9.6. CONCLUSION

This analysis chapter examined the dynamics of organisational change in HRM and ICT and also discussed the internal and external drivers of organisational change at ZimPost. The analysis showed that national economics and politics dominated the dynamics of change in HRM and ICT. The harsh economic environment restricted the effectiveness of HRM at ZimPost. Workers experienced a ten-year salary freeze and the lack of protests could be indicative as suggested by scholars to workers more preoccupied with survival than limited opportunities for a protest. The analysis also showed that there is a difference between HR prescriptions and practice. Whilst HRM prescribes that HR practitioners should prepare workers for retrenchment and be agents of change management, this was not the case at ZimPost. Workers were ambushed with retrenchment/ staff rationalisation. The advancement of ICTs presented opportunities and challenges for ZimPost. Whilst declines in mail volumes were experienced, ZimPost also changed its business model to focus on agency services and e-commerce as a way of providing innovative and diverse services. Drivers of change were also shaped by economic and political factors. Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism shed light on how organisations change their HRM and ICT strategies depending on the organising principle.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

10.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive conclusion of the thesis. The chapter starts by restating the goals of the thesis and the strategies that I used to achieve the objectives of the thesis. The motivation to learn more about postal services was inspired by the exposure that I found whilst working at ZimPost almost eight years ago. This brought attention to the important role played by postal services in providing basic, affordable communication services. The large physical distribution network enables post offices to be accessible in the most remote parts of the country. I also noticed that discussions at international postal meetings hosted by the UPU in Berne, Switzerland were consumed by how postal operators had to change their business models if they were to remain relevant. Whilst it appeared that developed countries were making significant efforts to invest in ICTs, diversify services and commercialise the postal service, developing countries such as Zimbabwe seemed to be lagging behind. This study was also motivated by a dearth in literature on postal organisations particularly in developing countries. Therefore, in my study I wanted to establish the historical basis of organisational change at ZimPost and how ZimPost has been evolving in the past decade in light of the economic and political changes taking place in Zimbabwe, that present unique challenges in managing change.

10.2. Addressing the Goals of the Thesis

The objectives of the study were formulated with a consideration of a historical approach to understanding organisational change. As argued by Ocasio, Mauskapf & Steele (2016) there are gaps in organisational change research stating that a historical approach is necessary in understanding that change is political and complex in nature. I then combined a sociological and historical approach in formulating the objectives. The historical period selected for the study was 2010 to 2020. This period was mainly determined for the thesis because of the rapid economic and political changes that have unfolded during that period in Zimbabwe. Given the vastness of organisational change studies, and to make sense of the organisational changes experienced at ZimPost, I then took an industrial sociology approach to use the broad organising principles of Taylorism, Fordism, and post-Fordism to examine the evolution process.

The tertiary objective of the thesis was:

To undertake a socio-historical analysis of organisational change at ZimPost using Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism as broad ideal types to explain how industry evolves in different phases of capitalism.

The subsidiary objectives were:

(a) Trace the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost over the period from 2010 to 2020.

(b) Examine the dynamics of organisational change within ZimPost in three broad areas, which are human resources management, information and communication technologies and type of work from 2010 to 2020.

(c) Conceptualise the drivers of change at ZimPost over the period from 2010 to 2020.

The section below will explore how I addressed each goal, and lastly how each goal contributed to the achievement of the overall goal of the thesis.

10.3. Tracing the major socio-historical developments of postal services at ZimPost from 2010-2020

A number of strategies were used to achieve the first objective of the thesis. Theoretically, the study adopted the processual perspective, which recommends the use of longitudinal studies in exploring organisational change in organisations. Whilst my study was not conducted over an extensive period, I opted to analyse organisational change for a ten-year period. The processual perspective argues that organisational change is processual, meaning it is a process and not an event. Therefore, data collection methods had to incorporate an approach that aimed to collect historical information.

Methodologically, data were collected from postal workers who have been part of the organisation before PTC was unbundled and those who have been in the organisation since the inception of ZimPost. The aim was to obtain rich historical accounts of organisational changes from the different groups of participants. Whilst the study was mainly focused on the period 2010 to 2020, workers who were part of the PTC era, could provide insight into organisational developments that took place in the organisations and any changes that have occurred. Documentary analysis was also conducted to trace the major developments at ZimPost. This was mainly done by analysing statistics and reports from the UPU, POTRAZ and any other reports of policy documents with related information. The statistics were important to confirm the historical developments provided by participants. Statistics were compiled on mail volumes and staff compliment from 2010 to 2020.

The introductory chapter and chapter three of the thesis explored the historical developments that have been taking place within the postal sector and how postal organisations have implemented postal reforms to transform postal administrations from departments housed within ministries to statutory corporations wholly owned by the government. The contextual chapter also provided examples of countries where postal organisations have evolved from being public administrations to private companies, partially or fully privatised or quoted on the stock exchange. Tracing the historical developments was also framed within the broad organisational types- Taylorism, Fordism, crisis of Fordism and post-Fordism in chapter three.

Tracing the major socio- historical developments of postal services at ZimPost was a theme that cascaded throughout the empirical chapters (five, six and seven). Chapter 5 presented descriptive accounts of the responses from workers who were part of PTC. The 1980s and 1990s were themed the golden years of postal services in Zimbabwe. Most of the organisational changes that were experienced during this period were characteristic of Fordism organising. There was mass production of mail products and services characteristic of the Fordist regime of accumulation, manual; the type of work was mainly manual and routinised work processes, vertical integration where one large conglomerate incorporated post and telecommunication services; antagonistic labour relations; increased unionisation of workers, economic growth and a demand for better salaries, a stable market share, job security and high wages. All these characteristics fit into Fordist organising as conceptualised in the contextual chapter. The socio-historical analysis also established that national economic and political factors shaped the stability that was experienced during this period, factors conducive for Fordism to be realised.

Organisational changes were noted from 1998 onwards, with the decline of the economy. Characteristics of post-Fordism started to emerge with the unbundling of PTC. In the year 2000, the government through the Posts and Telecommunications Act of [Chapter: 12:05] of 2000 unbundled postal from telecommunication services. Four separate companies were created which are Zimbabwe Posts, TelOne, POSB and NetOne. The separation was in line with global trends and to create smaller business units that could provide specialised services. This was one of the most radical changes implemented by the government. Participants noted that ZimPost employees were mainly opposed to this organisational change as it was imposed on them.

Chapter six traced socio-historical developments at ZimPost mainly for the period under focus. This period was themed the turbulent years at ZimPost mainly because of the rapid changes that took place including hyperinflation, cash shortages, rising costs of living, the removal of the multi-currency system, declining mail volumes and advanced ICTs. This period also marked what can be called the crisis of Fordism at ZimPost. Unlike the PTC era, there was declining markets for postal services, increased competition from private courier operators, shifting national economic policies, delayed tariff reviews by the regulatory authority, and challenges sustaining the universal service obligation. The study also showed that Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism are not separate and distinct organising principles, rather they overlap each other and are shaped by the context in which they are experienced.

Elements of post-Fordism organising were also identified during the period under focus. In view of declining mail volumes, ZimPost adopted a business model based on elements of post-Fordism as conceptualised in the contextual chapters. ZimPost introduced innovative products and services- agency services as a way of diversifying products to meets customers' needs. Other elements of post-Fordism recognised from the study include intensification of work and polyvalent skills requirements. Chapter eight analysed these developments in line with the processual theory.

10.4 Examine the dynamics of organisational change in the broad areas of Human Resources Management and ICT and Type of work

To achieve this objective, contextual chapter four explored the dynamics of organisational change in ICT and HRM. Chapter seven presented descriptive accounts from ZimPost employees on these dynamics. Following the framing of changes within the broad organising principles, elements of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism were identified. In HRM vertical decision making was identified aa characteristic of Taylorism organising. Other characteristics post-Fordist elements discussed were decreased unionisation, deterioration of salaries and benefits, staff rationalisation, casualisation of labour, outsourcing of HRM and IT functions, and high staff turnover. Changes such as unresolved grievances concerning salaries, reduced training of workers were more reflective of the economic context in which change was experienced at ZimPost.

There were organisational changes that were implemented at ZimPost such as the creation of two standalone companies that is Courier Connect and Post Properties. These were attempts by ZimPost to develop flexible and innovative services in line post-Fordist organising. These changes were influenced by national economics and political developments.

ICTs developments were experienced at ZimPost; however, ICTs were seen as providing both opportunities and challenges for change. There was increased automation of production seen in the almost 80 percent of post offices being automated. There was also increased use of automation in work processes marking the shift from manual work to increased use of ICTs in work processes. Increased automation is a characteristic of Fordism organising. There was also increased use of micro-processors in the workplace, an element characteristic of post-Fordism organising. This was evidence in the introduction of a front-end system to assist front-end workers in performing transactions, increased adoption of IT applications to improve the delivery of postal services such as the International Financial System and the international postal system, a virtual post office, national addressing and post-code system, Communication and Information Centres and e-commerce. The type of work performed by postal workers as indicated earlier shifted from manual to increased use of ICT due to improved technology however this did not apply to all categories of workers. Mail carriers were excluded from this development. The dynamics of change in ICT and HRM were analysed in chapter nice as part of achieving this objective.

