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Education and violence: The schools' micro-politics and the macro-politics in Zimbabwe

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This study examined forms of violence in Zimbabwean schools and sought to draw an analogy with the country's macro-politics. Key interrelationships emerged which painted an endemic culture of violence. Over three hundred (300) students and eighty, (80) teachers submitted 2 - 3 page-written accounts on their schools' micro-politics. Thirty, (30) trainee teachers and seven (7) lecturers also completed a qualitative questionnaire. Cartoons were also used to capture the experience of citizens in the macro-politics. The degrading and violent disciplinary networks applied by teachers on students in violation of statutory disciplinary regulations were noted. It was also established that knowledge discourses and new trainee teachers have been politicised into partisanship and intolerance, a situation that may serve to perpetuate a violent culture and compromise teacher professionalism. This article therefore discussed participants' accounts and concluded by posing key points and recommendations which were seen as critical, if Zimbabwe is to untangle from the gripping forces of violence.

Key words: Violence, democratic education, discipline, authority, knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Education is not often associated with violence. Oftentimes we are hesitant to conceptualise educational activities as associated with violence (Harber, 2004). In Zimbabwe where violence has been endemic (Broch-Due, 2005; Blair, 2002), it remained a challenge to establish further understanding on the phenomenon. This article therefore explored students' experiences of violence within the schools' micro-politics in Zimbabwe and drew an analogy with the violence pervading the macro-political field. The micro-politics of the schools refers to local administrative and educational processes within the schools. Key in this micro-political interaction is the role of prefects and the general conceptions on teacher-student relationships and how these dynamics manifest.

In the macro-politics, Zimbabwe has had a considerable streak associated with political violence. Chief among them has been the Midlands and Matabeleland disturbances of the 1980s which allegedly claimed over 20 000 lives (Sisulu, 2007; Human Rights Forum, 2003) and operation 'Remove the filth' in 2005 which was allegedly targeted at opposition supporters in urban areas and led to loss of life and destruction of property (Human Rights Forum, 2007). Furthermore, there have been numerous politically motivated murders in pre and post election violence in subsequent years (Human Rights

Forum, 2003) and quite recently after the March 29, 2008 poll. In 1998 the country's president threatened Trade Unionists before an industrial strike proclaiming "We have degrees in violence" (Open Society Institute, 2007). It is noted that the country's political landscape has continued in ways that affirm this ubiquitous culture of brutality and violence on those perceived to hold a different opinion from the status quo (Blair, 2002; Human Rights Forum, 2003; Stiff 2002: Sisulu, 2007). Such a culture has not only brought crisis within education, where standards have fallen and some teachers coerced into partisan 're-orientation' programmes (Raftopoulos, 2003; Ranger, 2004), but is also visible and evident where some teachers brutally deal with students in their exercise of supposedly professional authority. A clear pattern emerged in Zimbabwe, both within the schools' micro-politics and the macro-politics, where those in positions of power treat those lower in the hierarchy with disdain as Michels (1962) noted of undemocratic societies. In the 21st century where governance systems overwhelmingly favour a democratic culture and where democracy has become a moral yardstick (Harber, 1995; Crick 2002), the disciplinary networks in some of Zimbabwe schools need revisiting. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education whose goal is stated as "Promoting democracy, public participa-

tion and civic responsibility in the development process" and "cherishes in its clients and employees the values of critical thinking" (UNESCO, 2001), may need to reflect on the violent cultures prevailing in some schools and in the macro-politics in general. Otherwise such a mission statement may be seen as utopia and a masking of realities. The study therefore sought to establish further understanding on violence in Zimbabwe and whether there existed relationships between the schools' micro-politics and the macro-politics and with what implications on citizenship.

The carceral as a symbol of violence in Zimbabwe's schools

A carceral state is modelled after the idea of a prison. While a carceral may seek to know and control (sometimes violently) the 'soul' of its victims or inmates, it is itself unaccountable. The main features of the carceral are seen as isolation and severe punishment even for minor offences (Foucault, 1997), whose outcomes (intended or not), yield submissiveness and control of the 'soul' through knowledge. It is noted that knowledge is often seen as power (Strange, 1994; Foucault, 1977). The carceral is largely seen in relation to its desire for 'normalisation' by those in positions of power or in control of the means of production (Haralambos and Heald, 1980). The carceral system, of which there are traits in some of Zimbabwe's schools, sought to 'produce bodies that were docile and capable' (Foucault, 1977). This was to be achieved through disciplinary forms that 'concentrated all the coercive technologies of behaviour' (Foucault, 1977). It is extraordinary to note that the punitive policies on the body and the seemingly interchangeable image of 17th century young offender institute narrated in Foucault (1977) spills over into some aspects of schooling in 21st century Zimbabwe. It was noted that possibly the desire to maintain discipline as an end in itself, had, as a consequence given birth to some traits of carceralism in some schools. From a functionalist perspective on education where schools are primarily seen as meant to produce skilled labour for the economy (Haralambos and Heald, 1980), carceralism may serve as a mode to achieving that goal since the modelling of the body produces knowledge of the individual…induces modes of behaviour, the acquisition of skills, the establishment of power relations and a subjection to be maintained (Foucault, 1977).

