

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
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An analysis of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive towards western countries from 2000 to 2023

BY

(B226239B)

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ABSTRACT

This study employed a qualitative method approach to analyse the socio-economic challenges of Zimbabwe which influenced her to engage the diplomatic offensive towards Western countries. Data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions. The study was guided by the soft power theory as the guiding theoretical framework of this study. The analysis postulated some factors like poverty, natural environment, unemployment, and poor health services as causes which drove Zimbabwe to engage in the diplomatic offensive. More so many strategies were put in place to achieve the diplomatic offensive. The strategies which were put in place are building relationships, making alliances, look east policy, negotiations, silencing the internal forces, advocacy approach, flexibility, and effective communication these proved to be effective strategies for a successful diplomatic offensive. More so the response of the Western countries was also noted like the regime change principle and sanctions and this was noted that these responses played a pivotal role to the socio-economic challenges Zimbabwe faced up to date. However, success of the diplomatic offensive was noted. The diplomatic offensive brought benefits like the Chinese aid, loan contracts, Chinese Investments, barter trade, military affairs, Sino-Zimbabwe relationship, and Chinese investments these successes helped, and they are still helping Zimbabwe to curb the socio-economic challenges affecting the country. The study addressed the challenges which hinder or still hindering the diplomatic offensive were also articulated like national interest and sovereignty, political uncertainty and leadership transition and the imposed sanctions these factors are the ones pointed as a stumbling block to the success of the diplomatic offensive

Key words; *Socio-economic challenges, Diplomatic Offensive and Western countries*

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this dissertation is a result of my own effort and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgments, bibliography, references, and comments included in the body of the report, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

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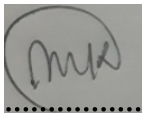
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Ms Ngwerume (Supervisor)

Date



...19/09/2024.....

Dr Kurebwa (Chair)

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my mother who has constantly supported me, my little brother and sister for their unmatched enthusiasm in seeing me succeed academically. May you find inspiration in my work?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank the Almighty for his grace upon my life, his guidance and protection. Special thanks goes to my supervisor, who has been patient and lenient with me and has produced the best out of me. Her guidance has been of paramount importance in my completion of the dissertation.

I extend my appreciation to my family and friends, for moral and emotional support.

ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
DDF	District Development Fund
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NEDPP	National Economic Development Programme
NSSA	Non-State Actors Alliance
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPS	Structural Adjustment Programme
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference Trade and Development
US	United States
USA	United States of America
ZIDERA	Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe, a Southern African country, has long faced socioeconomic challenges that have hampered its progress and international standing. Zimbabwe, which has experienced hyperinflation, political instability, and strained relations with western countries, has attempted to address these issues through a socioeconomic diplomatic offensive. The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of Zimbabwe's efforts to improve its diplomatic relations with Western nations, as well as the implications of these efforts on the country's socioeconomic landscape.

1.1 Background of the study

Zimbabwe, formerly known as Rhodesia, gained independence from British colonial rule in 1980. For the first decade or so, the country witnessed relative stability and economic growth under the leadership of President Robert Mugabe. However, his regime later faced widespread criticism for human rights abuses, corruption, economic mismanagement, and political repression. In the early 2000s, the Zimbabwean government implemented controversial land reforms, which involved the seizure of white-owned commercial farms and their redistribution to black Zimbabweans. The strained relationship between Zimbabwe and the West deepened during this period, with the United States and European Union imposing targeted sanctions on key individuals and entities responsible for human rights abuses and undermining democratic institutions.

The elections in Zimbabwe have also had an impact on its relationship with Western countries. The country has faced multiple elections that have been marred by allegations of electoral fraud, violence, and intimidation. These irregularities have led Western countries to question the legitimacy of the electoral process and criticize the government for not upholding democratic values. Following disputed elections, Western countries have often withheld recognition of the Zimbabwean government; further straining diplomatic relations (Williams, 2003). For example, after the 2002 presidential elections, which were deemed undemocratic by international observers, the US and the EU imposed targeted sanctions on Zimbabwean officials, including travel bans and asset freezes. The disputed elections have also raised concerns about human rights

abuses and the suppression of political freedoms in Zimbabwe. Western countries, as proponents of democratic values and human rights, have taken a strong stance against such violations. The government's response to protests and demonstrations by opposition parties and civil society organizations has been met with condemnation and further deterioration of relations (Chigora, 2006). The persisting political tensions and lack of confidence in the electoral process have hindered efforts to rebuild relations between Zimbabwe and the Western countries. Without transparent and credible elections, Western countries are reluctant to fully engage with the Zimbabwean government and provide financial aid or investment.

Zimbabwe in the 21 century has received widespread condemnation from the EU, particularly following abandonment Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), intervention in Democratic People's Republic of Congo and with the implementation of the controversial land reform. The image portrayed by the EU has been reports of violence, instability, and abandonment of the rule of law, which has created a serious challenge to modern developments on democracy and human rights (Chigora, 2008a). This was followed by the EU's imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe and denigrating policies and events organized and formulated by the Zimbabwean government. EU took a drastic shift from cooperation to open confrontation and was noticeable in almost all spheres of interaction.

Historically, Zimbabwe has faced a range of socio-economic challenges, including land reform policies, economic mismanagement, and political unrest. These factors have contributed to a decline in foreign investment, strained international relations, and limited access to financial assistance and trade opportunities. In response to these challenges, Zimbabwe has embarked on a diplomatic offensive, focusing on improving its relations with Western countries to access much-needed economic support and revitalize its struggling economy.

The objectives of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive are multifaceted. The country aims to attract foreign direct investment to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and enhance its technological capabilities. Additionally, Zimbabwe seeks to secure international financial assistance to address its

debt burden, strengthen its fiscal stability, and support social development programs. Furthermore, the country aims to forge trade partnerships that can open new markets for its goods and services, diversify its export base, and enhance its competitiveness on the global stage.

To achieve these objectives, Zimbabwe has implemented various strategies. Diplomatic engagements with Western countries have been intensified, featuring high-level visits, bilateral negotiations, and diplomatic exchanges aimed at fostering understanding and trust. Economic reforms have been undertaken to improve the business environment, enhance governance, and attract foreign investment. Policy changes have been implemented to address issues such as property rights, labor laws, and regulatory frameworks to create a more favorable investment climate.

The responses of Western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive have been varied. While some nations have shown cautious optimism and demonstrated willingness to engage with Zimbabwe, others have maintained a more skeptical stance, raising concerns about human rights, governance, and the rule of law. Western countries have imposed conditions and requirements on Zimbabwe, urging progress in areas such as democratic reforms, respect for human rights, and transparency in economic management.

The outcomes and implications of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive are of great significance. Success in attracting foreign investment and securing financial assistance could provide much-needed stability and stimulate economic growth (Ncube, 2022). Improved relations with Western countries may also enhance Zimbabwe's international standing, leading to increased trade opportunities and the diversification of its economic base. However, challenges and criticisms related to governance, human rights, and sustainability of reforms may pose obstacles to the country's progress.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive against Western countries from 2000 to 2023 presents a complex and multifaceted problem that necessitates careful examination. A

variety of political, social, and economic factors, including historical tensions, human rights violations, economic sanctions, and government policies, have shaped this diplomatic offensive. Since 2000, the United States and the European Union have imposed a variety of economic sanctions on Zimbabwe in response to human rights violations and allegations of election rigging. These sanctions have had a significant impact on the country's economy, particularly its agriculture and mining sectors, contributing to widespread poverty, unemployment, and political instability (Hawkins, 2007). Cotton and tobacco prices, for example, fell around 2005. Since the imposition of sanctions, Zimbabwe's balance of payments position has deteriorated significantly. Zimbabwe's access to international credit markets was hampered following the passage of ZIDERA (Francis & Duncan, 2016). Zimbabwe has called the sanctions imposed by the US illegal, but the US believes the Zimbabwean government has violated and continues to violate the rights of the Zimbabwean people. America still wants to see more changes, particularly during elections, before lifting sanctions, but Zimbabwe considers itself a sovereign state that cannot be controlled by outsiders. People have been gathering around Zimbabwe and in some African countries as an anti-sanction campaign on October 25th, 2022, and 2023, but it appears that it has fallen on deaf ears of the western countries who are unwilling to take any reasonable steps to lift the sanctions and it appears that it is not a pressing issue for them as it is for Zimbabwe. Mnangagwa in 2022 expressed that the sanction regime undermines the nation's human approach factor in pursuit of long-term socioeconomic development. They are an attack on Zimbabwe's freedoms and sovereignty (Ncube, 2022) the tension between Zimbabwe and the United States has resulted in a lack of foreign aid, investments, and credit markets, resulting in worker retrenchment and poor health facilities in the country (Gordon, 2002). Because of this Zimbabwe has been ranked as a country with a failed economy by an economy analyst, (Aljazeera, 2023) hence it is important for Zimbabwe to embark on a diplomatic offensive so as to normalize its socioeconomic situation.

1.3 Research objectives

1. To explore the underlying political, economic, and social factors that have influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive.

2. To examine the key policies and strategies employed by the Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive.
3. To assess the response of Western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive.
4. To examine the successes and failures of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive

1.4 Research questions

1. What social factors have influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decisions in its diplomatic interactions with Western countries?
2. What are the key policies and strategies employed by Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive?
3. What measures or policies implemented by western countries in response to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive?
4. What challenges and success has Zimbabwe faced in its diplomatic offensive, and what factors contributed to these setbacks?

1.5 Assumptions

1. Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive is motivated by economic interests.
2. Zimbabwe seeks recognition and legitimacy from Western countries.
3. Zimbabwe is engaged in activities to counter western criticism.
4. Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive is in harmony with its socio-economic goals.