10.4. Drivers of Change at ZimPost

Chapter 5 discusses the drivers of change. The purpose of the discussion was to establish how drivers of change were conceptualised in literature so as to explore the unique ways in which forces of change were also experienced at ZimPost. drivers of change were infused in the historical analysis and accounts of participants on different issues. It was my job as the researcher to then identify them as conceptualised by ZimPost workers. Internal drivers of change at ZimPost were identified by participants as modernisation of post offices, resource limitations, pressure from workers, and power and political forces. External drivers of change included economic challenges, increased competition, changing customer needs, technological drivers, regulatory driver and political drivers.

These objectives contributed to the achievement of the overall goal of the thesis. The case study established that there are signs of Taylorism, Fordism and in particular post-Fordism at ZimPost. However, it is not a full-blown Fordism, it is some kind of deformed Fordism. Therefore, the position at ZimPost is not from some preferred Fordism to post-Fordism. It is a deformed or partially implemented Fordism to some kind of distorted, incomplete post-Fordism. These broad organising principles cannot be universally applied in the global south because the mode of regulation is different. It is subject to national economic, political, cultural and other social factors.

10.5. Thesis Contribution and further studies

This thesis recognises the importance of industrial sociologists in contributing to the body of knowledge in issues that are pertinent in all sectors of the economy. As highlighted in the introductory chapter, most studies on organisational change have focused on the private sector yet the broad organising principles of Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism also apply to public sector organisations. Unlike private organisations, ZimPost is a public sector organisation and therefore it is directly subject to political influence. The government does not intervene in the internal affairs of a private organisations like the interest it has in a public enterprise. Since ZimPost is a public entity and given the national economic and political circumstances in Zimbabwe; this qualifies the way Taylorism, Fordism and post-Fordism is shaped at ZimPost. Therefore, this thesis contributes to a further understanding of the dynamics of organisational change in public sector organisations. An analysis of organisational change using these categories is critical in organisational change studies as it demonstrates the uniqueness of organisational change depending on the context. This therefore highlights the importance of not having 'one size fits all' assumptions and strategies to manage organisational change.

As indicated earlier, there is a dearth of literature on postal organisations particularly in developing countries. The limited studies available are dated and have mainly focused on the EU. This was a major challenge in the writing of this thesis as there was very limited literature on African postal administrations. This study provides unique insight into the challenges that postal operators face in the midst of rapid economic, political and technological changes. Organisational changes experienced at ZimPost are probably not unique to ZimPost, however there are very few if at all, in-depth studies that explore organisational change within postal organisations. It is my view that there is need for more studies that explore organisational change in ALL types of industry to increase the relevance of the discipline of sociology.

Another important contribution of this thesis is in-depth understanding of organisational change from the perspective of various categories of workers in the organisation. Organisational change studies tend to focus on the narratives and perceptions of management. This study delved into the experiences of different categories of workers and highlighted the importance of meaningful worker involvement in the change process by management. This study demonstrates the contested nature of organisational change and how change is not

homogenous for different groups of workers highlighted by the differences between full time workers and casual employees. Casual employees were hardly if at all consulted in the change processes at ZimPost.

It is anticipated that this study will enhance strategies of managing the change process in postal organisations and exploit opportunities to implement organisational change for the improvement of work processes and workers' well-being at ZimPost. The study established the need to bridge the gap between management and non-managerial staff in planning and implementing organisational changes. The study points to different areas where the change process could have been managed better for example preparing workers for retrenchment. The study also highlighted the challenges HR and IT practitioners face in managing change with limited or no resources. Whilst organisational change is implemented to improve the state of the organisation, this is not often realised. This finding concurs with studies that show that organisational change strategies often yield negative results.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Ahmad, A. B. & Cheng, Z. 2018 'The Role of Change Content , Context , Process , and Leadership in Understanding Employees ' Commitment to Change : The Case of Public Organizations in Kurdistan Region of Iraq'.

Akçomak, I.S., Borghans, L. and Ter Weel, B., 2011. Measuring and interpreting trends in the division of labour in the Netherlands. *De Economist*, *159*(4), pp.435-482.

Alford, J. Greve, C. 2017 'Strategy in the public and private sectors: Similarities, differences and changes', *Administrative Sciences*, 7(4).

Alkaya, A. and Hepaktan, C.E., 2003. Organizational change. *Yönetim Ve Ekonomi: Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Iktisadi Ve Idari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, *10*(1), pp.31-58.

Al-saadi, H. 2014 'Demystifying Ontology and Epistemology in research methods', (February).

Amin, A., 1994. Post-Fordism: models, fantasies and phantoms of transition. *Post-Fordism: a reader*, *1*, pp.1-7.

Andrade, A. and Joia, L.A., 2012. Organizational structure and ICT strategies in the Brazilian Judiciary System. *Government Information Quarterly*, *29*, pp. S32-S42.

Andrews, R., Beynon, M.J. and McDermott, A.M., 2016. Organizational capability in the public sector: A configurational approach. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *26*(2), pp.239-258.

Anson, I.G., 2018. Taking the time? Explaining effortful participation among low-cost online survey participants. *Research & Politics*, 5(3).

Ansón, J. and Helble, M., 2014. Postal economics and statistics for strategy analysis–the long view. *Development strategies for the postal sector: an economic perspective*.

Anson, J., Boffa, M. and Helble, M., 2014. A short-run analysis of exchange rates and international trade with an application to Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.

Antonio, R.J. and Bonanno, A., 2000. A New Global Capitalism? From" Americanism and Fordism" to" Americanization-Globalization". *American Studies*, 41(2/3), pp. 33-77.

Aoife, M., McDermott, E, Conway., K, Cafferkey, J, Bosak & Patrick C. Flood. 2017. Performance management in context: formative cross-functional performance monitoring for improvement and the mediating role of relational coordination in hospitals. *International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 30, pp. 436-456.

Apulu, I. and Latham, A., 2011. Drivers for information and communication technology adoption: A case study of Nigerian small and medium sized enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(5), p.51.

Apulu, I. and Latham, A., 2011. Drivers for information and communication technology adoption: A case study of Nigerian small and medium sized enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(5), p.51.

Armstrong, P., 2014. Limits and possibilities for HRM in an age of management accountancy. *New Perspectives on Human Resource Management op. cit. at*, pp.154-166.

Arslan, U. & Erdil, E. 2003 'New Technologies and Changes in Work Organization : A Survey', pp. 1–45.

Bartol, K.M., Tein, M., Matthews, G. and Sharma, B., 2007. *Management: A pacific rim focus*. University of the Sunshine Coast, Queensland.

Baxter, V.K., 1994. The Post Office and Society. In *Labor and Politics in the US Postal Service* (pp. 29-54). Springer, Boston, MA.

Beynon, H., 2016. Book review symposium: Response to reviews of Huw Beynon, Working for Ford: Men, Masculinity, Mass Production and Militancy.

Bezweek, S.A. and Egbu, C.O., 2010, May. The impact of information technology to facilitate communication and collaboration in Libyan public organisations. In *CIB World Congress 2010* (Vol. 1). School of Built Environment, The University of Salford.

Bijker, W.E. and Pinch, T.J., 1987. The social construction of fact and artifacts. *Philosophy of technology: the technological condition: an anthology*.

Bijker, W.E., 1987. *The social construction of Bakelite: Toward a theory of invention* (pp. 159-187). Cambridge, MA: MIT press.

Bijker, W.E., 2008. Technology, social construction of. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*.

Bilbao-Osorio, B., Dutta, S. and Lanvin, B., 2014. The Global Information Technology Report 2014: Addressing New Digital Divide Key for Balanced Growth.

Birkinshaw, J. and Ridderstråle, J., 2010. Adhocracy for an agile age. *Organization Science*, *22*(5), pp.1286-1296.

Blake, A. M. & Moseley, J. L. 2010 'Principles of scientific management: Frederick Taylor's life and impact on the field of human performance technology', *Performance Improvement*, 49(4), pp. 9–16.

Bloom, N., Schankerman, M. and Van Reenen, J., 2013. Identifying technology spillovers and product market rivalry. *Econometrica*, *81*(4), pp.1347-1393.

Boddy, D., 2011. *Management: An Introduction. 5ᵗʰ Edition*. Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Bojovic, N., Kujacic, M. & Macura, D. 2014 'Organizational design of a post office using analytic network process', (May).

Boreham, N., 2008. Organisational learning as structuration: an analysis of worker-led organisational enquiries in an oil refinery. In *The learning potential of the workplace* (pp. 225-240). Brill Sense.

Bourdieu, P., 1984. A social critique of the judgement of taste. *Traducido del francés por R. Nice.* London: Routledge.

Bowen, G. A. 2009 'Document analysis as a qualitative research method', *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), pp. 27–40.

Boyer R, & Durand. J. 1997 *After Fordism*. London: Macmillan business.