Bailey (2000) commented concerning 19th century British education that, 'the lower classes ought to be educated to discharge the duties cast upon them. They ought also to be educated that they may appreciate and defer to a higher cultivation when they meet it.' It is noted that what obtained in 19th century British education also extended to Anglophone colonial Africa, including Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Such objectifying forms of education that advance the 'modelling of the body' for servitude, have transcended colonial times and may also be found in neo colonial Africa. Modelled in a prison-like system the carceral was often manifested in docility or fatalism (Freire, 1970) as exemplified with Mettray – a 17th century junior offenders' institution run like a school (Foucault, 1977). Though Zimbabwe's schools may not wholly resemble Mettray, there are some traits of the carceral in some schools

Of note, 'the carceral pyramid gives to the power to inflict legal punishment, a context in which it appears to be free of all excess and violence' (Foucault, 1977). It is noted that the excess, violence and abuse, which may send one to prison in a civil community may fail to do so under a carceral state, with its 'licences.' A good example is where abuses on students by some teachers, prefects and well-connected students are swept under the carpet as will be shown in the students' accounts.

Sadism and the spectacle of the scaffold as a form of violence in Zimbabwe's schools

In describing the spectacle of the scaffold, Foucault (1977) noted that penal torture was an organised ritual for the marking of victims and the expression of the power that punishes as opposed to the expression of justice. "The very excess of the violence employed is one of the elements of its glory; the fact that the guilty man should mourn and cry out under blows is not a shameful side effect…justice pursues the body beyond all possible pain" (Foucault 1977)

Numerous students complained of being beaten by teachers and these accounts are discussed under 'physical violence'. The transcendence of some 17th century traits of the spectacle of the scaffold into 21st century schooling may suggest that organisational institutions as observed by Michels (1962) risk replicating that old model of order, discipline and justice unless there be a conscious decision to democratise educational space with a measure of accountability. The Foucauldian narration of the 17th century forms of penal justice is also seen as highly sadistic since the pleasure in complete domination over another person is the very essence of the sadistic drive whose aim is to transform men into a thing, the animate to the inanimate (Fromm, 1966). Death and decapitation on the scaffold may just be one of many possible forms of deaths of which sadism is another. This non-judicial but political ritual of punishing is seen as demanding reparation not because the offender has brought injury to anyone but 'because the right of the superior man (the prince) is violated and because it offends the dignity of his character' (Foucault, 1997). In this case the teacher's hierarchical authority, which Freire (1970) claims is sometimes confused with professional authority passes off the teacher as the 'prince' or the 'sovereign' and that the breaking of a school rule is seen as attacking the dignity of his person.

In traditional Zimbabwean culture, like many African cultures, the child is socialised to belong to the whole

(Mbiti, 1988). This culture is directly descendent from pre-colonial Africa where the tribe was central and the individual secondary (Tyrell and Jurgens, 1983). It might therefore follow that the disciplinary networks in the traditional African sense are co-operate and communitarian in nature and may limit abuses. It was not un-common in a balanced traditional African setting that children readily turned to aunts, uncles and grand parents to avoid brutality especially from an angry parent. When a child has done wrong s/he would have shamed the whole group or community (Mbiti, 1988; Garegae, 2007) and not the individual 'prince' or 'sovereign', in this case the teacher. Teachers who go on to personally brutalise some students to bring about a utopia of order in some schools, act outside current legal frame-works in Zimbabwe (Public Service Disciplinary Regulations, 1993; Zindi, 1995) and also anathemas to the African traditions they purport to preserve and against the democratic principles aspired for by most citizens.