1.6 Significance of the study

- The study will give a broader view to the citizens on how sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union have entrenched authoritarianism and exacerbated people's suffering in Zimbabwe. The

study would also establish the relationship that exists between sanctions and democracy.

- The Zimbabwean government's reaction would also be recorded.
- The study would benefit readers and academics who are interested in pursuing the sanctions discourse in relation to democracy in Zimbabwe additionally, research would help address the difficult questions that have arisen in Zimbabwe over the years about how sanctions entrenched authoritarianism, economic collapse, and effects on citizens, as most studies focused primarily on the effectiveness of sanctions negating effects on the governed.

1.7 Limitation of the study

Time constraints

There are time constraints. Practical constraints may limit the amount of time available to investigate a research topic and track changes as they occur. Approval of research acceptance from the officials may take time to be approved.

In the scenario of time constraints, whether the researcher is dealing with procrastination, deadlines, or distractions, the key is to remain adaptable and flexible. Set time constraints but be willing to adapt when those constraints are inevitably blown apart.

Lack of reliable data

Lack of data or reliable data will almost certainly necessitate limiting the scope of the

analysis because some of the research meetings with the government officials will not be accepted.

To avoid this situation the researcher utilized powerful reporting and dashboards. The researcher made sure he got the most out of his data by developing robust reports and interactive dashboards. Tracked the key metrics that were most important to his research to ensure he got the detailed analysis he required.

Discreet

Data may be limited because some of the respondents may not be able to disclose all the information due to security reasons.

The researcher introduced informed consent made sure that adequate provisions are in place to allow all research participants to read and sign their informed consent form, which agrees on the scope of confidentiality and privacy.

1.8 Delimitation of the study

This study will only focus on government officials, western diplomatic representatives, business communities, investors, civil society organization and scholars. More so the researcher will also focus on both genders among the respondents selected. The researcher will focus on respondents who are 18 to 50 years.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Diplomatic offensive

It is a concerted effort to implement diplomatic plans and policies to gain a competitive advantage in international situations (William and Wyatt, 2013).

Sanctions

A punitive or coercive measure or action resulting from noncompliance with a law, rule, or order (US Department of State, 2022).

Reengagement

According to the Non-State Actors Alliance of Zimbabwe (NSSA, 2016: 5), re-engagement refers to the process by which Zimbabwe restores all spheres of its

economic and political relations with the western world after the EU, the United States, and other countries-imposed sanctions and other restrictions.

Soft power

This refers to the country's ability to attract others through ideas, values, and ideologies (James, 2018).

Foreign policy

Foreign policy of any country deals primarily with the maintenance of its sovereignty and national security and secondly with the pursuit and protection of its economic interests (Makumbe, 2009). These interests or objectives guide the foreign policy process of any state as well as who to interact with and who not to interact with in the international system. According to Yarger (2006:15)

Economic diplomacy

Economic diplomacy includes the formation of international coalitions to assist countries in recovering from financial crises (Leyton, 2018). It entails persuading host-government leaders to implement policies and measures that are most likely to strengthen their economies and create jobs for their citizens, even if the reforms come at a political cost.

Land reform

Land reform is a type of agrarian reform that involves changing land ownership laws, regulations, or customs. Land reform can be defined as government-initiated or government-supported property redistribution, most commonly of agricultural land (Mix, 2013).

Democratic government

A democratic government is one in which state power is vested in the people or the general population of a state (UN, 17 August 2023). Democracy provides an environment in which human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected and people freely expressed will is exercised.

Economic sanctions

Economic sanctions are commercial and financial penalties imposed on states, groups, or individuals by states or institutions (Hatipoglu and Peksen, 2018). Economic sanctions are a type of coercion that attempts to change an actor's behavior by disrupting economic exchange. Sanctions can be used to compel or deter behavior.

Developing country

-In comparison to other countries, a developing country is a sovereign state with a less developed industrial base and a lower Human Development Index (Naumova, 2019).

Hyperinflation

Hyperinflation is characterized by extremely high and typically accelerating inflation. As the prices of all goods rise, it quickly erodes the real value of the local currency (Masters, 2019). This causes people to sell their holdings in that currency in favor of more stable foreign currencies.

1.10 Chapter outline

The introductory chapter provides background information regarding research questions, statement of the problem, assumptions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study and definition of key terms. Chapter two provides introduction, theoretical framework, and literature review. In chapter three there is introduction, research design, methodology, population sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, ethical considerations, validity and reliability of research instruments, data presentation and analysis procedures. Chapter four there is introduction, data presentation, implications of findings and their limitations, new knowledge trying to fill the gaps, discussion of findings and a summary. The final chapter is comprised of the introduction of focus of the chapter, summary of the whole project, conclusion, recommendations, and areas of further research

**CHAPTER TWO:
LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews literature on key and relevant issues of the study in relation to research questions and objectives. This chapter provides detail on democracy and democratization in developing world, how sanctioned regime react to sanctions, economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe a major cost, economic sanctions cost of the sender are Zimbabwe sanctions backfiring and economic diplomacy. This chapter also gives a general review of the theories that underpins the research and that provides a framework for comprehending the phenomenon under study.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Soft power theory

To analyze Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive towards Western countries from 2000 to 2023, the theoretical framework can be built upon Joseph Nye's concept of soft power and its influence in international relations. Nye argues that a country's soft power derives from its cultural attractiveness, political values, and foreign policies that others find desirable and legitimate. This soft power can shape the preferences of other states and result in cooperation and favorable outcomes in diplomatic relations.

Applying Nye's framework to Zimbabwe's diplomatic efforts, we can examine the various elements of soft power employed by the country and their impact on relations with western countries. These elements may include cultural exchanges, public diplomacy campaigns, economic engagement, international cooperation, and diplomatic initiatives, (Nye, 2008).

Additionally, Vlassenroot & Löffelholz's (2015) book on hybrid diplomacy can provide insights into how digital tools and communication technologies have influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive. This framework can help evaluate the effectiveness of Zimbabwe's digital diplomacy strategies in enhancing soft power and bridging the gap with Western powers.

2.2.1 The Debate Over Democracy and Democratization in the Developing World

The process of democratization in these countries has been fraught with violence and coups. This is significant to the study because it provides context for how third-world countries struggle to democratize in the face of sanctions. It was observed that many third-world countries, including India, Gambia, Botswana, Mauritania, and some West Indian Islands, have been dominated by military governments, one-party states, and dictatorship (Chigora,2006). This clearly demonstrates that dictatorship has been rampant around the world, and countries such as Botswana have liberalized even without sanctions in place, demonstrating that there is no link between sanctions and democracy. He went on to say that governments in Latin America are chosen through elections. South Korea, Asia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines have all been liberated from authoritarianism and one-party rule. Since 1990, countries such as Burma, Pakistan, North Africa, and the Middle East have been able to hold elections, but authoritarianism remains a factor in politics (Pinkney, 2014). This calls into question the existence of democracy and democratization in the developing world. This is a clear example of how third-world countries face tyranny at the hands of their own governments as they try to keep up with domestic pressures caused by sanctions. Sanctions have been imposed in countries such as Myanmar, but nothing has changed except the suffering of the people.

Sanctions at most lead to under development. It is difficult to rely with development in a country with sanctions and only a few like or none have had positive results because of sanctions. Scholars such as (Abdullah, 2010) and (Bapir, 2010) demonstrate how difficult it is to rebuild a country that is subject to sanctions, dictatorship, and war, as is the case with Iran. This suggests that sanctions impede growth and the democratization process by fueling authoritarianism rather than encouraging it. Further references can be made to Saddam Hussein's demise; he was blamed for being a barrier to democracy, but his death had little effect on the country (Bapir, 2010). How can sanctions be used if they are causing chaos and suffering among the people? It

clearly demonstrates that they are ineffective as a democratization tool.

2.2.2 How Sanctioned regimes react to Sanctions.

Regimes targeted by sanctions rarely attempt to mitigate the impact of sanctions, preferring to pursue policies and strategies that amplify the sanctions' negative economic impact to keep the population from revolting. The government deliberately degrades economic activity to increase the population's economic hardship, making any revolt costly for citizens. Although the sanctions affect the elite because of their strong economic starting point, funds hidden around the world, and international collaborators, the local population bears the brunt of the impact until the sanctions have been lifted (Oechslin, 2014). This can be noted in Zimbabwe where more than half of the population lacks formal jobs and the rich who are sanctioned are the ones still benefiting at the expense of the poor.

Economically sanctioned countries, such as Zimbabwe, frequently suffer from the "devil-may-care" syndrome, in which they formulate and implement bad economic policies and then blame economic sanctions. One cannot claim that economic sanctions caused every socioeconomic ill in Zimbabwe. That way of thinking does not serve the country well. As a result, the Zimbabwean government must adhere to sound public policy as soon as possible. For example, you cannot argue that corruption is rampant in Zimbabwe because of economic sanctions; as a policymaker, one cannot fail to keep inflation under control and blame it on economic sanctions; and as a country, you cannot face a natural disaster like drought and blame it on economic sanctions. In countries such as Zimbabwe, the "sanctions must go" campaign is frequently abused. Many governments whose economies are being harmed by economic sanctions typically act irresponsibly and then try to hide behind the threat of economic sanctions. Yes, economic sanctions must be lifted, but poor economic policies cannot be used as an excuse.