Boyer, R. and Durand, J.P., 1993. Shared Principles and National Diversities. In *After Fordism* (pp. 37-54). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Braverman, H., 1974. *Labor [labour] and monopoly capital*. Monthly Review Press.

Braverman, H., 1998. *Labor and monopoly capital: The degradation of work in the twentieth century*. NYU Press.

Brodar, K., Klačmer Čalopa, M. and Pihir, I., 2009. Impact of ICT on the structural and contextual organizational elements: Case of the Varaždin County. *Journal of Information and Organizational Sciences*, *33*(2), pp.243-254.

Brunninge, O., 2009. Using history in organizations: How managers make purposeful reference to history in strategy processes. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*.

Bryant, S.E., 2003. The role of transformational and transactional leadership in creating, sharing and exploiting organizational knowledge. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *9*(4), pp.32-44.

Buchanan, D. and Badham, R., 2020. *Power, politics, and organizational change*. Sage.

Burke, R. J. 2002. Organizational change: Theory and practice. Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

Burnes, B. 2004b *Managing Change: A strategic approach to organisational dynamics*. 4th edn. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Burnes, B. 2004 'Kurt Lewin and the planned approach to change: A re-appraisal', *Journal of Management Studies*, 41(6), pp. 977–1002.

Burnes, B., 1996. No such thing as… a "one best way" to manage organizational change. *Management decision*.

Burnes, B., 2004. Kurt Lewin and the planned approach to change: a re-appraisal. *Journal of Management studies*, *41*(6), pp.977-1002.

Burnes, B., 2004. *Managing change: A strategic approach to organisational dynamics*. Pearson Education.

Caldari, K., 2007. Alfred Marshall's critical analysis of scientific management. *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, *14*(1), pp.55-78.

Cameron, E. and Green, M., 2012. Contextual leadership and change in the public sector. In *Managing Organizational Change in Public Services* (pp. 41-60). Routledge.

Carbaugh, R.& Tenerelli, T. 2010 'Restructuring the U . S . Postal Service', 31(1), pp. 129–150.

Chitiyo, K. 2019 'Briefing note Forging Inclusive Economic Growth in Zimbabwe Insights from the Zimbabwe Futures 2030 roundtable series', (October).

Chitongo, L., Chikunya, P. & Marango, T. 2020 'Do economic blueprints work? Evaluating the prospects and challenges of Zimbabwe's Transitional Stabilisation Programme', *African Journal of Governance and Development*, 9(1), pp. 7–20. Available at: https://0-search.ebscohost.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=awn&AN=1462030&site=e

host-live&scope=site%0Ahttps://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajgd.

Chusseau, N., Dumont, M. and Hellier, J., 2008. Explaining rising inequality: Skill-biased technical change and north–south trade. *Journal of Economic Surveys*, *22*(3), pp.409-457.

Clarke, S. and Holdsworth, L., 2017. *Flexibility in the workplace: Implications of flexible work arrangements for individuals, teams and organizations. Business and Management*

Clarke, S., 1990. New utopias for old: Fordist dreams and post-Fordist fantasies. *Capital & Class*, *14*(3), pp.131-155.

Clarke, S., 1992. What in the F---'s Name is Fordism. In *Fordism and Flexibility* (pp. 13-30). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Coccia, M. 2019 'What is technology and technology change? A new conception with systemic- purposeful perspective for technology analysis', *Journal of Social and Administrattive Sciences*, 6(3). doi: 10.1453/jsas.v6i3.1957.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. 2018 *Research methods in education*. 8th edn. New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Collins D., 1998. *Organisational Change Sociological Perspectives*. Routledge.

Collins, D., 2005. *Organisational change: sociological perspectives*. Routledge.

Confederation of Zimbabwean Industries (CZI)., 2011. *Annual manufacturing sector survey*

coordination in hospitals, The International Journal of Human Resource Management, DO Coraiola, D.M., Barros, A., Maclean, M. and Foster, W.M., 2021. History, memory, and the past in management and organization studies. *Revista de Administração de Empresas*, *61*.

Coraiola, D.M., Foster, W.M. and Suddaby, R., 2014. Varieties of History in Organization Studies Chapter taken from 'The Routledge Companion to Management & Organizational History', edited by Edited by Patricia Genoe McLaren, Albert J. Mills, Terrance G. Weatherbee–Publishing July 2015.

Cordella, A. and Tempini, N., 2015. E-government and organizational change: Reappraising the role of ICT and bureaucracy in public service delivery. *Government information quarterly*, *32*(3), pp.279-286.

Corredera, D.N., 2015. Measuring postal e-services development. *A global perspective Version*, *2*.

Cresswell J.W and Cresswell J.D., 2018. *Research design qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches. 5ᵗʰ Edition*. Sage Publications. London

Cresswell & Poth P., 2018. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design 4ᵗʰ Edition*. Sage Publications. London

Crew, M., Kleindorfer, P. and Campbell Jr, J., 2008. Postal reform: introduction. *Handbook of Worldwide Postal Reform*, pp.1-12.

Crew, M., Kleindorfer, P. and Campbell Jr, J., 2008. Postal reform: introduction. *Handbook of Worldwide Postal Reform*, pp.1-12.

Čudanov, M., Jaško, O. and Jevtić, M., 2009. Influence of information and communication technologies on decentralization of organizational structure. *Computer science and information systems*, *6*(1), pp.93-109.

Cunningham, J. B. and Kempling, J. S. 2009 'Implementing change in public sector organizations', *Management Decision*, 47(2), pp. 330–344..

Dawson P., 2003. *Understanding organizational change: The contemporary experience of people at work*. Sage Publication. London

Dawson, P. 2003 *Understanding Organisational Change :The contemporary experience of people at work, Angewandte Chemie International Edition, 6(11), 951–952.* London: Sage Publications.

Dawson, P. and McLean, P., 2013. Miners' tales: Stories and the storying process for understanding the collective sensemaking of employees during contested change. *Group & Organization Management*, *38*(2), pp.198-229.

Dawson, P., 1996. Beyond conventional change models: A processual perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, *34*(2), pp.57-70.

Dawson, P., 1997. In at the deep end: conducting processual research on organisational change. *Scandinavian journal of management*, *13*(4), pp.389-405.

Dawson, P., 2005. Changing manufacturing practices: An appraisal of the processual approach. *Human Factors and Ergonomics in Manufacturing & Service Industries*, *15*(4), pp.385-402.

Dawson, P., 2014. Reflections: On time, temporality and change in organizations. *Journal of Change Management*, *14*(3), pp.285-308.

Dawson, P., 2014. The processual perspective: studying change in organisations

Dawson, P.M., 1994. *Organizational change: A processual approach*. Paul Chapman Publishing.

De Wet, W., Koekemoer, E. and Nel, J.A., 2016. Exploring the impact of information and communication technology on employees' work and personal lives. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *42*(1), pp.1-11.

Dess, G.G., Lumpkin, G.T. and Eisner, A.B., 2010. Strategic management: Creating competitive advantages. 5 Hill Irwin.

Dessler, G., 2017. Human Resources Management. 15th Edition Pearson Education

Dieke, A. K. (no date) 'Summary of Postal Privatization in Europe & Key Lessons Who is WIK ?', (April 2012).

Dubravska, M. and Solankova, E., 2015. Recent trends in human resources management in selected industry in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, *26*, pp.1014-1019.

Durand, J.P. and Boyer, R., 1997. After Fordism.

Eason, K.D., 1989. *Information technology and organisational change*. CRC Press.

Edgell, S. and Granter, E., 2019. *The sociology of work: Continuity and change in paid and unpaid work*. Sage.

Elving, W.J., 2005. The role of communication in organisational change. *Corporate communications: an international journal*.

Entrekin L &Scott-Ladd B.D., 2014. *Human resource management and change, a practising manager's guide*. Routledge. Arbington Oxford

Erakovic, L. 2006 'Researching organisational change in the public sector', *International Journal of Learning and Change*, 1(2), p. 201..

Errida, A. & Lotfi, B. 2021 'The determinants of organizational change management success : Literature review and case study', 13, pp. 1–15.

Errida, A. and Lotfi, B., 2021. The determinants of organizational change management success: Literature review and case study. *International Journal of Engineering Business Management*, *13*, p.18479790211016273.

Esparcia, S., Boissier, O. and Argente, E., 2014, June. Design of Forces Driving Adaptation of Agent Organizations. In *International Conference on Practical Applications of Agents and Multi-Agent Systems* (pp. 110-121). Springer, Cham.

Etzioni, A., 1964. *Modern Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs Prentice-Hall. *Inc.,*

Eyck, K.V., 2003. Flexibilizing employment: an overview. *ILO Working Papers*, (993597573402676).

Farkas, É. and Petrovics, M., 2012. Az ügyfélcentrikus szervezeti kultúra fejlesztése: a Magyar Posta példája: Liberalizáció és szervezeti változások a postai szektorban. *Competitio*, *11*(2), pp.143-158.

Felisberto, C., Finger, M., Friedli, B., Krähenbühl, D. and Trinkner, U., 2006. Pricing the last mile in the postal sector. In *Progress toward liberalization of the postal and delivery sector* (pp. 249-264). Springer, Boston, MA.