Regulations on corporal punishment in Zimbabwe's Schools

The Zimbabwean government passed Amendment 11 of the Constitution (1992), which altered the supreme law to allow corporal punishment of minors after the Supreme Court had ruled that caning of minors constituted cruel and inhuman punishment. Though the Zimbabwean government may have sidestepped the human rights law by amending the constitution in this manner, corporal punishment remains a violation of human rights and other international statutes such as the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Article 5). In an endeavour to moderate the application of corporal punishment the Zimbabwe Public Service (Disciplinary) Regulations, only mandated the headmaster to give corporal punishment (Statutory Instrument 65 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, 1992), although teachers may inflict punishment when given specific authority by the head. The Ministry of Education Circular P.35 of 3 May 1993 on Corporal Punishment in Schools states that boys should be beaten on their buttocks with a light cane. Girls should be beaten on their palms. Section 241 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act states that "a head-teacher shall have authority to administer moderate corporal punishment for disciplinary purposes upon any minor male pupil or student" (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 2005). However, it was noted in the students' accounts that degrading and inhuman treatment was ubiquitous in some schools and that moderation as stated by law was lacking since most teachers were not seeking consent from the headmaster.

METHODOLOGY

The study sought to establish understanding on the levels of violence in Zimbabwe's secondary schools and whether there existed interrelationships with the country's often-violent macropolitics.

The research collected written observation accounts from urban and rural secondary students, teachers and head-teachers. Trainee teachers and lecturers from a teachers' college also completed quailtative questionnaires. This data helped to explore the schools' micro-politics and the impact of violence in general. Another phase of the research collected a profile of cartoons from national media in Zimbabwe so as to capture the macro-political experience on violence over the people studied.

It is noted that one of the intriguing reasons for the use of images such as cartoons in educational research is that they touch on the limitations of language, in ways that help us think about social life, possibly free from the traps set by language (Walker 1993 cited in Schartz, 1993). The use of background knowledge and related articles in newspapers or editorial comments is often seen as helpful in their interpretation (Warburton, 1998 in Prosser, 1998). A cartoon like a proverb may be used to sum up a huge amount of social experience, not easily describable in literal words.

Sampling

Using non-probability (purposive) sampling the study selected eight secondary schools and one teacher training college where various research activities were carried out. The main rationale for choosing these institutions was mainly because of ease of access seen by Strauss and Corbin (1998) as critical in research. It is noted that the primary focus of the study was on secondary students within the schools' micro-politics. Other secondary sources of data such as teachers, lecturers and trainee teachers from a college were introduced for triangulation purposes only.

Analysis

Due consideration was given in the case of qualitative questionnaires and some written accounts where the data was used to form patterns (Wolcott, 1994) and thematizing and categorising (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Also used was Critical discourse analysis (CDA) largely founded on Marxist traditions in social theory that are interested in the relationship between language and ideology and dominance amongst groups in society (Travers, 2001). In my analysis of language used in participants' accounts and cartoons, the imprisoning effects of the 'order' and the objectifying disciplinary networks were established.

DISCUSSIONS

The discussion below forms the basis of what was found in the study concerning violence within the schools' micro-politics and in the macro-politics.

The school – prison metaphor

One student complained that, "sometimes teachers use corporal punishment, which is not allowed in the Institution. Sometimes hard manual labour is given. This results in the teachers and the students not having a sound relationship, which is conducive for learning". Though students would have initially breached some code of conduct, the teachers also act ultra-vires, (use of corporal punishment only allowable by the headmaster in extreme circumstances) breaching their own code of conduct (Zindi, 1995) thereby losing respect and creating an atmosphere of mistrust. The use of hard labour as a penal measure at school level is also reminiscent and ana-

logous to those incarcerated in Zimbabwe's jails. At one boarding school, a student wrote, "Yes I admit that the school prefects should be respected because the school authorities inaugurated them but it looks as if some of us are dogs in a cage".

It was noted that some students, presumably the less powerful perceived themselves as 'dogs in a cage', again, a symbol of imprisonment. Besides being abusive, the systems of control and discipline were also seen as imposed and often accepted with resignation by some students. The prison-like notion of a school was noted (Harber, 1995). One student at a boarding school also wrote that "another problem that we meet is that we get to see our relatives and friends on a single day.' Furthermore, some students at a city boarding school also echoed this problem. One is reminded of the restrictive measures when visiting prison inmates. Possibly, teachers may need to strike a proper balance between protecting students and allowing them space to develop responsibly (Flekky and Kaufman, 1997).

Authoritarian school rules

In maintaining this carceral state in some schools, coercion or force is sometimes used on students. One student stated that, "The school authority is strict and severe. Those who break the school rules are punished or are fired from school". Another also added, "Others say they hate the school authority because of their strong laws and punishment".

It should be noted that some of these 'strong laws and punishment' often have to do with 'the prince' or 'the sovereign' as noted earlier, that is, the teacher asserting his authority as opposed to establishing justice in proportionate reparation. When some students openly 'say they hate the school authority', 'the carceral, with its far reaching networks, allows the recruitment of major 'delinquents' (Foucault, 1977).