2.2.3 Economic Sanctions Imposed on Zimbabwe: A Major Cost

It is almost unnecessary to emphasize that economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe rarely directly destroy Zimbabwe's infrastructure what is happening on the ground is

that Zimbabwe's infrastructure, particularly roads, hospitals, and sanitation systems, is being neglected and thus falling into disrepair because of economic sanctions. Ordinary, innocent, and poor Zimbabweans have suffered greatly because of sanctions-induced neglect and scarcity. Economic sanctions in Zimbabwe have significantly reduced the quality and quantity of clean water. Water scarcity is now common in all urban areas, and drinking water provided by city councils is sometimes contaminated with visible faecal material. Furthermore, due to a lack of unrestricted access to nutritious food and clean water, Zimbabweans' average level of health has significantly deteriorated. It is also critical to emphasize that Zimbabwe's health sector is currently genocidal due to economic sanctions that have reduced the capacity of the public health system. Simple and treatable diseases have become life-threatening problems in Zimbabwe due to a perennially insufficient supply of medicine. As a result of the poor working conditions, a health worker in Zimbabwe is always demoralized and demotivated. Furthermore, economic sanctions have significantly reduced available resources for Zimbabwe's health sector, resulting in unacceptably limited options for preventive and curative medical services.

2.2.4 Economic Sanctions Cost the Sender: Are Zimbabwe's Sanctions Backfiring

From around 2000 the Zimbabwean economy has been on the verge of its collapse, and this can be noted by the closure of industries and international banks. Economic sanctions have the potential to backfire and result in a negative net result for the sender (Drezner, 2000). Because trade is a two-way street, restricting trade in one direction will inevitably result in lost revenues or increased costs in the opposite direction. Furthermore, in addition to limiting trade by obstructing financial flows, economic sanctions have a negative impact on capital flows into the sending country (Besedes et al, 2017) Economic sanctions can provoke leaders in the target country to blame the sanctions for lower levels of growth and welfare rather than failing economic policies, causing them to dig in their heels and resist the sanctions even more, making achieving the set objectives even more difficult. For example, during the sanctions imposed on Iraq, Saddam Hussain was more determined than ever to defy outside pressures, eventually leading to military intervention (Smeets, 2018). Zimbabwe can be said to

have more problems within than without however political officials are always on record blaming sanction but not pointing important factors like corruption.

Economic sanctions are a type of investment in which senders incur costs in exchange for future profits. This means that, while the target country will undoubtedly lose in the sanctions-game, the sender country will also lose in some way. While the sanctions are bound to hurt Zimbabwe, we cannot rule out the possibility that the sender countries will also feel the heat. As a result, the sanctions game can be a lose-lose situation. Trade sanctions, for example, alter the behavior of economic agents, causing several long-term trade contracts to fail.

This usually harms the sender's economy because the process of finding new trade partners instead of the target is usually time-consuming. Time is money in business. Lost time equates to lost revenue. As a result, many people in the sending country lose their jobs. By imposing trade embargoes, the sender country also loses the target market. Thus, the United States and other countries that have imposed economic sanctions on Zimbabwe are also suffering because of lost trade and investment opportunities (Noyes, 2015). If these losses were quantified, it would not be surprising to discover that these sender-countries have suffered greatly because of sanctions, particularly in terms of lost jobs and income.

2.2.5 Economic diplomacy

Mnangagwa's foreign policy strategy includes ending Zimbabwe's isolation. Mugabe's relations with the West were poisonous and toxic. The restoration and normalization of relations with the West has emerged as a key pillar of the Mnangagwa regime. To that end, active diplomacy to end the West's isolation has become critical (Dzikamai, 2019). His administration recognizes that improved diplomatic ties with the West will improve Zimbabwe's global standing and perception. Mnangagwa stated in 2015, while still Vice President of Zimbabwe, that Zimbabwe needed to re-engage with the West, saying, "we cannot remain isolated; we wish to engage the international community and also be part and parcel of the forward-looking international community" (Masunungure,2011). Even as Vice-President, his policy toward the West was at odds with Mugabe's. Mnangagwa was expressing a pragmatic view, realizing that Zimbabwe's economy would not

recover without the West, whereas Mugabe's stance was informed by politics (Chipanga, 2020). Importantly, re-engagement with the West will allow the country to gain access to the foreign capital and investment it requires to resuscitate its economy.

Furthermore, Mnangagwa is aware of how acrimonious relations with the West and the international community have harmed Zimbabwe's economy and international standing. 'Let us remember where we were and how we suffered as an isolated nation,' he is quoted as saying. Zimbabwe is now open to the rest of the world, and governments, businesses, and individuals are all eager to do business with us. To secure critical foreign investment, the new Zimbabwe must embrace the international community. These projects will create jobs, and foreign investment will inject crucial cash into our economy' (Ndlovu, 2019). Hence his knowledge that the past era of isolation is detrimental to the wellbeing of Zimbabwe is a driving factor to him wanting his government to engage with western countries.

The new regime understands the significance of friendly relations with the West. It not only provides much-needed economic assistance, but it also provides trade and investment opportunities for Zimbabwe, so the administration understands the importance of mending fences with the West. Fundamentally, as a pragmatist, Mnangagwa recognizes that in order for his regime to be accepted by the West, he must engage in a charm offensive and demonstrate that his regime is not simply a case of 'same script, different cast,' a continuation of Mugabe-era policies.

Sanctions are being sought by the Mnangagwa administration. To that end, normalizing relations with the United States of America (USA) is critical. This has not yielded any significant dividends at this point, as the United States' attitude toward Zimbabwe has been lukewarm, as the United States has pointed out that the military that backed Mnangagwa's seizure of power was previously involved in state-sanctioned violence, and that he was privy to these operations as one of Mugabe's henchmen (Ndlovu,2019). The Trump administration was only willing to lift sanctions if the Mnangagwa administration implemented significant reforms. This has presented a conundrum for Harare, as she understands the importance of Washington, but instituting reforms may upset the military element, which wields power and influence in the state (Lopi, 2019).

When Biden took office, the Zimbabwean government believed that sanctions would be relaxed and lifted; however, Biden reinforced the idea that Zimbabwe should be sanctioned, and because of the conflict in Ukraine, America is more relaxed about focusing on Zimbabwe.

The rhetoric, however, did not impress the US, and President Trump signed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Amendment Act (ZIDERA) into law in August 2018. Renewing ZIDERA from 2001, it 'effectively extended US restrictive measures against targeted individuals and companies' (Kamete, 2019: 529). Furthermore, US sanctions were renewed in March 2019 under the National Emergencies Act. These apply to 141 people, as well as 56 companies some of which are state-owned and a few other businesses including farms. Doing business with these US citizens and businesses is prohibited. In contrast, the EU has shown a greater willingness to re-engage, and in February 2019, EU foreign ministers agreed that no sanctions would be imposed on members of the current government. Contrary to popular belief, the EU imposed no economic sanctions: 'The individual measures still in place concern a very limited number of persons linked to the previous regime and include an arms export ban, asset freeze, and travel restrictions,' a spokesperson explained.

It is believed by some that the sanctions have no effect on the country. These restrictions have no effect on the country's economy,' the spokesperson added. 'Anything implying the opposite is incorrect,' according to the BBC (2019). However, one is compelled to examine the veracity of this question because Zimbabwe is currently receiving little assistance from Europe, and that assistance is the same as it was when Mugabe was still in power. Mnangagwa expressed his desire for Zimbabwe to rejoin the Commonwealth as soon as possible after taking office. According to Onslow, who conducted interviews in Harare in mid-January 2018, this was motivated by the hope that Commonwealth re-engagement would hasten the removal of US sanctions and the few remaining EU measures that were still deemed to taint the Zimbabwean business environment. Furthermore, she contended that if successful, it could de-escalate Western pressure for change and herald the start of a new chapter in Zimbabwe's

international relations.

Joining the commonwealth was seen as an easy task. Commonwealth membership was seen as "low hanging fruit," promising quick diplomatic success as "a kite mark of respectability in the international community" (Elliot et al, 2018). 'The United Kingdom would strongly support Zimbabwe's re-entry and a new Zimbabwe committed to political and economic reform that benefits its entire people,' says the UK. However, Johnson stated that he expects the government to hold "the free and fair elections that the people of Zimbabwe deserve and that it has promised (James, 2018). Despite these early and encouraging signs, Zimbabwe's chances of rejoining the Commonwealth were quickly dashed by the regime's violent response to the protests that followed the July 2018 elections. In early February 2019, UK Africa Minister Harriet Baldwin told the House of Commons International Development Committee that the government would not support Zimbabwe's bid for re-admission. Mnangagwa became enraged because of this. He pointed out during the AU Summit in Addis Ababa that the application was submitted to the Commonwealth Secretariat rather than the UK, which was only a member of the bloc (Ndlovu, 2019). Failure to re-enter the Commonwealth may result in continued tensions between Zimbabwe and the United States, given that the United States and the United Kingdom are allies in almost every way. So, if Zimbabwe wants to re-enter the fray, it must first re-enter the commonwealth.

2.6 Summary

This chapter firstly has highlights the theory to be used to carry out the research which is the soft power theory, it then established the debate over democracy in developing world. It also summaries how sanctioned regimes react to sanctions. The chapter also addresses the economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe and it establishes economic sanctions cost the sender and finally it addressed the economic diplomacy. It shows that sanctioned regimes want to maintain the status core in order to benefit a few elite people. Sanction are then a deadly cancer destroy the majority who are the poor and benefiting the minority hence the need to remove sanctions is vital.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study research methodology. It emphasizes empirical techniques that connect readers to the study progression in accordance with the study objectives. The researcher outlines the research methodology, research design, population, and sampling procedure, as well as the process and methods used to critically interrogate each of the research objectives stated in the chapter. This

section discusses the primary and secondary research techniques used, as well as data analysis. The researcher outlines data collection methods, as well as interviews with key service providers and individuals involved in the study. The chapter also discusses the studies' ethical considerations.