Finger, M., Alyanak, I. and Mollet, P., 2005. *Postal sector overview and dynamics* (No. REPWORK). EPFL-CDM.

Finger, M., Jaag, C. & Jaag, C. 2019 'The Routledge Companion to Network Industries Postal sector development between digitization and regulation'.

Fitzgerald, J. (2016) 'Epistemology and Reading', (April).

Flecker, J., Fibich, T. and Kraemer, K., 2017. Socio-economic changes and the reorganization of work. In *Job demands in a changing world of work* (pp. 7-24). Springer, Cham.

Flecker, J., 2010. Fragmenting labour: organisational restructuring, employment relations and the dynamics of national regulatory frameworks. *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*, *4*(1), pp.8-23.

Flew, T., 2014. Six theories of neoliberalism. *Thesis eleven*, *122*(1), pp.49-71.

Frey, C.B. and Osborne, M., 2015. Technology at work. *The Future of Innovation and Employment*.

Frey, C.B. and Osborne, M., 2015. *Technology at work: The future of innovation and employment*. Oxford, England: Citi GPS.

Fritschler, A.L., Pommerening, C., Campbell, J.I., Cohen, R.H., Dieke, A.K., John, R.R., Panzar, J.C. and Wolak, F.A., 2008. Study on Universal Postal Service and the Postal Monopoly.

Gekara, V.O. and Fairbrother, P., 2013. Managerial technologies and power relations: a study of the A ustralian waterfront. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *28*(1), pp.51-65.

Gene, E. 1997 'Organizational Change from Scientific Management to the Learning Organization Implications for New Work Systems Contemporary Western enterprises competition in which industry leaders can no longer overlook negative effects'.

Gerdenitsch, C., 2017. New ways of working and satisfaction of psychological needs. In *Job demands in a changing world of work* (pp. 91-109). Springer, Cham.

Giddens, A. 2006. *Sociology*. New York: Polity Press

Giddens, A. *et al.* 2018 *Introduction to sociology*. 11E edn. W.W. Norton & Company.

Giddens, J. and Morton, P., 2018. Pearls of wisdom for chief academic nursing leaders. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, *34*(2), pp.75-81.

Gilbert, N., Burrows, R. & Pollert, A. 1992 *Fordism and Flexibility*, *Fordism and Flexibility*. Edited by A. Gilbert, Nigel; Burrows, Roger; Pollert. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd. doi: 10.1007/978-1-349-13526-4.

Giritli Nygren, K., 2009. The rhetoric of e-government management and the reality of e-government work: the swedish action plan for e-government considered. *International Journal of Public Information Systems*, (2), pp.135-146.

Global, Uni. 2019 'The economic and social consequences of postal services liberalization'.

Gori, P. and Parcu, P.L., 2018. Postal Operators as "Ground Based" Online Platforms?. In *New business and regulatory strategies in the postal sector* (pp. 1-14). Springer, Cham.

Gough, J., 1992. Where's the Value in 'Post-Fordism'?. In *Fordism and Flexibility* (pp. 31-45). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Grachev, M. & Rakitsky, B. 2013 'Historic horizons of Frederick Taylor's scientific management', *Journal of Management History*, 19(4), pp. 512–527. doi: 10.1108/JMH-05-

2012-0043.

Grachev, M. and Rakitsky, B., 2013. Historic horizons of Frederick Taylor's scientific management. *Journal of Management History*.

Gramsci, A., 1971. *Hegemony* (pp. 95-123). na.

Gruzd, S. and Lalbahadur, A. 2020 *How can Zimbabwe successfully reintegrate into the international community?* Harare.

Guermazi, B. and Segni, I., 2004. Postal Policy and Regulatory Reform in Developing Countries. *The Postal Sector in Developing and Transition Countries, Washington*, p.42.

Guislain, P., 2004. *The postal sector in developing and transition countries: Contributions to a reform agenda* (No. 31664, p. 1). The World Bank.

Gull,R., *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* (IJHSSI) 2017:68-70 *Scientific Management; Concept, Principles, And Relevance Author*.

Gunasekaran, A., Ngai, E.W.T. and McGaughey, R.E., 2008. Information technology and systems justification. In *Evaluating information systems* (pp. 37-70). Routledge.

Halkos, G., 2012. Importance and influence of organizational changes on companies and their employees.

Harwood, I. K et al., 2016. *Effects of Organizational Restructuring on Firm Performance*: A Case of National Bank of Kenya. Global Journal of Advanced Research, 3(1), 43-49

Haveman, H. A. 2018 '20,094', (January 2016).

Hecht, J., 2001. Classical labour-displacing technological change: the case of the US insurance industry. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, *25*(4), pp.517-537.

Helliker, K. and Murisa, T., 2020. Zimbabwe: continuities and changes. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, *38*(1), pp.5-17.

Hirst, P. and Zeitlin, J., 1991. State, democracy, socialism: introduction. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *20*(2), pp.133-137.

Hirst, P. and Zeitlin, J., 1991. State, democracy, socialism: introduction. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *20*(2), pp.133-137.

Huijboom, N., 2007, May. Social capital and ICT adoption in the public sector. In *ACM International Conference Proceeding Series* (Vol. 228, pp. 140-147).

Huys, R., Van Hootegem, G., Maenen, S. and Ramioul, M., 2002. Is ICT transforming the world of work?.

Ianni, J.B., 2008. 23. Postal reform in developing countries: challenges and choices. *Handbook of Worldwide Postal Reform*, p.400.

International Telecommunication Union., 2020 *Measuring digital development facts and figures*. ITU Publications

Irani, Z. and Love, P.E. eds., 2008. *Evaluating information systems: public and private sector*. Routledge.

Jaag, C. and Maegli, M., 2015. Market regulations and USO in the revised Swiss Postal Act: Provisions and authorities. In *Postal and Delivery Innovation in the Digital Economy* (pp. 301-311). Springer, Cham.

Jaag, C., 2015. Postal sector development between digitization and regulation. In *The Routledge Companion to Network Industries* (pp. 45-56). Routledge.

Jaag, C., Trinkner, U. and Yusof, J., 2014. Assessment of EU postal sector policy during the Second Barroso administration (2010-2014). *Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Research Paper*, (2014/117).

Jackson, M.H., Poole, M.S. and Kuhn, T., 2002. The social construction of technology in studies of the workplace. *Handbook of new media: Social shaping and consequences of ICTs*, pp.236-253.

Jazdowska, N., 2001. *Will they ever learn? Work representation in Zimbabwe's manufacturing industry 1980-1998'* (Doctoral dissertation, PhD Thesis, Coventry University).

Jefferis, K., 2020. Zimbabwe's currency 'curse'and the economic malaise.

Jessop, B. 2017 'Neoliberalism', (January).

Jessop, B., 1990. State theory: Putting the capitalist state in its place.

Jessop, B., 2019. Primacy of the economy, primacy of the political: Critical theory of neoliberalism. In *Handbuch Kritische Theorie* (pp. 893-905). Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

Johns, E.A., 1973. *The sociology of organizational change*. First Edition. Pergamon Press.

Johnson, B. and Arcangel, D., 2011. *Everything you want to know about Organisational Change*. IT Governance Ltd.

Jones, L., Watson, B., Hobman, E., Bordia, P., Gallois, C. and Callan, V.J., 2008. Employee perceptions of organizational change: impact of hierarchical level. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.

Jorgenson, D.W. and Stiroh, K.J., 1999. Information technology and growth. *American Economic Review*, *89*(2), pp.109-115.

Kanji, G. and Moura e Sá, P., 2003. Sustaining healthcare excellence through performance measurement. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, *14*(3), pp.269-289.

Kanyenze, G., Chitambara, P. and Tyson, J., 2017. The outlook for the Zimbabwean economy. *Supporting Economic Transformation, London*.

Kawulich, B., 2012. Collecting data through observation. *Doing social research: A global context*, *6*(12), pp.150-160.

Keane, C., 2008. A new economy? ICT investment and Australia's economic boom. *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, (61), pp.112-133.

Kellner, A., Townsend, K. and Wilkinson, A., 2017. 'The mission or the margin?'A high-performance work system in a non-profit organisation. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *28*(14), pp.1938-1959.

Kempe.R., 2001. The new public management: context and practice in Africa. *International public management journal*, *4*(2), pp.119-134

Kezar, A., 2001. Organizational Models and Facilitators of Change: Providing a Framework for Student and Academic Affairs Collaboration. *New directions for higher education*, *116*, pp.63-74.

Khator, A. 2013 'THE RELEVANCE OF TRADITIONAL POST OFFICE SERVICES IN THE GROWTH', *International Journal of Business and Management Review Vol.1, No.2, pp31-42*, 1(2), pp. 31–42.

Kipping, M. and Üsdiken, B., 2014. History in organization and management theory: More than meets the eye. *Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), pp.535-588.

Kipping, M. and Üsdiken, B., 2014. History in organization and management theory: More than meets the eye. *Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), pp.535-588.