With its licences, the carceral state allows the 'strict and severe' or 'strong laws and punishment' to continue unabated and unaccountable. A good example was noted from another student who wrote: 'they also say that other teachers want to compete with the headmaster in making rules.' The above remark shows that sometimes teachers introduce school rules to assert their authority without due regard to student welfare and expected procedure, that is, ratification of school rules by a school board or staff. The desire to 'compete with the headmaster' seems also to border around notions of self-preservationism or of a 'sovereign' teacher as discussed earlier. This is further indicative of the assertion made earlier on corporal punishment that there are a lot of abusive and violent disciplinary networks not moderated by the headmasters, as the Zimbabwean law requires.

Abusive relationships

There were instances where teachers had sexual relation

relations with school children. Recently, UNICEF reported an over 40% increase in girl child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe due to the worsening economic and political crisis (UNICEF, 2008). It was noted that schools have not been left unscathed as a result. The dynamics of such abusive relationships further confirm the disdain with which the powerless are held both within the schools' micro-politics and the macro-politics, thereby alienating students. Writing in reference to the same issue a teacher is recorded as saying "There are cases though very rare that have been reported of teachers abusing girl students. Investigations into the matter have proved fruitless".

The failure by the school system to deal with these abuses cements the notion of some schools as carceral in nature. It is noted that the civil servants (Statutory Instrument 1 of 2000) is adequate to help prosecute such cases. In such a carceral climate, investigations often 'prove fruitless' and 'bodies' are not just disciplined: they are 'possessed' in a secondary kind of commodification.

School 'Justice'

From a moral perspective another student also wrote this about teachers: "They don't do their duties. Some come to school half naked and they expect their students to respect them. Teachers can accuse you or beat you for something you haven't done".

In a carceral, with its free 'licences' it is no wonder that some students are allegedly accused unfairly and then beaten. Sometimes the loco parentis role seems forgotten by some teachers. There were numerous instances in the accounts where students claimed to have been beaten for things they did not commit. This calls into question the justice system in the schools, or the respect attached to any due process, especially involving students. In a carceral state it would seem that the law that sends the convict to prison does not follow him there hence the excess and violence (Foucault, 1977). It may prompt one to wonder whether the 'rights' that send children to school, such as the right to education, also follow them there.

Lack of a due process as often happens in some schools may occur when those who adjudicate (teachers) think of themselves infallible and supreme ('the sovereign') and the alleged offenders (students) are seen as possessing no rights or seen as 'the have not' (Freire, 1970). This resonates with Harber's (1995) assertion that in most African classrooms a teacher often exercises unquestioned authority.

Another student further recorded that, 'some of the students think that the school authority is discriminatory. They do not beat students equally, some of the teachers are even lazy, and they do not attend lessons.' It seemed that some students had fatalistically come to accept the beatings as a legitimate activity and not as something dehumanising and to be opposed, as would happen in a civil environment. Such fatalistic students' attitudes may

serve as an affirmation to the claim that schools run like a carceral will as envisaged produce docile and capable bodies in students which is anathema to the development of democratic citizens. Laziness and non-attendance to lessons by some teachers may also be seen as another of the 'licences' in a carceral. The next discussion is on sadistic violence on students by teachers in their application of discipline where some objectifying effects were noted.

Physical violence

In reference to the harshness of his school's disciplinary system one student wrote; 'Let's make hay while the sun shines by taking the school rules strictly, for a dead man tells no tales.' One thing that comes to mind after reading the above student data is the image of 'death' (where one goes and does not return to tell the tale). It is also striking how the breaking of school rules is perceived in so severe terms that it can only be figuratively expressed in the image of death. This read like an indictment of teacher power.

In these accounts it is not suggested that the Zimbabwean student situation is exactly the same as that of the victims of the spectacle of the scaffold (Foucault, 1977) but that there are sometimes symmetrical traits reflected by those in power who seek to inflict pain on the weak so as to assert and maintain their authority. The Cape Argus of April 24, 2006 reported that;

"Teachers at a school in rural Zimbabwe have been convicted of assault after a brutal caning spree during which they beat about 300 children with broomsticks for being late for lessons, breaking one girl's arm, reports say. Villagers who heard the children's cries rushed to the school and tried to stop the beatings but failed."