3.1 Research design

A research design is a technique used to describe, test, and investigate the causes and effects of a connection (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). To help the researcher in this investigation, a cross sectional research design was employed. The design enables the researcher to collect data from many different individuals at a single point in time (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). The design helped the researcher because it allowed him to collect data from a large pool of subjects and compare the differences. More so the design helped the researcher to capture specific moment in time. The researcher considered cross sectional study to be of paramount importance to understanding the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries from 2000-2023. Cross sectional study is crucial because it is not costly, and it does not require a lot of time. In addition, the design was of much help to the researcher because he used it to approve and disapprove assumptions. The cross-sectional study helped the researcher in that it didn't allow the researcher to control any variables or manipulate any variables (Bliss, 2016). In this study, it helped in broadening the researcher's knowledge about socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries and how the country should engage or improve the process, based on the recommendations from findings

The researcher specifically chose in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions as the methods of data collection. Using such in-depth methods of data collection allowed the researcher to document participants' own analysis of their situations (Alvesson, 2011). In this study the main objective was to explore the underlying political, economic, and social factors that have influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive, and the researcher found qualitative research to be the most appropriate technique in ensuring political, socio-economic engagement, knowledge and experience sharing.

3.2 Methodology

The study adopted the qualitative research approach which is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experience and the world in which they live, which adopts a person-centered, holistic, and humanistic perspective to understand human lived experiences (Flick, 2011; Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). It is people-centered in the sense that the process of critical inquiry is informed by and responds to the experiences and needs of people involved, (Nelson, 2013). The fundamental principle of qualitative research is that it is research with the people rather than on the people. In this context conducting interviews and discussions with government officials, ambassadors, businesspeople, civil society researchers and students helped in bringing out first-hand information from the context where and when it happens. Qualitative research is particularly appropriate for this study because it allows understanding social reality from ordinary people's perspectives which is based on experience (Yeasmin and Rahman, 2012). With in-depth methods of data collection, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, which this study utilized, people's own analysis of their situation was documented (Alvesson, 2011). This provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, which usually is not equally possible through the quantitative approach.

3.3 Research philosophy

The study required a clear paradigm on the nature of beliefs and reality that could constitute knowledge about socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries from 2000 to 2023. The interpretivist philosophy which assumed that the social world should be studied in a different way than the scientific objects in the natural sciences was adopted (Bryman, 2012). The researcher therefore placed emphasis on the ever- changing knowledge, beliefs, truths, justifications, memories, testimonies, and perceptions of government officials, western diplomats, businesspeople, civil society groups, researchers, and students on the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries from 2000 to 2023 (Hajek and Lin, 2017).

3.4 Population

Target population is defined as the sum or totality of subjects, objects, or members who meet a set of criteria (Creswell, 2018). Study population is the entire sum of total elements from which the researcher wishes to draw a conclusion and from which the findings are general (Etikan, 2018). To get multiple perspectives that helped in analyzing the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe to western countries, the researcher involved both men and women as participants in the research. Key informants were included. The researcher chose this study group to obtain first-hand information from key informants on the analysis of socio-economic offensive by Zimbabwe to Western countries from 2000-2023.

3.5 Sampling

This study adopted purposive sampling to come up with the required set of participants, in line with the objectives of this study. Purposive sampling as the selection of information-rich cases for in-depth study (Patton, (2015). Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry (Lomax et al., 2011). The purpose of inquiry for this study was to analyze socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries from 2000-2023. Therefore, the researcher purposefully chose to draw participants of this research from the government officials, business sectors, civil society groups, western diplomatic representatives, researchers, and students of international relations the government officials and the western diplomatic representatives were the key informants as they had rich diplomatic work perspective.

3.6 Sample size

The number of participants or observations included in the study is the sampling size (Etikan, 2018). There were seventeen participants in this study. Seven women and ten men participated in the study.

3.7 Data collection methods and tools

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, qualitative data collection methods were used in this study because of their flexibility to explore issues in depth (Bryman, 2012). Prior to data collection, letters of request, permission and attestation were requested

detailing the study information sheet, the proposal, and the methodology as well as research tools. The research tools for this study included an in-depth interview guide (appendix 2), a focus Group discussion guide (appendix 3) and key informant interview guide (appendix 4). The sets of questions were deliberately made similar but asked to different people of different levels and background, so that points of agreement, differences and confirmations could be realized from the data.

3.7.1 In- depth interviews

An in-depth interview is a conversation with an individual in an endeavor to deeply explore the participants' perceptions and experiences (Neuman, 2014). In-depth interviews is the rich data collection method, which provides rich data over a short period due to the use of open-ended questions, semi- structured discussion, and provision of an opportunity to observe non-verbal communications (Creswell, 2014). The researcher used semi- structured interviews, which had questions (open-ended) which were guided by the research questions and the theories and literature. The researcher adopted in-depth interviews as one of its main data collection methods, with each interview taking approximately 30-45 minutes. By in-depth interviews, the researcher was in a better position to explore in detail, the factors influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive towards western countries from 2000-2023.

In-depth interviews allowed the researcher to probe the participants to dispose and explain in-depth some of the information, which could have been impossible if a quantitative method of inquiry such as the questionnaire was used (Lomax et al., 2011). The researcher engaged in face-to-face in-depth interviews with the government officials and the western diplomats. A total of 5 in-depth interviews were conducted with the government officials and the western diplomats. With in-depth interviews, the researcher was in a better position to explore in greater detail, the challenges experienced by Zimbabwe in engaging in the diplomatic offensive towards western countries.

3.7.2 Key informant interviews

Key informants are experts chosen to participate in a qualitative study for their known

knowledge, experience and capacity in a particular area or field (George, 2022). The study thrived to elicit some expert information from some key members of the government. Key informant interviews are qualitative in-depth interviews with people who know what is going on in the country, with the objective to collect information from a wide range of people, including businesspeople, civil society groups, students, western diplomats, and researchers who have knowledge about the socio-economic issues in the country. (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). These researchers, western diplomats, civil society groups, with their knowledge and understanding, can provide insight on the nature of problems and give recommendations for solutions (Neuman, 2014), an). In this study, the researcher conducted key informant interviews with the government officials and western diplomats who were mostly diplomats and have rich insights needed for this study. Therefore, a total of fourteen key informant interviews were conducted in this study.

3.7.3 Focus group discussion

A focus group discussion is a dialogue where a group of 6 to 8 people discuss a particular subject together (Bryman, 2012). It helps gathering qualitative data from several people who share characteristics. The discussion uses a guide of semi-structured questions, led by a skilled moderator, to elicit responses and generate discussion among the participants (Alvesson, 2011). The goal is to generate the maximum amount of discussion and opinions on the topic, within a given time. Focus group discussions can be used to clarify, extend, qualify, or challenge data collected through other methods (Creswell, 2014). In this study, only one focus group discussion was conducted, in which a total of 9 participants were recruited in the group to discuss a wide range of issues to do with the socio-economic diplomatic offensive of Zimbabwe towards western countries for 2000-2023.

The group consisted of government officials, western representatives, civil society groups, businesspeople, researcher, and students. The researcher purposefully chose to conduct a focus group discussion so that the findings could be used to test the validity or truthfulness of the findings from in-depth interviews. To achieve that, the researcher made sure that the participants of in-depth interviews were different from those who

would participate in focus group discussions.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Confidentiality

Before beginning the study, every researcher must warn or educate participants about the security of their data. The researcher used confidentiality to reassure people that their information was safe. Participants should be informed, according to (Sarantakos, 2013), that all study-related records will be kept strictly confidential and that they will be identified by numbers rather than names.

Informed consent

Informed consent means agreeing to take part in study after receiving important information (Sarantakos, 2013), before conducting interviews and discussions with participants, the researcher obtained their permission. The researcher used consent forms to explain the study aims, advantages, timeline, and potential risks to participants. Prior to taking part in the study, the researcher made certain that each subject signed consent form.

Voluntary Participation

The researcher also follows the ethical ideal of voluntary participation. Before the researcher began any interviews or discussions, participants were given the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

Avoidance of harm

The concept of avoidance of harm refers to a researcher's efforts to direct and safeguard participants against any kind of psychological, emotional, or physical risk that might have an impact on their well-being (Clarke, 2012). The researcher avoided questions and subjects that would have upset participants physically or emotionally throughout the study.

3.9 Validity

Validity is defined as the accuracy and appropriateness of the data collected, allowing

for a comprehensive understanding of the participants both within and outside of the context (Spier et al, 2018). To ensure validity, the research methods used in the data collection process were evaluated for effectiveness. The researcher thoroughly examined the data collection instruments to ensure their validity. Additionally, prior to the distribution of questionnaires and interview questions, a pilot test was conducted to refine them and ensure that he gathered relevant data to answer the research questions.

3.10 Reliability

To ensure the reliability of the results, the participants in the study were familiar with the topic being studied (Spier et al, 2018). The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were also structured to improve the reliability of the results.