Kiumarsi, S., Jayaraman, K. and Mohd Isa, S., 2015. Service quality and innovation in Malaysian post offices: An empirical study. *Global Business and Organizational Excellence*, *35*(1), pp.55-66.

Kivunja, A. C., Ahmed, A. & Kuyini, B. (2017) 'Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts', 6(5), pp. 26–41.

Klein, H.K. and Kleinman, D.L., 2002. The social construction of technology: Structural considerations. *Science, Technology, & Human Values*, *27*(1), pp.28-52.

Klerck, G.., 2001. Metaphors of progress in the discourses of development: The regulation approach. In: J. Coetzee, J Graaff,F. Hendricks & G. Wood (eds) Development: *Theory, policy and practice*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press

Korunka, C. and Kubicek, B., 2017. Job demands in a changing world of work. In *Job demands in a changing world of work* (pp. 1-5). Springer, Cham.

Korunka, C. Kubicek, B. 2017 J*ob Demands in a Changing World of Work'*, pp. 1–5.

Korunka, C., 2017. Challenges for job design. In *Job demands in a changing world of work* (pp. 131-151). Springer, Cham.

Kossek, E.E. and Michel, J.S., 2011. Flexible work schedules.

Kraak, A. 1996 'Transforming South Africa's Economy: From Racial-Fordism to Neo-Fordism', *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, Vol.17, pp. 39–74.

Kubíčková, L., Toulová, M. and Votoupalová, M., 2015. Specifics of the internationalization process of Czech engineering SMEs. *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis*, *63*(3), pp.947-956.

Kurgat, A., 2016. Organizational restructuring: an opportunity for growth and social networks. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, *4*(8), pp.626-655.

Laidlaw, B. and Curtis, B., 1986. Inside Postal Workers: The Labour Process, State Policy, and the Workers' Response. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, *18*, pp.139-162.

Leavy, P. ed., 2014. *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Leavy, P., 2017. *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guilford Publications.

Lee, M., 2015. Open Source Software and Human Resource. *International Information Institute (Tokyo). Information*, *18*(12), p.5045.

Lin, S.K., 2013. Human Resource Management, International Student Version. By David A. DeCenzo, Stephen P. Robbins and Susan L. Verhulst, Wiley, 2013; 448 Pages. Price£ 54.99/€ 66.00, ISBN 978-1-1183-7971-4. *Administrative Sciences*, *3*(1), pp.4-5.

Lipietz, A. and Jenson, J., 1987. Rebel sons: the regulation school. *French Politics and Society*, pp.17-26.

Lipietz, A., 1987. *Mirages and miracles* (Vol. 137). London: Verso.

Lipietz, A., 1997. The post-Fordist world: labour relations, international hierarchy and global ecology. *Review of International Political Economy*, *4*(1), pp.1-41.

Löfgren, H., 2016. The communist party of India (Marxist) and the left government in West Bengal, 1977–2011: Strains of governance and socialist imagination. *Studies in Indian Politics*, *4*(1), pp.102-115.

MacDermid, S.M. and Wittenborn, A.K., 2007. Lessons from work—Life research for developing human resources. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *9*(4), pp.556-568.

Maclean, M., Harvey, C. and Clegg, S.R., 2016. Conceptualizing historical organization studies. *Academy of Management Review*, *41*(4), pp.609-632.

Maes, G. & Hootegem, G. Van (2019) 'A systems model of organizational change', 32(7), pp. 725–738.

Makhulu, A.M., 2016. A brief history of the social wage: welfare before and after racial Fordism. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, *115*(1), pp.113-124.

Makó, C., Illéssy, M. and Csizmadia, P., 2013. Measuring organisational innovation–the example of the European Community Innovation Survey (CIS).

Mansaray, H. E. 2020 'The Role of Leadership Style in Organisational Change Management : A The Role of Leadership Style in Organisational Change Management : A Literature

Review', (January 2019).

Maruyama, S. and Sano, S., 2008. 20. The diverse characteristics of postal reforms in Asia: privatization, corporatization and liberalization. *Handbook of worldwide postal reform*, p.355.

Mazikana, A.T., 2017. Zimbabwe is currently experiencing a de-industrialization trend. Discussing the causes of de-industrialization in Zimbabwe and offering suggestion on how the country can reverse the trend. *Discussing the Causes of De-Industrialization in Zimbabwe and Offering Suggestion on How the Country Can Reverse the Trend (March 8, 2017)*.

McCollum, D.L., Zhou, W., Bertram, C., De Boer, H.S., Bosetti, V., Busch, S., Després, J., Drouet, L., Emmerling, J., Fay, M. and Fricko, O., 2018. Energy investment needs for fulfilling the Paris Agreement and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. *Nature Energy*

McLoughlin, I. and Badham, R., 2005. The Three Dimensions of E-Government. In *Paper presented*.

McLoughlin, I., 2002. *Creative technological change: The shaping of technology and organisations*. Routledge.

McLoughlin, I., 2002. *Creative technological change: The shaping of technology and organisations*. Routledge.

Merriam, S.B. and Tisdell, E.J., 2016. Designing your study and selecting a sample. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*, *67*(1), pp.73-104.

Merriam, S.B. and Tisdell, E.J., 2016. Designing your study and selecting a sample. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*, *67*(1), pp.73-104.

Methode, K., Olutayo, K., Osunsan., Irau, F., Wandiba, A.,Patricia,A., Bayo, I., *East African Scholars Journal of Economics, Business and Management* ., Volume-2 :2019 Kenya 225 Research Article *Effect of Organizational Change on Employee Performance* among selected Commercial Banks in Bujumbura, Burundu.

Mia, M.B. and Ramage, M., 2018. ICT-mediated organizational change in microfinance organizations: a case study. *Problems and perspectives in management*, (16, Iss. 3), pp.40-47.

Mlambo, A.S., 2017. From an industrial powerhouse to a nation of vendors: Over two decades of economic decline and deindustrialization in Zimbabwe 1990–2015. *Journal of Developing Societies*, *33*(1), pp.99-125.

Mondy, R.W. and Martocchio, J.J., 2016. Human Resource Management 14th Global ed.

Mori, G. T. 2017 'Examining Hindrance of Bureaucracy on Management Innovation for Organizations', 7(4), pp. 601–607.

Mosadeghrad, A. M. 2014 'Why do organisational change programmes fail ? Why do organisational change programmes fail ? Ali Mohammad Mosadeghrad Maryam Ansarian', (January 2014).

Mosley, P., 1977. Chibaro: African mine labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900–1933 by Charles Van Onselen London, Pluto Press, 1976. Pp. 326.£ 7.50.-Contract Workers and Underdevelopment in Rhodesia by Duncan G. Clarke Gwelo, Mambo Press, 1974. Pp. 132. R1. 00. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, *15*(2), pp.328-330.

Munro, A. and Rainbird, H., 2002. Job change and workplace learning in the public sector: the significance of new technology for unskilled work. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, *17*(3), pp.224-235.

Muzio, D. and Tomlinson, J., 2012, July. Structure, agency and career strategies of women and BME individuals in the legal profession. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* (Vol. 2012, No. 1, p. 10199). Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510: Academy of Management.

Nathan, M., Carpenter, G. and Roberts, S., 2003. *Getting by, not getting on*. London: Work Foundation.

Nathan, M., Carpenter, G. and Roberts, S., 2003. *Getting by, not getting on*. London: Work Foundation.

Noordin, A., Hasnan, N. and Osman, H., 2012. Service innovation of postal and courier services in Malaysia: Will it lead to customer responsiveness. *International Proceedings of Economics Development & Research*, *42*, pp.205-209.

Nowell, L. S. 2017 'Thematic Analysis : Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria', 16, pp. 1–13.

Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. and Moules, N.J., 2017. Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *16*(1), p.1609406917733847.

Noyes, A. H. 2020 *A New Zimbabwe? Assessing Continuity and Change After Mugabe*. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation.

Ocasio, W., Mauskapf, M. and Steele, C.W., 2016. History, society, and institutions: The role of collective memory in the emergence and evolution of societal logics. *Academy of Management Review*, *41*(4), pp.676-699.

Ocasio, W., Mauskapf, M. and Steele, C.W., 2016. History, society, and institutions: The role of collective memory in the emergence and evolution of societal logics. *Academy of Management Review*, *41*(4), pp.676-699.

OECD, 2002. OECD Reviews of Regulatory Reform: Regulatory Policies in OECD Countries. *From Interventionism to Regulatory Governance*.

Orlikowski, W.J. and Barley, S.R., 2001. Technology and institutions: What can research on information technology and research on organizations learn from each other?. *MIS quarterly*, pp.145-165.

Orlikowski, W.J., 1992. The duality of technology: Rethinking the concept of technology in organizations. *Organization science*, *3*(3), pp.398-427.

Owens, P., Batalla, R.J., Collins, A.J., Gomez, B., Hicks, D.M., Horowitz, A.J., Kondolf, G.M., Marden, M., Page, M.J., Peacock, D.H. and Petticrew, E.L., 2005. Fine-grained sediment in river systems: environmental significance and management issues. *River research and applications*, *21*(7), pp.693-717.