The victims of such a spectacle (because punishment is inflicted to be seen by all), be it psychological or physical, often 'tell no tales' as the student claimed. Another teacher remarked that; 'some teachers are feared by students especially senior teachers that deal mainly with disciplinary problems.' Another student also observed the following: "Then, there is this kind of teacher who hits students. These are the most feared. Not that I am saying being hit is bad. I am simply saying that some of the teachers take pleasure in hitting students, which to us seems rather insensitive and heartless".

The fatalistic acceptance of physical chastisement of the body by this student does not only reflect docility (Freire, 1970; Foucault, 1977) but also breeds irrationality (Bailey 2000), which may not auger well with the development of democratic citizens as the Ministry of Education aspires (UNESCO, 2001). It seemed that dealing with disciplinary issues was sometimes accompanied with the use of brute force. The treatment and perception of stu-

dents by teachers also degenerates to degrading levels where 'teachers take pleasure in hitting students.' Such 'insensitive and heartless' administration of 'justice' seemed designed to make a spectacle of some students where sometimes, minor offences were punished harshly so as to discourage major ones. One student observed that: "If a teacher comes across as mean and merciless it could hinder a child's performance. There are a couple of teachers within the school that think of the most severe punishment and derive much joy in humiliating students".

When teachers are seen as 'heartless and insensitive' and thinking 'of the most severe punishment and derive joy in humiliating students', such perceptions are indicting and resonate with the Foucauldian spectacle of the scaffold where 'the guilty man should mourn and cry out under blows which is not seen as a shameful side effect and justice pursues the body beyond all possible pain' (Foucault 1977). The above student observation also suggests that some teachers were often the perpetrators of violence in their fitting role as oppressor, much as Freire (1970) envisaged.

Another student also observed that: 'however, there are some ignorant teachers who make student life miserable by embarrassing them at regular intervals. This creates tension between teacher and student.' The above observation also suggests the notion of deriving joy from student misery by some teachers. 'Ignorant teachers' may imply raw, uncivilised and unprofessional teachers who still exercise some archaic terror-like tactics of the 17th century jurists (Foucault, 1977), which only seek to reactivate and assert their power and dominance over students. The violent dehumanising aspects within schools kept reverberating. Just like some of the prefects, there seemed to be some teachers who become corrupted by the hierarchical, often autocratic and authoritarian enviomment condoned in some schools with negative conesquences for quality education and democratic citizenship.

Alienating violence

In the accounts one student noted that: "What students think of school authority is not easy to talk about…students think the authorities are a bother. When they are rebuked and punished, it annoys them and they end up hating the authorities". Another student commented that, "Students think that advice from authorities is rubbish. To students, prefects are just there for progress's sake".

What seemed to rile some students was the excess of teacher power where the overt or covert desire to assert teacher authority sees penalties not regulated and proportioned to offences. It was noted too that students sometimes come to a point where they are not prepared to meaningfully engage with teachers as a result. Even advice from authorities becomes seen as 'rubbish' since the school administration often condones these abuses.

The student body, which may have no clear routes to express disquiet, comes to bottle up anger and hate of the authorities.

It was noted that the hate that the school authority earns from some students is due in part to its failure to harness and discipline some wayward teachers and prefects. A student cried out; "Some teachers, if they came for a lesson, they will take a stick for a reminder. Now students say they are tired of being beaten every minute until the lesson ends. How can we relate with teachers if they do like this?" Ironically, it was noted that these violent means, which are meant to discipline students, end up alienating them and thus later affirm negative teacher perceptions when students start to act irresponsibly, or become disruptive. Another student observed that 'The relationship tends to be more strenuous as students seem to be afraid of most teachers.' It's difficult to conceptualise a learning atmosphere that is marshalled by such fear.

Another student wrote, "Some teachers just get into moods, some students are just beaten for no apparent reason, and thus students fear to talk to their teachers or even to ask questions. The teacher will want to show his bravery or cruelty on students".
The show of 'bravery or cruelty on students' by some teachers also affirms traits of sadism and making a spectacle of some students. It was noted that some abusive situations might come to a head leading to emotional strife for those affected as shown in the account below. One student addressed me directly, which indicated the extent of the problem eating him away.

"I write this report kindly asking for your assistance. Some people abuse us and in my own side I feel like hanging myself. Yes as human beings we make mistakes. I remember I made a mistake during a certain teacher's lesson, but it looks as if she is revenging indirectly and truly one day I will either gun her or hang myself."

It was noted from the above quote how forms of sadism in a school may escalate in a young person's life, alienating them as a result. The issue of students being beaten seemed quite prevalent in the data and sometimes an acceptable fate. This brings to question whether it is not exactly such debasing technological forms of physical disciplining, which teachers have become so accustomed to that they may not contemplate other approaches. Below I focus on how the violent political system in Zimbabwe may be negatively affecting knowledge discourses in education particularly in teacher training.