3.11 Data presentation and analysis procedures

Data analysis is a process that seeks to categorize and reduce research data into meaningful and understandable information (Cresswell, 2017). The methods of data collection used in this study yielded vast amounts of data which needed to be reduced into meaningful themes and sub-themes so that the impressions that shed light on research questions could emerge. This study therefore utilized thematic analysis, which is a qualitative data analysis instrument that focuses on the specific words and phrases in the data to bring out themes and sub-themes in line with the research objectives (Alvesson, 2011). The process started by documenting all interviews and discussions in the form of audiotapes and field notes captured in vernacular and translated into the English language. This documentation process was vital, for tracking emerging themes from the rapidly growing volumes of data. After documentation, the data analysis process also involved the conceptualization and categorization of data in which important concepts were identified and refined in line with the study objectives. Comments and statements from the interviews and discussions were pulled out of the vast data and put back together as more meaningful themes that answered the research questions.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The research methodology, study population, and study location were all described in the chapter. The chapter also covered sample size and sampling techniques. Techniques for data analysis as well as instruments for data collecting were provided. The chapter discusses the ethical standards that were followed when interviewing the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the study findings and data, and an analysis of the data, in accordance with analysis of socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe to Western countries from 2000-2023. This chapter focuses on the data demonstration, analysis, as well as interpretation of findings. To and questionnaires achieve the research objectives, interviews and group discussions were employed to collect data. Following that, the findings were presented and analyzed using excel and themes.

4.1 Response rate

Response rate is the level at which the targeted sample responds to the administered research instruments. Table shows the response rate of the participants for the interviews.

Description	Target	Response received	Response rate %

Interviews	10	8	80
Focus group discussions	20	9	45

Table 4: 1 Source: (Author 2024)

The findings present responses and response rates for two data collection methods, namely focus group discussions and interviews the target of 30 individuals only 17 participated. For the focus group discussion, the target was 20 individuals, and 9 responses were received meeting the 45% response rate 11 failed to participate which constituted 55%. In contrast, interviews, with a target of 10 individuals, 8 responses were received meeting 80% response rate 2 failed to participate which constituted 20%.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

The findings of the study are presented according to the set objectives and themes developed from the objectives. The data was presented under the following topics: political and socio-economic factors that influenced Zimbabwe’s strategic decision with the western countries, policies and strategies employed by Zimbabwe in its diplomatic offensive, response of western countries to Zimbabwe’s diplomacy and successes and failures of Zimbabwe’s socio-economic diplomatic offensive.

4.2.1 Political and Socio-economic factors that influenced Zimbabwe’s strategic decision with the western countries

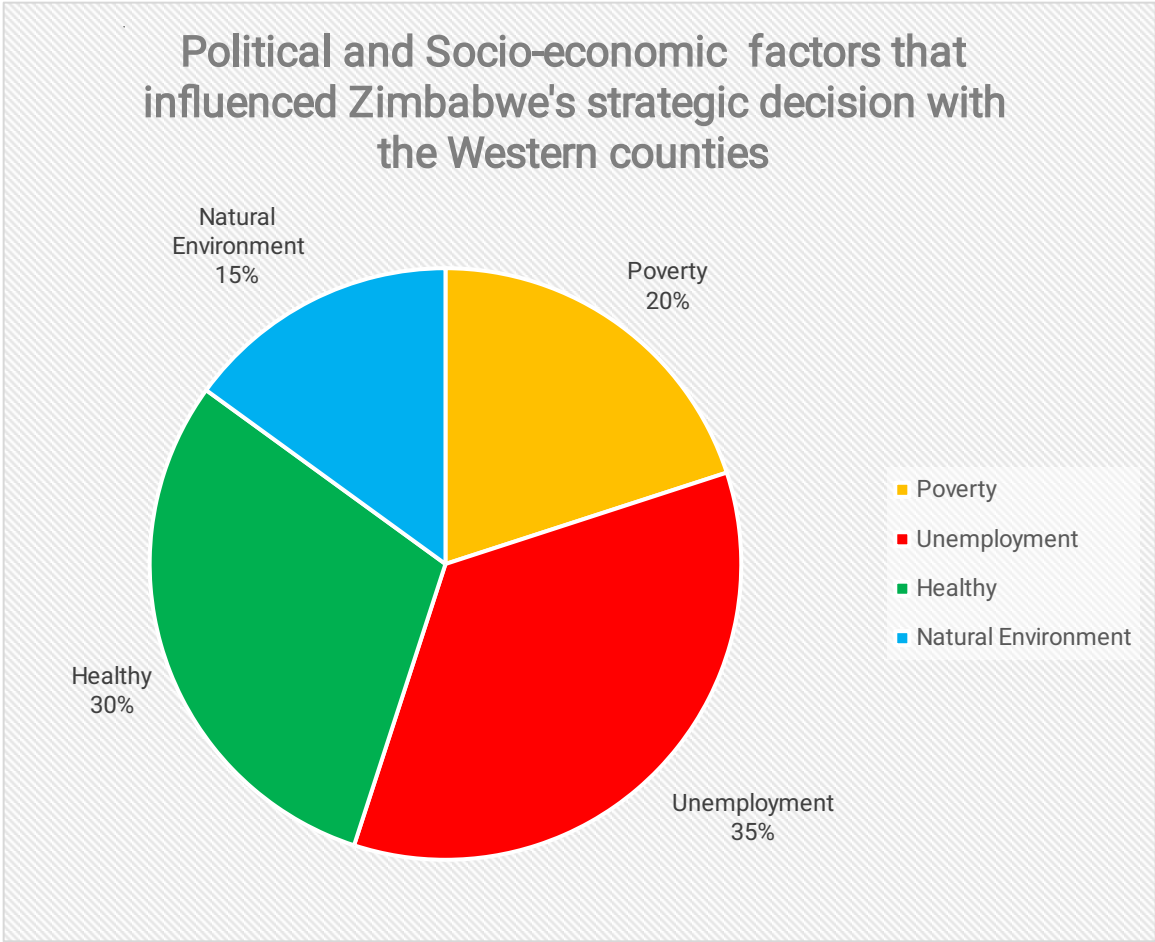


Fig 4.2 Source :(Author 2024)

The findings shows that political and social factors that influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decision with the western countries are as follows Health services with 30%,

Unemployment with 35%, Poverty with 20% and the natural environment with 15% this was postulated as the major causes which drove the country to decide to have a strategic decision with the Western countries.

4.2.1.1 Poverty

In Zimbabwe, the rate of poverty has been recently rising. Based on an analysis using the US\$1.90 International Poverty Line, roughly 72.3% of the population was considered impoverished by 2011. This percentage shot up to 74% in 2018 and was almost 84% at the end of 2019 (World Bank, 2019). The percentages of impoverished population continued to rise more up to date because the economy continued to collapse day by day. This pattern began right after the ESAP, at a time when sixty percent of people were living on less than \$1 a day. The proportion of those classified as extremely poor, that is, those who live extremely far below the poverty line rose from 29% in 2018 to 34% in 2019. Reports stated that, 47% of people are undernourished (Vhumbunu, 2019). People who are undernourished are the ones who only eat just one meal per day, and they are likely to face health challenges like kwashiorkor and diarrhea which can affect their wellbeing. People are trying to flee famine and underdevelopment, which has resulted in massive and chaotic human flows (World Food Programme, 2019). When the country is facing famine and underdevelopment the people in the country are the ones that suffer hence the people will then flee from the country to other countries looking for greener and stable environment for better leaving conditions. An average of two people per household were found to be in the diaspora in the context of the places that were resettled during the 2000s (Ndhlovu, 2017). Around the year 2000 people from Zimbabwe migrated to South African places which were resettled and be permanent residents there. Cross-border migration, especially into South Africa and Botswana, has brought about several benefits for these nations as well as a host of difficulties due to overburdened health, sanitation, educational, and settlement infrastructure. Poverty increased migration and also that led to brain drain people flee to neighboring countries looking for better living conditions this was noted also by the Member of Parliament representative he highlighted that poverty is among the factors that influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decisions with the western at large. He stated that, *"The increase*

of cross boarder migration especially into South Africa particularly is because of poverty and that brought host countries difficulties due to over population, poor sanitation, and inadequate health services among other services". Scholarly findings underscore the notion that poverty is one of the reasons that influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decisions with the western countries. High cross boarder migrations were noted especially in Botswana and South Africa around 2017. People fled because of famine and underdevelopment in the country. The high increase of cross boarder became a challenge specifically to host countries because the host countries ended up having high population and as a result their services ended up not adequate for their people like health, water, and sanitation services.

4.2.1.2 Unemployment

Unemployment is a cause that influenced Zimbabwe's strategic diplomatic decisions with the western countries. Many people from Zimbabwe migrated to Botswana looking for employment and some of them did not have legal documents and they were expelled from the nation, and this was caused by high unemployment in Zimbabwe.

One of the most significant issues the administration is dealing with in Zimbabwe is the shortage of jobs. This has been the result of the socio-economic and political breakdown brought about by the deployment of incorrect activities, as previously mentioned. News24 reported in 2017 that 85% of Zimbabweans were unemployed. This problem has been accumulating since the late 1990s, only getting worse in the early 2000s and became more serious as Mugabe was overthrown in 2017. Out of the 12 million individuals living in the nation in 2008, just 480,000 held formal employment, a decrease from 3.6 million in 2003 during the GNU (World Bank, 2018). It is noted that high unemployment rate rises more during the Mugabe era to 12 million however during the GNU the unemployment decreased. About 94% of people were unemployed in the official sector, with youngsters making up 67.7% of the workforce. All that Mugabe asked of people was that they create jobs for themselves and not wait to be given work. Mnangagwa also discusses enormous agreements that never materialize. Because of this, the nations that border Zimbabwe South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and, to a lesser extent, Mozambique now shoulder the majority of the country's high unemployment rate.

Nonetheless, South Africa is grateful that Zimbabwe has sent vitally important skilled laborers.