Palmer, I., Dunford, R. and Buchanan, D.A., 2017. *Managing organizational change: A multiple perspectives approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Palmer, I., Dunford, R. and Buchanan, D.A., 2017. *Managing organizational change: A multiple perspectives approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Palmer, I., Dunford, R. and Buchanan, D.A., 2017. *Managing organizational change: A multiple perspectives approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.

Parry, S., Straker, L., Gilson, N.D. and Smith, A.J., 2013. Participatory workplace interventions can reduce sedentary time for office workers—a randomised controlled trial. *PloS one*, *8*(11), p.e78957.

Pérez de Guzmán, S., Martínez, E. & Ulloa, E. 2021 'Down but not out: Union strategies and power resources in response to liberalization and changes in national postal services – The cases of Spain and Belgium', *European Journal of Industrial Relations*, 27(4), pp. 387–403.

Pettigrew, A.M., 1985. Contextualist research and the study of organizational change processes. *Research methods in information systems*, *1*, pp.53-78.

Pettigrew, A.M., 1990. Longitudinal field research on change: Theory and practice. *Organization science*, *1*(3), pp.267-292.

Pintsov, L.A. and Obrea, A., 2008. 11. Postal reform and product innovation. *Handbook of worldwide postal reform*, p.176.

PIORE, M.J. and SABEL, C., 1984. Possibilities for prosperity. *The second industrial divide*, pp.251-280.

Plaquet, A., Guillaume, M., Champagne, B., Rougier, L., Mançois, F., Rodriguez, V., Pozzo, J.L., Ducasse, L. and Castet, F., 2008. Investigation on the second-order nonlinear optical responses in the keto− enol equilibrium of anil derivatives. *The Journal of Physical Chemistry C*, *112*(14), pp.5638-5645.

Poole, M.S. and Van de Ven, A.H. eds., 2004. *Handbook of organizational change and innovation*. Oxford University press.

Poole, M.S. and Van de Ven, A.H. eds., 2004. *Handbook of organizational change and innovation*. Oxford University Press.

Postal And Telecommunications Regulatory Authority Of Zimbabwe (Potraz) ., *2019 Abridged postal & telecommunications sector performance report*, Quarterly Report

Powell, M. & Osborne, S. P. 2020 'Social enterprises , marketing , and sustainable public service provision'..

Raftopoulos, B. 2014 'Africa Spectrum', pp. 91–103.

Rahman, M.S., Hussain, B., Uddin, A.M. and Islam, N., 2015. Exploring residents' satisfaction of facilities provided by private apartment companies. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, *20*(3), pp.130-140.

Ramanathan, R., 2008. The role of organisational change management in offshore outsourcing of information technology services. *Florida: Universal Publishers*.

Ramanathan, R., 2008. The role of organisational change management in offshore outsourcing of information technology services. *Florida: Universal Publishers*.

Ritzer, G., 2011. Sociological Theory (Eight Edition). *New York, America: The McGraw-Hill Companies*.

Robbins, S.P., DeCenzo, D.A. and Wolter, R.M., 2013. *Supervision today!* (Vol. 7). Pearson.

Robert, G. and Fulop, N., 2014. The role of context in successful improvement. *Perspectives on context. A selection of essays considering the role of context in successful quality improvement. London: Health Foundation*, *31*.

Rosen, R., Mountford, J., Lewis, G., Lewis, R., Shand, J. and Shaw, S., 2011. Integration in action: four international case studies. *London: The Nuffield Trust*.

Rotmans, J., Kemp, R. and Van Asselt, M., 2001. More evolution than revolution: transition management in public policy. *foresight*.

Sachikonye, L. and Raftopoulos, B., 2018. *Building from the rubble: The labour movement in Zimbabwe since 2000*. African Books Collective.

Sachikonye, L., 1990. The 1990 Zimbabwe elections: a post-mortem.

Saltari, E. and Travaglini, G., 2009. The productivity slowdown puzzle. Technological and non-technological shocks in the labor market. *International Economic Journal*, *23*(4), pp.483-509.

Saunders, M. N. K., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2019) *RESEARCH METHODS FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS*. 8th edn. New York.

Scher, M.J., 2001. *Postal savings and the provision of financial services: policy issues and Asian experiences in the use of the postal infrastructure for savings mobilization*. DESA.

Schiphorst, F., 2002. The institutionalization of collective bargaining in Zimbabwe: a pig in poke for trade unions. In *3rd African Regional Congress of International Industrial Relations. Cape Town, March* (pp. 6-8).

Scupola, A. and Zanfei, A., 2016. Governance and innovation in public sector services: The case of the digital library. *Government Information Quarterly*, *33*(2), pp.237-249.

Self, D. R., Armenakis, A. A. & Schraeder, M. 2007 'Organizational Change Content , Process , and Context : A Simultaneous Analysis of Employee Reactions Organizational Change Content , Process , and Context : A Simultaneous Analysis of Employee Reactions', (June 2013), pp. 37–41.

Senior, B. and Swailes, S., 2016. Organisational Change. 5th edn. Harlow.

Shen, J., 2005. Towards a generic international human resource management (IHRM) model. *Journal of Organisational Transformation & Social Change*, *2*(2).

Shen, J., 2005. Towards a generic international human resource management (IHRM) model. *Journal of Organisational Transformation & Social Change*, *2*(2).

Sibanda V & Manda N., 2020 *The effects of the multi-currency system on the performance of the manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe.* Journal of Harmonized Research in Management 6(2):22-35

Sibanda, A.E., 1989. State and Industrial Relations in Developing Countries: Focus on Zimbabwe: Paper prepared for the 8th World Congress of The International Industrial Relations Association, Brussels: 4-8 September, 1989.

Sibanda, V. & Makwata, R. 2017 'Zimbabwe Post Independence Economic Policies : A Critical Review', *Lap Lambert Academic Publishing*, (February). Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314154884_Zimbabwe_Post_Independence_Econo mic_Policies_A_Critical_Review/references.

Singh, K., 2015. *Organizational Change and Development*. Excel Books

Smit, B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. 2018 'Observations in Qualitative Inquiry: When What You See Is Not What You See', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), pp. 1–3.

Smith, L., 2013. Working hard with gender: Gendered labour for women in male dominated occupations of manual trades and information technology (IT). *Equality, diversity and inclusion: An international journal*.

Snellen, I.T.M. and van de Donk, W.B. eds., 1998. *Public administration in an information age: A handbook* (Vol. 6). IOS press.

Sparrow, P.R. and Pettigrew, A.M., 1987. Britain's training problems: the search for a strategic human resources management approach. *Human Resource Management*, *26*(1), pp.109-127.

Stouten, J., Rousseau, D.M. and De Cremer, D., 2018. Successful organizational change: Integrating the management practice and scholarly literatures. *Academy of Management Annals*, *12*(2), pp.752-788.

Studies, I. for peace and security studies 2018 *Zimbabwe Conflict Insight*. Addis Ababa.

Suddaby, R. and Foster, W. M. 2016 'History and Organizational Change', pp. 1–20. doi: 10.1177/0149206316675031.

Sveningsson, S. & Sörgärde, N., 2019. *Managing Change in Organizations: How, what and Why?*. Sage.

Sweet, S. A. 1994 'University of New Hampshire Scholars ' Repository Work and power in post-Fordist production : A case study of four machine shops'.

Sweet, S.A., 1994. *Work and power in post-Fordist production: A case study of four machine shops* (Doctoral dissertation, University of New Hampshire).

Tarnoki, C. and Puentes, K., 2019. Something for everyone: A review of Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. *The Qualitative Report*, *24*(12), pp.3122-3124.

Taylor, F.W., 1911. Principles and methods of scientific management. *Journal of Accountancy*, *12*(2), pp.117-124.

Taylor, F.W., 1947. The principles of scientific management, Scientific Management. *New York & London: Harpers & Brothers, c*.

Tefera, O. and Mutambara, E., 2016. Effect of organizational changes on employees' motivation at a Country Club in Kwazulu Natal: from the employees' participation perspectives. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, *5*(1), pp.1

Thomas, K.J., 2014. Workplace technology and the creation of boundaries: The role of VHRD in a 24/7 work environment. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *16*(3), pp.281-295.

Thompson P & McHugh D 2002 *Work Organisations: A critical introduction*. 3rd edn, *Angewandte Chemie International Edition, 6(11), 951–952.* 3rd edn. New York: Palgrave.

Thompson, A. and Beardwell, J., 2017. Human resource management: A contemporary approach.

Torrington, D., 2014. *Human resource management*. Trans-Atlantic Publications.

Turyahikayo, E. 2018 'Bureaucratic Rigidity , Risk Aversion and Knowledge Generation and Utilization in the Public Sector : Reality or Illusion ?', *Management and Organizational Studies*, 5(3), pp. 9–16. doi: 10.5430/mos.v5n3p9.

UN 2021 'Common Country Analysis', p. 97.

Union, U.P., 1999. 125 Years 1874–1999. *International Systems and Communications Limited (ISC)*.