Politicisation of the knowledge economy – The perpetuation of violence

In his paper on patriotism, Tolstoy (1894) once noted that the government and ruling classes excite and maintain patriotism persistently among the people both by cunning

and violence, aware that their power and their very existence depends upon it.

Tolstoy (1894) also observed that 'public opinion' which often emanates from knowledge dissemination and control of knowledge, produced power, which in turn perpetuates a desired 'public opinion', as will be shown in some trainee teachers' accounts. Strange (1994) writing on structures of power in the political economy such as security, production, finance and knowledge, notes the role of the knowledge structure which often engineers public opinion and, determines what knowledge is discovered, how it is stored, and who communicates it by what means, to whom and on what terms…power and authority are conferred on those occupying key decision-making positions.

Knowledge is defined broadly to include evolving technology, ideas, beliefs and information. Knowledge in this sense is seen as critical because it controls the mind and therefore the behaviour of individuals. The control of knowledge involves withholding certain kinds of knowledge from people thereby keeping them in ignorance or feeding them certain kinds of knowledge that favour the interests of those in power.

Since the trainee teachers were the products of the current regime, I hoped that they would provide some insight into the extent of the politicisation of pedagogical knowledge, without me asking direct questions on the issue due to the polarised politics in Zimbabwe (Raftopoulos, 2003). Some of their responses were unexpectedly revealing. It is noted how the ruling elite in Zimbabwe has sought to create queer 'patriotism' among civil society by implementing a national service programme (Ranger, 2004; Human Rights, Forum, 2003). It is alleged that this programme does not only foster an imposed patriotism on the recruits but overtly inculcates intolerance and unquestioning deference towards the ruling clique (Raftopoulos, 2003; Ranger, 2004), which manifests itself in violent tendencies against other citizens (Human Rights Forum, 2003). The current policy in Zimbabwe now requires that young people who have gone through that programme be given preference in government employment or in enrolment by teacher training colleges. It is noted therefore that the current regime, through cunning and violence as observed of regimes dependent on patriotism and patronage, has put enormous pressure on the young trainee teachers to be 'patriotic'. Most of the teachers currently in the schools did not train under such conditions and this disparity is clear in most accounts. Reading through trainee teacher responses one could sense some of this unquestioning patriotism seen as a debasing tool to harness the masses (Tolstoy, 1894). One trainee teacher wrote, "Peer pressure is now western therefore may lead to most of the young generation become traitors".

The current political line perpetuated by the Zimbabwean regime has been the demonisation of 'the west' meaning, Europe and America. Far from cosmopolitan

citizenship (Osler and Starkey, 2005), which may offer pluralism (Berlin, 1969; Dahl, 1989), the trainee teachers seemed intolerant of those who may prefer multiculturalism among them. The use of the word 'traitors' is not only emotive and reflective of intolerance but is synonymous with the country's current regime, which allegedly uses violence to indoctrinate its young citizens with propaganda especially against 'the west' (Kibble, 2005). This often affects local relations where those citizens, who are seen as possessing a different view, become readily labelled as 'traitors' or worthy of being crushed often through violent means (Human Rights Forum, 2003-2007; Sisulu, 2007). If young upcoming teachers in Zimbabwe imbibe such intolerance then the future potential for democratic citizenship seems bleak. Asked as to which areas secondary students should participate in, in the schools, another trainee teacher categorically stated that "They must not participate in anything administrative--- they distort information to others".

The trainee teacher's fear of information flow or fear of freedom especially on student participation in school organisational processes is based on assumptions that students will be malicious with this information. It could not be established how many teachers typify this fear of 'ghosts' which is also evident in the macro politics where the media has been subjected to inhibitive laws such as Public Order and Security Act (2002) (POSA) and Access to Information and Public Privacy Act (2002) (AIPPA) which have been put in place to quash free information flow and limit political space (Human Right Forum, 2003).

Another student teacher, though moderate, also exhibited a disposition of an unquestioning 'patriot.' She also stated "students should not participate in administrative decisions". This contrasted remarkably with most teachers', lecturers and head-teachers' accounts (most of whom trained long before the current polarising and violent macro-politics). Most of those trained earlier, though admitting the lack of students' participation within school processes, were nevertheless in favour of democratising space. Referring to students, another trainee teacher commented that we should "Teach them their own history and also keeping on acknowledging the reasons they are at that school so that they would not go astray… if not, they will not know the right step to take… would end up being traitors."