Dr. Nadelo Pandor, the Minister of International Relations for South Africa, postulated that, there are moments when I shudder to think of what might happen if all the math and science teachers in South African schools were to leave. A large portion of them is from Zimbabwe (Zim Live, 2019). It was noted that many teachers flee to South Africa looking for greener pastures due to socio-economic woes of the country and this brain drain affected the country at large. The 2011 census reads that there were 672,308 Zimbabweans living in South Africa overall, of whom approximately 391,992 were employed there (Stats SA, 2011). These statistics showed that many Zimbabweans migrated to South Africa in 2011 and nearly a half of the noted population was working in South Africa. By 2019, it was estimated that at least 3 million Zimbabweans were living and working in South Africa alone. This number had increased to 4 million (UN, 2020). The number of Zimbabweans living in South Africa increased to more than 4 million this was due to socio-economic strains which the country was and is facing. Additionally, there are about 40,000 Zimbabweans living in Botswana, and between 2015 and 2018, roughly 50,000 illegal Zimbabweans were expelled from that nation. Additionally, the nation spends more than \$100,000 per year deporting immigrants (Dube, 2019). Due to over population in South Africa the South African government each year will be setting aside a budget to use it to deport foreigners to their countries particularly Zimbabwe she is the country who has a larger population in South Africa. Since 2008, there has been hostility between South Africans and foreigners, which frequently results in xenophobic attacks.

Unemployment is at the core of Zimbabwe's problems and if not dealt with protests similar to those that happened in 2016 and 2018 are close to impossible to avoid. Sentiments expressed by a business manager in an interview showed that indeed unemployment prove to be a cause of concern in Zimbabwe and that led to high migration to neighboring countries and that also led to spread of diseases in host countries due to over population. More so xenophobic attacks were noted in host countries particularly in South Africa where a large population of Zimbabwe has been

recorded. Unemployment contributed to a myriad of factors which affected the population since 2000 up to date. However scholarly findings postulated that, South Africans who exhibit xenophobic sentiments were justified because they were fighting for their socio-economic well-being since it was noted that they were facing socio-economic difficulties like unemployment and social or political deprivation (SAHRC, 2016). South Africans saw that the foreigners are increasing, and their resources were now inadequate they started attacking the foreigners that led to xenophobic attacks. The presence of socioeconomic difficulties is therefore interpreted to indicate that the primary issue is that businesses are hiring foreign workers before domestic workers. The 2019 xenophobic attacks damaged diplomatic ties between South Africa and Nigeria, even though there are more Zimbabweans living in South Africa than any other foreign nation (Aljazeera, 2019). It was noted that the xenophobic attacks broke some country ties because the host country became barbaric to other foreigners. Even though the majority of Nigerians in South Africa work for themselves or run small businesses, xenophobic incidents frequently center on employment-related issues. Therefore, one of the main challenges is the influx of foreign workers seeking employment opportunities in South Africa from neighboring countries like Zimbabwe

4.2.1.3 Health

Zimbabwe's health system is currently in a dire situation. There was a higher massive brain drain of doctors and nurses from 2000 up to date going abroad looking for better living conditions and the government has been failing to provide adequate health services in the country. The health system failure in the country is marked as a push factor to the country's diplomatic offensive. Zimbabwe's health system is currently in disarray. Within other sectors, the health sector was severely impacted by the socioeconomic crisis that followed nearly two decades of misguided policies and maladministration, especially between 1997 and 2008 (Chikanda, 2005). The health system in Zimbabwe was affected severely due to the socio-economic crises, a lot happened in the health sector like the brain drain of nurses and doctors and shortages of equipment and medication in hospitals. A significant advancement in immunization rates and infant mortality rates was reversed because of the nation's socio-economic

collapse. Although there had been some outflow of health workers prior to 1997 the number of these workers increased significantly during the crisis, leading to 43% of positions being unfilled by 2008. This industry has continued to descend into catastrophic chaos ever since.

Doctors in Zimbabwe are tired for being paid so little for working so much which has led to strikes. In 2019, medical doctors went on an extended two-month strike due to unsatisfactory working conditions and staff incapacitations, which ultimately resulted in the dismissal of 211 doctors (Samaita, 2019). Due to unfavorable working conditions the doctors went on strike and after the strike many doctors were dismissed hence that also contributed to the brain drain because after dismissal these doctors fled to other countries looking for favorable and good working conditions. Politicians and a few wealthy families are now seeking treatment abroad, primarily in neighboring South Africa, where they are using private institutions, while the average Zimbabwean is still suffering. The destruction of household housing for a sizable portion of the urban population during Operation Murambatsvina, along with the disintegration of sanitation services, contributed to the collapse of the health sector and the subsequent spread of infectious diseases like AIDS/HIV, cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, and diarrhea not only in Zimbabwe but throughout the region. When more Zimbabweans travel to South Africa and, to a lesser extent, Mozambique for medical care, the health systems in both countries are under pressure, especially in the Manica province's areas of Chingove, Chomoio, and Machazi. Because of its severe immigration regulations, Botswana is still uninhabitable.

The health system in Zimbabwe is affecting the economic stability of the country. A government official postulated that the health system of Zimbabwe was severely impacted by the socio-economic crisis followed nearly two decades of misguided policies and maladministration. Many doctors and nurses also fled to foreign countries looking for better living conditions which also affected our health system delivery. One scholar supported the notion that health delivery systems are severely affected by the economic crises since we are experiencing shortages of medication and poor health delivery systems mostly in government hospitals.

Health system in Zimbabwe was severely affected by the socio-economic challenges which the country was facing. The scholarly findings postulated that the health system in Zimbabwe is very bad because the system is weak no medication or equipment in hospitals. People in Zimbabwe are going to neighboring countries to seek medical attention and some are being helped by Doctors Without Borders. Only politicians and wealthy people are the ones who can afford to get medical services that are adequate abroad. The health system failed due to misguided policies and maladministration by the government.

4.2.1.4 Natural environment

The natural environment has been a cause of concern and it contributed to be one of the factors that influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decision with the western countries. Currently, Zimbabwe is dealing with several environmental issues. More so some of the environmental issues are contributing to climate change hence leading to droughts, famine, floods, and cyclones just to mention a few. Government representatives in the Ministry of lands and the business representative reported that because there are poor legal framework people in Zimbabwe are now largely into illegal mining due to poverty the environment is being destroyed because people are practicing mining everywhere leaving the environment with many holes polluted and degraded. Moreover, there is an increase in deforestation due to illegal mining which is leading to climate change. Challenges that are now faced because of climate change include famine, drought, floods, and cyclones. Poverty exacerbates the destruction of the environment. Due to climate changes people shifted to basic crops to cash crops like tobacco which enables the cutting down of many trees and the killing of wild animals in the forests therefore the socio-economic challenges are to be blamed for the destruction of natural environment.

Natural environment was and is destroyed because of the socio-economic challenges the country is facing people are doing illegal mining, agriculture, poaching and deforestation as way of finding better living conditions. Drawing insight from the interviews, the findings postulated that the natural environment also has an impact on the socio-economic challenges. Challenges like deforestation and air pollution led to

climate change and the results of climate change which contributed to cyclones, floods, famines, and drought which will also affect the population at large. Zimbabwe is currently dealing with several environmental issues, such as deforestation and degradation of land, pollution, loss of biodiversity, and poor waste management rangelands are now essential to the survival of most rural households due to the nation's socioeconomic collapse (Chaumba, Scoones, & Woolmer, 2021). The land degradation and deforestation is or was a result of socio-economic instability people now using land for other purposes for survival like illegal mining and agricultural activities in designated land so that they can feed their families. Deforestation is a direct result of this circumstance. Even though the nation has a well-established record of protecting biodiversity, the rich biodiversity is disappearing quickly, primarily due to habitat destruction from the expansion of agricultural lands, firewood collection, droughts, poaching, and fires. Particularly since the beginning of the FTLRP, forest clearances without any kind of rehabilitation have been observed these are problems brought on by climate change. Climate change challenges such as floods and cyclones (e.g., Cyclone Idai) hit the region in 2017 in countries such as Mozambique and Malawi, while repeated tornados ravaged South Africa, causing massive losses in human lives and property. The fundamental causes of Zimbabwe's environmental challenges include poor regulation and little to no enforcement of existing legislation. This situation is largely unchecked because the perpetrators are ZANU-PF's political capital. As a result, the government finds itself in a quandary when it comes to addressing environmental issues, particularly in the resettled areas inhabited by its supporters, the majority of whom are war veterans who may be reluctant to be dictated to.

There are very poor legal frame work in guarding against the killing of endangered species in Zimbabwe this has led to the increased killing of these animals. Taking advantage of weak legal frameworks, but also of political connections, organized poaching, hunting, and illegal mining have become ways for some people to earn scarce foreign currency (Siyabona Africa, 2019). Many people in the country so an opportunity of illegal poaching as a way of surviving because they get foreign currency by selling ivory, animal skins to other countries at a cheaper price in return of foreign currency which can be able to help them to escape the socio-economic challenges in the country.

These politically connected individuals are also reported to be commercially hunting in protected areas. As a result, neighboring countries, particularly Botswana and South Africa, are witnessing increased rhino poaching. In South Africa, Save the Rhino released statistics indicating that poaching levels have increased dramatically since 2008, with approximately 1000 rhinos poached between 2013 and 2017 (Save the Rhino, 2019). It was noted that illegal poaching increased rapidly these past few years. Poverty has been a major drive for poaching hence even if poachers are killed they are always on the increase as poverty is spreading in Zimbabwe.