Universal Postal Union,. 2019. Convention Manual. *Berne 2019 International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union*

Universal Postal Union., 2019, *Postal development report perspectives on the performance of postal operators worldwide*.

Üsdiken, B. and Kieser, A. 2007 'Introduction : History in Organisation Studies', (October 2014), pp. 37–41.

Üsdiken, B. and Kieser, A., 2004. Introduction: History in organisation studies. *Business History*, *46*(3), pp.321-330.

Üsdiken, B. and Kieser, A., 2004. Introduction: History in organisation studies. *Business History*, *46*(3), pp.321-330.

Usdiken, B., Kipping, M. & Engwall, L. 2011 'M & OH Historical perspectives on organizational', 6(1), pp. 3–12.

Üsdiken, B., Kipping, M. and Engwall, L., 2011. Historical perspectives on organizational stability and change: Introduction to the special issue. *Management & Organizational History*, *6*(1), pp.3-12.

Van Graan, J. and Ukpere, W.I., 2012. An inclusive approach to structural transformation in organisational restructuring. *African Journal of Business Management*, *6*(50), pp.11916-11922.

Vance, C.M., Paik, Y. and White, J.A., 2006. Tracking bias against the selection of female expatriates: Implications and opportunities for business education. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, *48*(6), pp.823-842.

Vinger, G. and Cilliers, F., 2006. Effective transformational leadership behaviours for managing change. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *4*(2), pp.1-9.

Vinger, G., 2004. The contextualist model and organisational change: a case of higher education transformation. *Interim: Interdisciplinary Journal*, *3*(2), pp.186-203.

Voet, J. Van Der 2013 'The effectiveness and specificity of change management in a public organization : Transformational leadership and a bureaucratic organizational structure', *European Management Journal*, pp. 1–10.

Volti, R., 2011. *An introduction to the sociology of work and occupations*. Sage Publications.

VON GLINOW, M.M. and McShane, S., 2018. *M: Organizational behavior*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Wadhwani, R. D., Suddaby, R. and Popp, A. (2018) 'History as Organizing : Uses of the Past in Organization Studies'.

Wadhwani, R.D., Suddaby, R., Mordhorst, M. and Popp, A., 2018. History as organizing: Uses of the past in organization studies. *Organization Studies*, *39*(12), pp.1663-1683.

Wahab, E.O. and Jawando, J.O., 2008. The effects of bureaucracy and its implications for adhocracy in the workplace: a study of Lagos State University. *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, *3*(1), pp.16-24.

Ward, H. 2010 'The Co-evolution of Regimes of Accumulation and Patterns of Rule : State Autonomy and the Possibility of Functional Responses to Crisis The Co-evolution of Regimes of Accumulation and Patterns of Rule : State Autonomy and the Possibility of

Functional Res', (December 2014), pp. 37–41.

Watson, T. and Watson, T.J., 2008. *Sociology, work and industry*. Routledge.

Watson, T. J. 2008 *Sociology , Work and Industry*. 5th edn. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Watson, T.J., 2008. Managing identity: Identity work, personal predicaments and structural circumstances. *Organization*, *15*(1), pp.121-143.

Weichbrodt, J. & Grote, G. 2015 Rules and Routines in Organizations : A Review and Extension

Weick, K.E. and Quinn, R.E., 1999. Organizational change and development. *Annual review of psychology*, *50*(1), pp.361-386.

Wijnhoven, A.B. and Wassenaar, D.A., 1990. Impact of information technology on organizations: The state of the art. *International Journal of Information Management*, *10*(1), pp.35-53.

World Bank, 2021 *Economic update*. Washington.

Yin, R.K., 2016. Qualitative research from start to finish (Second). *New York:*

Zimbabwe Infracture Report, Z. 2019 Infrastructure Report

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency ZIMSTAT.,2019 *Labour force child labour survey report*

Zimbabwe, G. of 2018 'Government of Zimbabwe TOWARDS AN UPPER-MIDDLE INCOME ECONOMY BY 2030 " New Dispensation Core Values " Zimbabwe : Some Key Facts', (April).

Zuboff, S., 1988. *In the age of the smart machine: The future of work and power*. Basic Books, Inc..

Zwizwai, B., Halimana, C., Sibanda, A., Kaliyati, J. and Braathen, E., 1994. *Coordinated African Programme of Technical Assistance on Services (CAPAS): a study on services in Zimbabwe*. Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: POSTAL WORKERS

A. Biographical Information

Age	
Sex	

Highest Educational Qualification attained	
Year of commencement at Zimpost	
Initial position upon commencement of work	
Positions of employment occupied over the years	
Current position of employment	
Type of employment contract	

B. Period 2010 to 2015

1. What was the nature of postal business when you joined the organisation? Did it change over time? If so how and why?

   There were very high mail volumes however they have declined significantly over time. The decline is attributed to technology/

2. Explain the type of work that you did when you joined Zimpost? Did it change over time? If so how and why?

   Started off as a mails clerk, the job was manual and involved sorting letters and parcels. Workers

3. What were the different categories of work that were done by other departments that you worked with? Did that change over time? If so how and why?

4. How was management perceived from 2010 to 2015?

5. How did workers relate to each other? Did employees' workplace relations change during this period? If so how and why?

6. How were work place grievances and disputes resolved during this period? Did the resolution process change? If so how and why?

7. How did your work change from 2010 to 2015? If so why? Was the process of change negotiated? Were there any disputes or conflict in the change process? If so why and how were they resolved?

8. What are the organisational changes that that were implemented from 2010 to 2015? In your view, were these changes positive or negative? Were they necessary or not?

9. How did the different changes affect workers, senior managers, middle management, line managers and technical or skilled workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers?

10. Were you involved by management in any of the changes that were implemented? If so, how? If not, why?

11. Did workers initiate any changes from 2010 to 2015?

12. Was there any organisational restructuring or staff rationalisation that was implemented from 2010 to 2015? If so, how did they affect different categories of workers senior managers, middle management, line managers and technical or skilled workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers?

13. What was the role of trade unions from 2010 to 2015? What was your perception of trade unions during this period? Why? How did management view trade unions during this period? Why?

14. How did workers negotiate salary increments, benefits and other working conditions with management from 2010 to 2015? Why?

15. What were the salaries or wage rates for workers in your grade during this period? What other benefits were offered to workers in your grade? Were these salaries considered fair by employees?

16. Did the introduction of information communication technology such as computers and mobile phones change the way you performed work from 2010 to 2015? Did the use of computers make your work flexible? Did the use of computers enhance your skills? Did the use of computers ease the process of doing work?

17. Do you think the use of technology at Zimpost replaced certain groups of workers from 2010 to 2015? Why?

18. Are there any other changes that took place during this period that you think are important?

C.   Period 2016 to 2020

1. What was the nature of postal business when from 2016 to 2020? Did it change over time? If so how and why?

2. Explain the type of work that you did from 2016 to 2020. Has it changed over time? If so how and why?

3. What were the different categories of work that were done by other departments that you worked with? Did that change over time? If so how and why?

4. How was management perceived from 2016 to 2020? Why?

5. How did workers relate to each other during this period? Did employees' workplace relations change during this period? If so how and why?

6. How were work place grievances and disputes resolved during this period? Did the resolution process change? If so how and why?

7. How did your work change from 2016 to 2020? If so why? Was the process of change negotiated? Were there any disputes or conflict in the change process? If so why and how were they resolved?

8. What are the organisational changes that that were implemented from 2016 to 2020? In your view, were these changes positive or negative? Were they necessary or not?

9. How did the different changes affect workers, senior managers, middle management, line managers and technical or skilled workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers?

10. Were you involved by management in any of the changes that were implemented? If so, how? If not, why?

11. Did workers initiate any changes from 2016 to 2020? If so how and why? If not, why?

12. Was there any organisational restructuring or staff rationalisation that was implemented from 2016 to 2020? If so, how did they affect different categories of workers senior managers, middle management, line managers and technical or skilled workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers?

13. What was the role of trade unions from 2016 to 2020? What was your perception of trade unions during this period? Why? How did management view trade unions during this period? Why?

14. How did workers negotiate salary increments, benefits and other working conditions with management from 2016 to 2020? Why?

15. What were the salaries or wage rates for workers in your grade during this period? What other benefits were offered to workers in your grade? Were these salaries considered fair by employees?

16. Did the introduction of information communication technology such as computers and mobile phones change the way you performed work from 2016 to 2020? Did the use

of computers make your work flexible? Did the use of computers enhance your skills? Did the use of computers ease the process of doing work?

17. Do you think the use of technology at Zimpost replaced certain groups of workers from 2016 to 2020? Why?

18. Zimbabwe started to experience major economic challenges during this period. How did these challenges affect you as a postal worker? What were your copying strategies?