As part of the regime's violent strategy to remain in power it is noted that the teaching of history in schools has taken prominence alongside a propaganda 'war' with the west. While there may be nothing wrong with the teaching of history, sometimes it is how that history is taught and what emotions and feelings it prompts from the learners. A partisan and intolerant approach to history, which is littered with emotive words such as 'traitor', cannot be conducive to a tolerant democratic culture in the polity. Such partisan patriotism negates the view that it is impossible to account for values in a shared way (Etzioni, 1996) especially in a Zimbabwe that con-

sists of traditionalist, conservatives, liberals, republicans and communitarians, just to mention a few. As a propaganda tool, such 'patriotism' and teaching of history is not only meant to domesticate time, with some sense of future permanence ('they will know the right step to take'), but also domesticates men and women. It is further noted that the majority of trainee teachers were not upbeat about democratic involvement of secondary students within the educational process. Their use of terminologies surrounding citizenship and participation tended to be paternalistic and was synonymous sometimes with the non-polyarchical overtones in the macro politics to 'Zimbabweanise' every citizen (Kibble, 2005).

It is noted that when repeated more often with increased volume and large print, such ideas, information and beliefs become part of the daily vocabulary. Used everyday, it becomes part of the routine, and part of life. In this way 'a public opinion' is formed on behalf of the people such as, 'teaching them their own history' or keeping an eye out for 'traitors' among us. When the oppressed (trainee teachers included) begin to use the language of the oppressor ('traitor'), as sometimes used by Zimbabwe's ruling elite, one can see the power deriving from the knowledge structure, even though the oppressed may not realize their capitulation (Strange, 1994).

On reflection it is noted why mostly schools were burnt down and closed by the guerrillas in their fight against colonialism in Zimbabwe, pushing most young people to be part of the war. It is evident that there was a realisation on how critical schools were in 'public opinion' formation and the perpetuation of certain kinds of knowledge. Under the current regime the study found evidence within education to suggest active politicisation of teacher role and knowledge discourses to perpetuate undemocratic and violent agendas as a self-preservationist strategy to maintain the status quo.

Violence in the micro politics and the macro politics – some linkages

The fatalistic tendency in some students' accounts to just raise issues and not seek solutions was also prevalent in national politics. There was an element of docility as shown in cartoon 2 where after a failed weak 'push' to dislodge the ruling party, people's hands appear folded, (Daily News, 6/06/2003) and leaving responsibility to other citizens or outsiders. In cartoon 1, the Minister of Information is seen struggling towards parliament, carrying a massive knobkerrie, which is not only a spectacle of violence but also meant to maintain surveillance on press freedom and punish journalists (Daily News, 25/01/2003). Some of the draconian laws enacted by government such as POSA and AIPPA have already been referred to earlier. In the schools' micro-politics the tough and insensitive rules by some school authorities (as shown in students' accounts) have a certain parallel with these laws. Based on the discussion above such a scenario may be

seen as reflecting the regime's insensitivity and self-pre-servationist tendencies, also affecting the schools' micro-politics.

In a bid to oppress, the minister in cartoon 1 seems himself oppressed and he is seen following passively his masters. Cartoon 5 is also reflective of this fatalistic sce-nario where the two men sitting at a beer hall are pinning their hopes on the opposition party without them having a defined role in influencing the coming election. Often-times students cannot express their views, because the culture in the school is sometimes that of 'see no evil, hear no evil, and speak no evil' as in national politics. The sixth cartoon where a police officer is afraid to talk to a private 'independent' paper (though reading it secretly) also depicts the same notion of fear of expressing inde-pendent thought. In the schools' micro politics this fear was seen as inflicted through the beating of students and the enforcement of 'insensitive' school rules. An imagery of merging violent micro and macro political contexts is noted. In cartoon 4 the free flow of information is also depicted as muzzled, as the 'sovereign' regime seeks to protect her 'attacked' person. The sellers of an indepen-dent daily paper, perceived to be a threat to govern-men-tal 'order' (Weber, 1996) or 'normalisation' (Foucault, 1977) are savagely beaten.

Sometimes the punishment of students is unorthodox, as in national politics. This is where a small offence is se-verely punished so as to discourage major ones occur-ing. Cartoon 3 depicts a woman, (mother Zimbabwe) be-ing violently beaten by her husband (the government), yet purporting to love her (possessing sovereignty). The woman bears the brunt of abuse, probably under the guise of 'patriotism' because she is not seen complaining. The neighbours, who condemn the husband, in the Zimbabwean case, are thought to be the international community. Sometimes teachers also use unorthodox means while pretending to be protecting or 'helping' students in terms of preparation for the future 'order.' The beatings and the denial to be heard are some of the examples as discussed above.