Corruption has led to the illegal movement of goods and poaching has skyrocketed due to corruption and porous borders in Zimbabwe. IOL News stated that, while poaching levels in Botswana had been low, there has been a dramatic increase since the mid-2000s, a period marked by intensive poaching and reckless game slaughter in Zimbabwe. There have also been some increased incidences of goods smuggling both to and from neighboring countries, allowing actors to evade tax payments and engage in drug and human trafficking deals using numerous illegal cross-border routes, particularly between the country and South Africa, and to a lesser extent with Botswana. Illegal gold and chrome panning is common in Mozambique, Zambia, and South Africa, particularly in the Free State province. These are activities that have been practiced for many years in Zimbabwe, particularly in Shamva, Shurugwi, Chiadzwa, Kwekwe, Mazowe, and parts of Gweru. While the article does not blame Zimbabweans for these atrocities, it does argue that a weak legal framework, particularly since the FTLRP in the 2000s, has created some opportunities for these illicit activities.

4.3 Policies and strategies employed by Zimbabwe in its diplomatic offensive

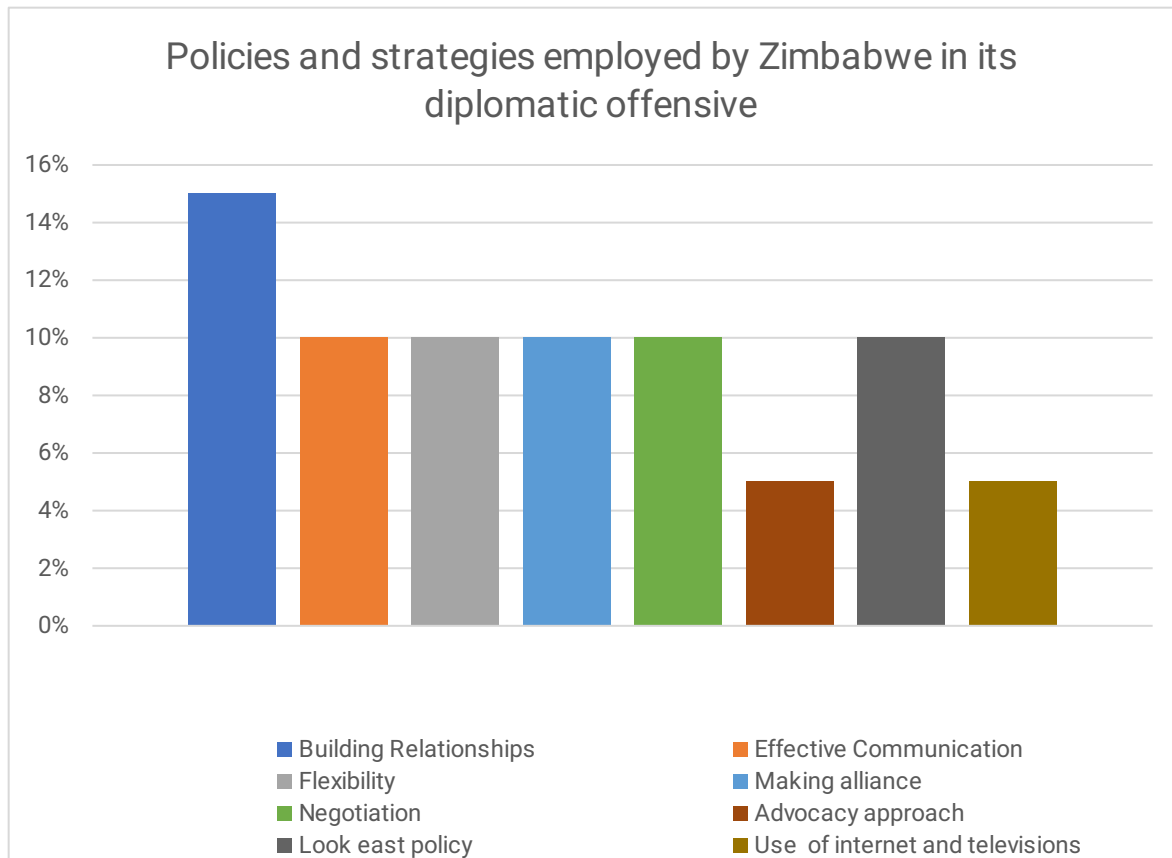


Fig 4.3 Source: (Author 2024)

The findings shows that there are policies and strategies which was put in place by Zimbabwe for her to have a successful diplomatic offensive. The strategies were building relationships with 15%, effective communication with 10%, flexibility with 10%, making alliance with 10%, negotiation with 10%, advocacy approach with 5%, the look east policy with 10% and the use of internet and televisions with 5%.

4.3.1 Building relationships

The first and foremost essential element of successful diplomacy is building strong relationships with other countries. This includes developing an in-depth understanding of the values, culture, and interests of other nations as well as exploring avenues to collaborate for common goals (Kanyenze, Chitambara and Tyson, 2017). Building relationships with other countries enable a successful diplomacy because the country will be able to understand the culture, goals and values of the other country and be able to understand their relationship as countries. This can be done through various means including regular communication, cultural exchanges, economic cooperation, military cooperation, and multilateral diplomacy. In terms of regular communication, keeping in regular contact and preserving open lines of communication help to garner understanding and trust between nations. Likewise, programs promoting cultural exchange can help in building mutual understanding and strengthening ties between two or more countries. These exchanges can include student exchange or cultural ambassador programs. Working jointly on economic initiatives and projects will help create mutually advantageous relations. In short, it will cement strong relationships between the stakeholders. Aside from that, combined military endeavors, like peacekeeping operations or joint training exercises can assist in cultivating trust and alliance between the countries, while working together and participating in international organizations on issues about a shared concern will aid in informing long-lasting ties and addressing transnational challenges. Building relationships with other countries was said to be an important strategy for a successful diplomatic offensive governments of countries should engage or use that effective strategy this assertion was supported by the government ministry representatives who argued that President Mnangagwa's strategy has been to engage Zimbabwe's neighbors, strengthen regional ties, re-engage, and strengthen Zimbabwe's relations with traditional allies such as China and Russia, as well as to reset relations with the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union, and the West after nearly two decades of toxic relations under Mugabe's regime. His foreign policy is known as the Mnangagwa Doctrine, which states that "Zimbabwe is open for business."

Building strong relations with other countries helps the country to have a successful diplomatic offensive. The scholarly findings strongly indicated that building strong

relationships with Western countries will result in a successful diplomatic offensive. As stated in an interview the president is willing to make more strong relationships and to mend other broken relationships with other Western countries for a diplomatic offensive to be successful. A scholar supported the notion that building relationships is important. In the theory of soft power effective communications and international cooperation and building relationships were mentioned and it was postulated that these factors are very important in a diplomacy of every country. These factors are important because they help in strengthening the relations of countries who have diplomatic issues.

4.3.2 Effective communication

Effective communication is a key element to a successful diplomatic offensive. It is comprised of the capacity to effectively communicate one's positions along with actively listening to the stance of others (Chiumia, 2019). It was noted that communication is the key to a successful diplomatic offensive because without communication there is no development, countries will be communication helping each other by communicating, so it is a necessity. Strategies for adequate communication in diplomacy are being open to compromise, using nonverbal communication, and being respectful. As far as being clear and concise is concerned, it is necessary to convey one's objectives and stance and avoid the use of confusing or ambiguous language. In the same vein, paying attention is equally important for successful diplomacy. Stakeholders must pay attention to what others are communicating along with industriously trying to comprehend their perspective. Moreover, diplomacy usually involves establishing common ground and reaching mutually acceptable solutions. Hence it is important to be open to the possibility of compromise. Also, another important thing in this context is respecting the views and opinions of others, even when disagreeing. This is essential to maintain positive relationships and build trust.

Communication is the way to go for a successful diplomatic offensive of every country and it was noted that communication should be a two-way street both countries should communicate to each other frequently this notion was also supported by a political science student at the University of Zimbabwe and a World Vision representative they

stated that, communication is a tool to successful diplomacy. Zimbabwe must pay attention to what others are communicating along with industriously trying to comprehend their perspectives. Without proper communication, there is no successful diplomacy. Furthermore, diplomacy usually entails finding common ground and reaching mutually acceptable solutions. As a result, it is critical to be open to the possibility of compromise. Respecting the views and opinions of others, even when they differ, is also important in this context. This is critical for maintaining positive relationships and developing trust. The scholarly findings revealed that communication is an essential tool for successful diplomacy. A country should be able to listen to and follow solutions from its stakeholders. Moreover, the country will be able to find a common ground due to communication strategy. There is also the need to respect the views of its partners hence leading to successful diplomacy in Zimbabwe.

4.3.3 Flexibility

Flexibility is a key feature to a successful diplomatic offensive. Being flexible involves being open to compromise, having the ability to consider a range of viewpoints and options, and adapting to altering circumstances. As noted earlier, diplomacy often includes exploring common agenda and advancing mutually acceptable solutions, it is critical to be open to the prospects of compromise. It is equally imperative to give value to the perspective of others, despite one's contrary opinion of the issue at hand. Additionally, adaptability in terms of evolving circumstances and considering new approaches might help in moving forward in negotiations and finding creative solutions to common challenges. Flexibility is the key to successful diplomacy of any country particularly Zimbabwe because it enables the country to advance mutual solutions, the government official representative postulated that; flexibility is required for diplomacy to be successful. Flexibility frequently entails exploring a shared agenda and advancing mutually acceptable solutions; thus, it is critical to be open to the possibility of compromise.

Flexibility is also a measure that was taken by Zimbabwe in its diplomatic offensive. The findings showed that flexibility involves compromise, openness, and having the

ability to consider a range of views and ideas from different perspectives. It is equally important to value the perspectives of others, regardless of one's opposing viewpoint on the issue at hand. Furthermore, adaptability in terms of changing circumstances and considering new approaches may aid in progressing in negotiations and finding creative solutions to common challenges.