19. Are there any other changes that took place during this period that you would like to discuss?

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST

A.   Biographical Information

Age	
Sex	
Highest Educational Qualification attained	
Year of commencement at Zimpost	
Initial position upon commencement of work	

Positions of employment occupied over the years	
Current position of employment	
Type of employment contract	

B. Period 2010 to 2015

1. What did your job entail from 2010 to 2015? How and why has this changed?

2. When you joined the organisation, what were the functions of the IT department? How and why has this changed?

3. When did the automation of post offices and back offices begin? How and why?

4. Over the period 2010 to 2015 was the process of sorting mail automated/mechanised? If not, why?

5. Are there any ICT products and applications that were introduced in the organisation from 2010 to 2015? How and why?

6. Did postal workers resist any ICT training during this period? If so, how and why?

7. In your view, how did ICT change the way Zimpost operated over the period 2010 to 2015? If so, how and why?

8. In your opinion, what was the impact of ICT on postal operations from 2010 to 2015?

9. Did the organisation outsource any ICT work over the period 2010 to 2015? How and why?

10. Did the use of ICTs change the reporting structure in the organisation from 2010 to 2015? How and why?

11. Are there any other changes that you think are important that occurred during this period?

C. Period 2016 to 2020

1. What did your job entail from 2016 to 2020? How and why has this changed?

2. Did the functions of the IT department change? If so how and why?

3. Were there any post offices and back offices that were mechanised/ automated during this period? why?

4. Over the period 2016 to 2020 was the process of sorting mail automated/mechanised? If so, how and why?

5. Are there any ICT products and applications that were introduced in the organisation from 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

6. Did postal workers resist any ICT training during this period? If so, how and why?

7. In your view, how did ICT change the way Zimpost operated over the period 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

8. In your opinion, what was the impact of ICT on postal operations from 2016 to 2020?

9. Did the organisation outsource any ICT work over the period 2016 to 2020? How and why?

10. Did the use of ICTs change the reporting structure in the organisation from 2016 to 2020? How and why?

11. Over the period 2016 to 2020 are there any ICT products and applications that were introduced in the organisation? If so how and why?

12. Did postal workers resist any ICT training during this period? How and why?

13. Did the organisation outsource any ICT work over the period 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

14. Were more resources allocated to the ICT department over the period 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

15. In your opinion, what was the impact of ICT on postal operations from 2016 to 2020?

16. In your view, do public organisations lag behind in the use of ICT products and applications? Why?

17. Did the use of ICT change the reporting structure of the organisation from 2016 to 2020? If so how and why?

18. What drives change in the organisation? Is it ICT or other factors? Why?

19. Are there any e-commerce products and services that were introduced in the organisation from 2016 to 2020? How and why?

20. Do you think ICTs made work more flexible for example enabling employees to work from home during this period? How and why?

21. Are there any other changes that you think are important that occurred during this period?

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTITIONERS

A. Biographical Information

Age	
Sex	
Highest Educational Qualification attained	
Year of commencement at Zimpost	
Initial position upon commencement of work	
Positions of employment	

occupied over the years	
Current position of employment	
Type of employment contract	

B. Period 2010 to 2015

1. Can you describe the structure of the Human Resources (HR) Department when you joined the organisation? Has it changed? If so how and why?

2. Over the period 2010 to 2015, what major policy changes were implemented by the HRD? Why were these policy changes made?

3. What major changes in human resources management practice were made in particular recruitment practices, human capacity development and performance management? Why were these changes made?

4. What were the major functions of the HR Department over the period 2010 to 2015? Why?

5. Did the role of the HR Department in bringing value to Zimpost change from 2010 to 2015? If so why?

6. Did technology change the way work is performed by the HR Department from 2010 to 2015? If so how and why?

7. How did technology change the way work is performed by workers during this period? Did it make work more flexible for example enabling employees to work from home? If so, how and why?

8. How did organisational restructuring and staff rationalisation affect the different categories of workers such as senior management, middle-level managers, skilled or technical workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from 2010 to 2015? Why?

9. How did the HR Department prepare workers for this change process?

10. What types of work did female employees mainly engage in from 2010 to 2015? Why?

11. Did the role of trade unions change in the period of 2010 to 2015? If so, how and why?

12. Did the process of collective bargaining between employees and management change during this period? If so, how and why?

13. In your hiring processes, what major skills were required from workers from 2010 to 2015? Why?

14. Did the HR Department outsource any of its functions over the period 2010 to 2015? If so, how and why?

15. What challenges did you experience in managing the various organisational changes during this period? Why?

16. In your hiring processes, what skills were required from different categories of workers such as senior management, middle management, line managers, skilled or technical workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from 2010 to 2015?

17. Are there any other organisational changes that you think are relevant?

C. Period 2016 to 2020

1. Can you describe the structure of the Human Resources (HR) Department over this period? Has it changed? If not, Why?

2. Over the period 2016 to 2020, what major policy changes were implemented by the HRD? Why were these policy changes made?

3. What major changes in human resources management practice were made in particular recruitment practices, human capacity development and performance management? Why were these changes made?

4. What were the major functions of the HR Department over the period 2016 to 2020? Why?

5. Did the role of the HR Department in bringing value to Zimpost change from 2016 to 2020? If so why?

6. Did technology change the way work is performed by the HR Department from 2016 to 2020? If so how and why?

7. How did technology change the way work is performed by workers during this period? Did it make work more flexible for example enabling employees to work from home? If so, how and why?

8. How did organisational restructuring and staff rationalisation affect the different categories of workers such as senior management, middle-level managers, skilled or technical workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from 2016 to 2020? Why?

9. How did the HR Department prepare workers for this change process?

10. What types of work did female employees mainly engage in from 2016 to 2020? Why?

11. Did the role of trade unions change in the period of 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

12. Did the process of collective bargaining between employees and management change during this period? If so, how and why?

13. In your hiring processes, what major skills were required from workers from 2016 to 2020? Why?

14. Did the HR Department outsource any of its functions over the period 2016 to 2020? If so, how and why?

15. What challenges did you experience in managing the various organisational changes during this period? Why?

16. Over the period 2016 to 2020, Zimbabwe's economy has been experiencing significant decline. How did that change the work of HR managers? Why?

17. In your hiring processes, what skills were required from different categories of workers such as senior management, middle management, line managers, skilled or technical workers, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from 2016 to 2020? Why?

18. Are there any other organisational changes that you think are relevant?

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Participant Information Sheet

Faith Kambarami- Zengeni
Email: faykambarami@gmail.com
Phone number: +263785888129

Dear participant,

I am a PhD student at Rhodes University, South Africa. To fulfil the requirements of my studies, I am conducting research on the historical development of postal services in Zimbabwe, with a focus on Zimbabwe Posts (ZimPost). To this end, my research seeks to explore the origins, causes, processes and historical dynamics of organisational change in postal organisations. I have been granted permission by ZimPost to conduct this study. I am interested in understanding your experiences of changes as part of my research.

Participation in this study involves in-depth interviews that will be conducted either over the telephone or face-to-face. If you are able and willing to assist, an interview will be arranged for a time and place that are convenient to you. Participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in the study. You are also free to end the interview and your participation at any time.

I would like, with your consent, to record the interview. This is for no purpose other than ensuring that I capture the details of the interview accurately and to avoid the distraction of taking detailed notes during the interview.

To protect your identity, your name will not be used in any part of this study. A pseudonym will be used to ensure that no one will know that you participated in this research. You will therefore not be identifiable in any way. I will ensure that I send you an electronic link to my research report once it is deposited in the Rhodes University library.

If you are willing and able to participate, I will be most grateful. You are welcome to contact me on the number provided, and/or to contact my academic supervisor at the University, if you have any questions or concerns: Professor Gilton Klerck at G.Klerck@ru.ac.za.

Yours faithfully,

Faith Kambarami- Zengeni

APPENDIX 5: CONSENT FORM

Consent Form for Participation in Study

I, _____ am willing to participate in this study. I understand that there will be no direct benefit for me in participating in this study and that there are not likely to be any risks involved. I understand that participation is voluntary, there will be no benefits for participation, and I am free to withdraw from the study at any time.

I have been given sufficient information about this research project. The purpose of my participation as an interviewee in this project has been explained to me and is clear.

I have been guaranteed that the researcher will not identify me by name.

I have read and understood the participant information sheet, my questions about participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, and I am aware of the risks and benefits of participating in the study.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Consent for Audio Taping of the Interview

I_____hereby give the researcher Faith Kambarami-Zengeni permission to tape-record the interview.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 6: ZIMBABWE POSTS PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT STUDY

Board Chairman

Zimbabwe Posts (Pvt) Ltd

[address block illegible]

16 March 2020

Attention F Kambarami

REF: Request for Permission to carry out PhD Research at Zimbabwe Posts Pvt Ltd

We are pleased to advise you that your request to carry out a research at Zimbabwe Posts Private Ltd has been approved. Please be advised that the permission being granted is specifically for academic purposes only and the report should not be published in any other publications except Rhodes University where you are currently undertaking your studies.

Zimpost will require you to submit the copy of the research findings once the research is completed.

Yours Sincerely,

[signature]

J Tinarwo

Please sign a copy and return confirming that you will submit the report once the research is completed.

Signed..................... Date 11/05/20 .....I.D Number 63-121976-K4

*Delete inapplicable