It was also noted that in almost all the instances of prefects' appraisal by other students they are seen as on the side of the teachers and that the students' notion of school is synonymous with teachers. It is further noted that prefects are seen as 'eyes of the school', but more profoundly 'the back eyes of the teachers'. In the macro-politics it is noted that instead of protecting the people from state tyranny and corruption, the military and the police, like prefects, often protect the mischievous ruling elite.

The Zim-online – (Monday 19 March 2007) cartoon shows an opposition party candidate who has been savagely beaten by ruling party thugs. This was produced recently after the leader of the opposition party and some of his Members of Parliament in Zimbabwe were savagely beaten by the police and the youth brigade and further prevented from holding a prayer rally. Such is the

degrading level of violence in Zimbabwe and the pessi-mism that surrounds democratic citizenship. Due to many students' accounts complaining about physical beating from teachers, it can be asked as to whether (through the hidden curriculum) students are socialised to be perpe-trators of violence. This socialisation also seems to rob them of their dignity rather than provide legitimate justice.

Under a corrupt prefect system relying heavily on self-preservationist approaches aided by senior staff, stu-dents learn to become victims of a superior force, fully licensed by institutional authority – the school administra-tion. By condoning these violent and corrupt tendencies, such school administrations not only exposed their leadership deficiencies but also showed a lack in the development of a democratic, tolerant leadership ethos. It should be noted that these violated children are often the same students who are allegedly recruited by govern-ment into its notorious youth brigades under the guise of a national service programme (Ranger, 2004; Human Rights Forum 2003). Ironically, some of the teachers have been victims of such political-sponsored violence. In view of the physical violence endemic in the micro and the macro political arenas, due to intolerance and self-preservationist tendencies, schools may need to reflect on their contributory role to the political malaise bedevil-ing Zimbabwe.

Key findings

Depth of crisis- The political and economic crisis since the year 2000, have further poisoned the macro-political discourse in ways that have politicised the teacher role and education, especially based on the data from trainee teachers and the alleged 're orientation' of teachers, which is highly partisan. There is need for the Ministry of Education to protect teacher professionalism from hostile political forces that abuse educational pedagogy as a tool for control.

Hope - It was noted that most teachers in the schools (more than 65%) though conceding violent tendencies in the classroom, expressed a political 'will' to democratise space. Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) inte-rested in civic education and human rights in Zimbabwe may exploit such political will and work with schools towards the development of a largely democratic society.

Politicisation of knowledge - Due to the indoctrination of the young citizens under a seemly partisan national service programme, most of the trainee teachers (about 70%) seemed to have become politically intolerant, and to express views supportive of the polarising and violent status quo. Such attitudes expressed by future-teachers were seen as retrogressive and painted a bleak future for democratic citizenship in the short to medium term in Zimbabwe.

Physical violence - The ubiquitous infliction of physical

punishment on students was noted. Such degrading treatment and the creation of 'unfair' school rules due to lack of students' involvement is another indicator of lack of satisfaction on their part, which indexes a lack of quality education among other things. There is need to review the regulations on canning students in ways that work towards a repeal of such a breach on human rights or ensure that the notion of moderation as stated in the law is followed to the letter, which is currently not the case.

The prison metaphor - It was also noted how under a carceral state the school becomes seen like a prison, manufacturing its own rules of self preservation, removed from legitimate and accountable forms of school governance. This is where for example some abusive acts are swept under the carpet and the victims find no purpose in seeking justice, due to unfair and unaccountable systems. If Zimbabwe is to produce democratic and accountable citizens, teachers in schools need to reflect on their schools' ethos in ways that advance rationality and participatory strategies in the educational process.

Micro and macro politics - The study established some inter-relationships and similarities between the micro-politics of the schools and the macro-politics, such as the use of violence, and self-preservationist approaches to leadership. This helped enhance a view that the school can be a microcosm of society and that practicing tolerance and democratic principles in the schools may help transform the future macro-political field in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

This article has explored the violent disciplinary networks in Zimbabwe's schools noting some linkages to the violent macro-political field pervading Zimbabwe's political discourse. The hidden curriculum of violence in some schools seems to educate students in ways that diminish the role of justice, fairness and tolerance and cement a view that brute force rules. The teachers, who perpetrate physical violence on students, were seen as complicit in a vicious circle within Zimbabwe's endemic culture of political violence, also affecting quality education and democratic citizenship. Teachers, head-teachers and policy-makers may need to reflect on the cultures they bring and perpetuate within the wider educational sphere, if Zimbabwe is to heal itself from destructive tyrannical forces in the long term.

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