4.3.4 Using a multi-faceted approach

Employing a multi-faceted method in diplomacy includes utilizing a wide range of tools and strategies for achieving one's objectives. This can include traditional diplomatic efforts and other means, including cultural exchange programs, economic incentives, and military collaboration. One example of a multi-faceted approach for successful diplomacy is the relationship of the European Union (EU) with its Eastern Neighbors. The EU has pursued a range of initiatives to promote stability and integration in the region. These initiatives include political reform, economic assistance, and cultural exchange programs (Dube, 2019). These initiatives which were pursued to boast the socio-economic challenges which the countries were facing. As a result, the EU has been able to promote cooperation with Eastern neighbors and manage a range of issues by using a multi-faceted approach.

Multi-faceted approach is a crucial tool for a successful diplomatic offensive, and it is encouraged to use the approach in every country when dealing with the diplomatic offensive issues, the students, civil society groups, and business sector people postulated that multi-faceted approach is very crucial for a successful diplomacy in every country. These multi-faceted relationships are important because, in times of difficulties, a country will be helped. Zimbabwe is also trying to use the multi-faceted approach to achieve its objectives in its diplomatic offensive.

Multi-faceted approach was or is proved to be a tool for a successful diplomatic offensive because it involves many aspects which are necessary for the country to have and use. The scholarly findings showed that by using the multi-faceted approach the country will be able to achieve its objectives and in times of difficulties the country will be helped by its alliances. This multi-faceted approach includes a lot of programs that are essential for a diplomatic offensive. Zimbabwe should have a strong relationship

with the European Union so that they will be able to get assistance with challenges being faced in the country.

4.3.5 Making alliances

Making alliances is a standard strategy in diplomacy, as nations can collaborate and pool their resources to acquire common objectives. Alliances have many forms informal coalitions, formal treaty organizations and military alliances, World Vision representative argued that, making alliances is another strategy in diplomacy. This is helping Zimbabwe to be strong because this collaboration makes the nation strong, and these alliances protect the interests of the country. Zimbabwe is making progress with Russia and China's alliances.

Making alliances with other countries will help a certain country because the alliance made will benefit one country in need of help particularly military help, economic help and many things the country might need. Scholarly findings postulated that Zimbabwe is achieving its diplomatic offensive because of the strong alliances. These strong alliances protect the interests of Zimbabwe. Alliances enable the country to achieve its objectives.

4.3.6 Negotiation

Negotiation is the way to a successful diplomacy. The negotiation process was used as a strategy to attract investors who were sent away during the land reform programme. One International student at Midlands State University asserted that, Zimbabwe started to move around preaching that it is the “enemy of none and a friend of all”. This was a cover-up for the land reform whereby they sent away the white farmers and took their lands. This is when Zimbabwe preached the gospel Zimbabwe is open for business and that started under the second republic under President Mnangagwa.

For a successful diplomatic offensive, a country should be able to negotiate with its allies so that the country at hand will be free to say out its challenges and be helped through the negotiation process. The findings showed that Zimbabwe engaged this

strategy to admit to the mistake she did under land reform program whereby white farmers were forcefully removed from their farms. So, Zimbabwe used the negotiation approach preaching that she is an enemy to none and friend to everyone hence it is open for business it was a way to drag other western countries to come to Zimbabwe to invest.

4.3.7 Silencing the internal forces

Another strategy which was used by Zimbabwe was or is the silencing the internal forces for which the internal forces are the ones who can report the current situation of the country, the government has proposed the signing of a patriotic bill to protect the spreading of information out of the country supporting the notion above, PLAN International representative reported that, civil society groups are being silenced so that they will not report the bad current situation in the country for which the western countries rely more on internal forces. There are bills which were put in place NGO bill and Patriotic bill these bills postulated that no one is allowed to speak bad about the country hence all the people are being silenced so this was also used as a strategy.

Silencing the internal force was proved to be an essential tool in Zimbabwe because the government saw the internal forces as a threat to the international organization so the only way was to silence them all through the use of bills which will be put in place to silence them while operating in the country. The findings showed that many a bill will be put in place to silence anyone who is in the country to report badly about the current situation. The Western countries rely more on internal forces like civil society organizations, but bills were put in place so that they will not be allowed to say a word to the Western countries, so it is said to be a very efficient strategy to date.

4.3.8 Advocacy approach

Advocacy approached approved to be a significant strategy in Zimbabwe. She used the advocacy approach so that other international platforms will see her as a victim of the white colonial rule. One parliamentary representative argued that Zimbabwe used the advocacy strategy whereby they will act as a victim to the imposition of sanctions. That is why Zimbabwe is seen on different international platforms like EU, UN, AU, SADC, and

all other platforms singing the song that she is the victim of international neo-colonialism that gave birth to 25th October the anti-sanction day.

Advocacy approach was also used as a tool so that the international organizations will feel pity for Zimbabwe hence, they can remove the sanctions. The findings shows that Zimbabwe engaged the advocacy approach to pave way for international restoration as well as the removal of sanctions which was imposed. On all international platforms Zimbabwe is seen preaching and singing that she is a victim of neo-colonialism and that marked the 25th of October the anti-sanction day.

4.3.9 Look East policy

The look east policy came as a rescue to Zimbabwe after Zimbabwe was banned from all international organization. Trade with other international countries became difficult and that affected the economy at large. Zimbabwe started relying on African trade and there was no access to international inputs and that also contributed to socio-economic challenges. However, the Look East policy which was engaged under Mugabe tried to help the socio-economic challenges which were skyrocketing in Zimbabwe. The Schweppes manager asserted that, Zimbabwe decided to look somewhere else for better opportunities. The Look East policy was engaged during the Mugabe era. Other countries like Malaysia also engaged but the main country was China and Zimbabwe became the darling of China because China saw that Zimbabwe has many opportunities and many resources to take advantage of. More so the Look East policy was also used as a tool to trigger jealousy to Western countries so that they may have lenience on Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe was left out alone without any international country to associate with and the economy was crumbling then Mugabe later engaged the Look East Policy. The findings showed that the Look East strategy helped Zimbabwe a lot under the Mugabe regime. Due to the imposition of sanctions, Zimbabwe was unable to sustain its socio-economic issues. It was banned from interacting with the western countries. So, by engaging this policy Zimbabwe managed to build other relations with other east countries like Malaysia, Singapore, and many others.

4.4. Response of western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomacy

4.4.1 Regime change principle

British policy towards Zimbabwe has been glaringly ineffectual since the current crisis began. Britain's interventions have swung from attempts at negotiating with the Zimbabwe government, resort to what has been called "megaphone diplomacy" consisting of vociferous public denunciations of the Harare authorities, the imposition of international sanctions to efforts at building a multi-lateral position against Mugabe, to calls for "regime change" (Taylor & Williams 2012). The agenda of Britain was for Zimbabwean government to be democratic however the government which was under Mugabe opposed the principles. All these strategies have not been successful in either halting the crisis or resolving it. In some cases, British interventions have, in fact, worsened the situation. The EU travel ban on the Zimbabwe leadership was meant essentially to prevent them from accessing European capitals in a way that they are isolated so that they would miss out on the economic benefits that potentially would bring. In this way, the travel ban would let the leadership become redundant and face domestic pressure for them to leave office. As part of a regime change agenda, it would surely contribute to the eventual downfall of the government in Harare. The EU, however, maintained that it only had imposed a 'travel ban because of the breakdown of the rule of law and human rights abuses. A government official representative in international relations and an international relations student at Midlands state university expressed that, the response of western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomacy was not successful. Many strategies were put in place in trying to solve the Zimbabwe issue, but all attempts failed. Instead. Britain wanted a regime change in Zimbabwe under Mugabe, but Mugabe refused to adhere to those principles and that destroyed the relations between Zimbabwe and Britain.

The western countries wanted Zimbabwe to follow the principles of democracy and regime change but unfortunately the government under Mugabe refused to abide to those principles. The scholarly findings showed that, the response of the western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive was not viable because the relations with Britain and other western countries was not good because Zimbabwe failed to deliver

what was expected by Britain the preaching about regime change which was under Mugabe that's when the Zimbabwe struggle began.

4.4.2 Sanctions

Sanctions were imposed following a process that began in 1998. The IMF first imposed unpublished sanctions in 1998, withdrawing its financial support for land reform. It completely abandoned its support for Zimbabwe's economic adjustment and reform in 1999. The US then passed the ZIDERA Act in March 2000, effectively freezing Mugabe's claims as well as those of his family and top government officials (Fowale, 2010). The imposition of sanctions affected the country at large because that is when the socio-economic crisis started a lot of things were disturbed. It also imposed travel restrictions on Mugabe and his close allies, as well as a ban on Zimbabwe accessing IMF and World Bank loans. One government official asserted that, Zimbabwe and Britain relations went sour when the two countries failed to reach a certain agreement on the issue to do with regime change which was under Mugabe around year 2000. Zimbabwe was in socio-economic crisis. Britain put sanctions to Zimbabwe hence barred Zimbabwe from accessing western help and achieving its goals socially and economically. Those sanctions also destroyed other western relations with Zimbabwe specifically countries who were Britain's allies.

Sanctions were imposed on Zimbabwe by the western countries after Zimbabwe failed to follow what the western countries want on issues to do with democracy and regime change. The scholarly findings showed that, the response of the western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive was not viable because the relations with Britain and other western countries was not good because Zimbabwe failed to deliver what was expected by Britain the preaching about regime change which was under Mugabe. Instead of helping Zimbabwe in socio-economic crisis Britain put sanctions to Zimbabwe hence barred Zimbabwe from accessing western help and achieving its goals.

4.5 Success employed by the diplomatic offensive

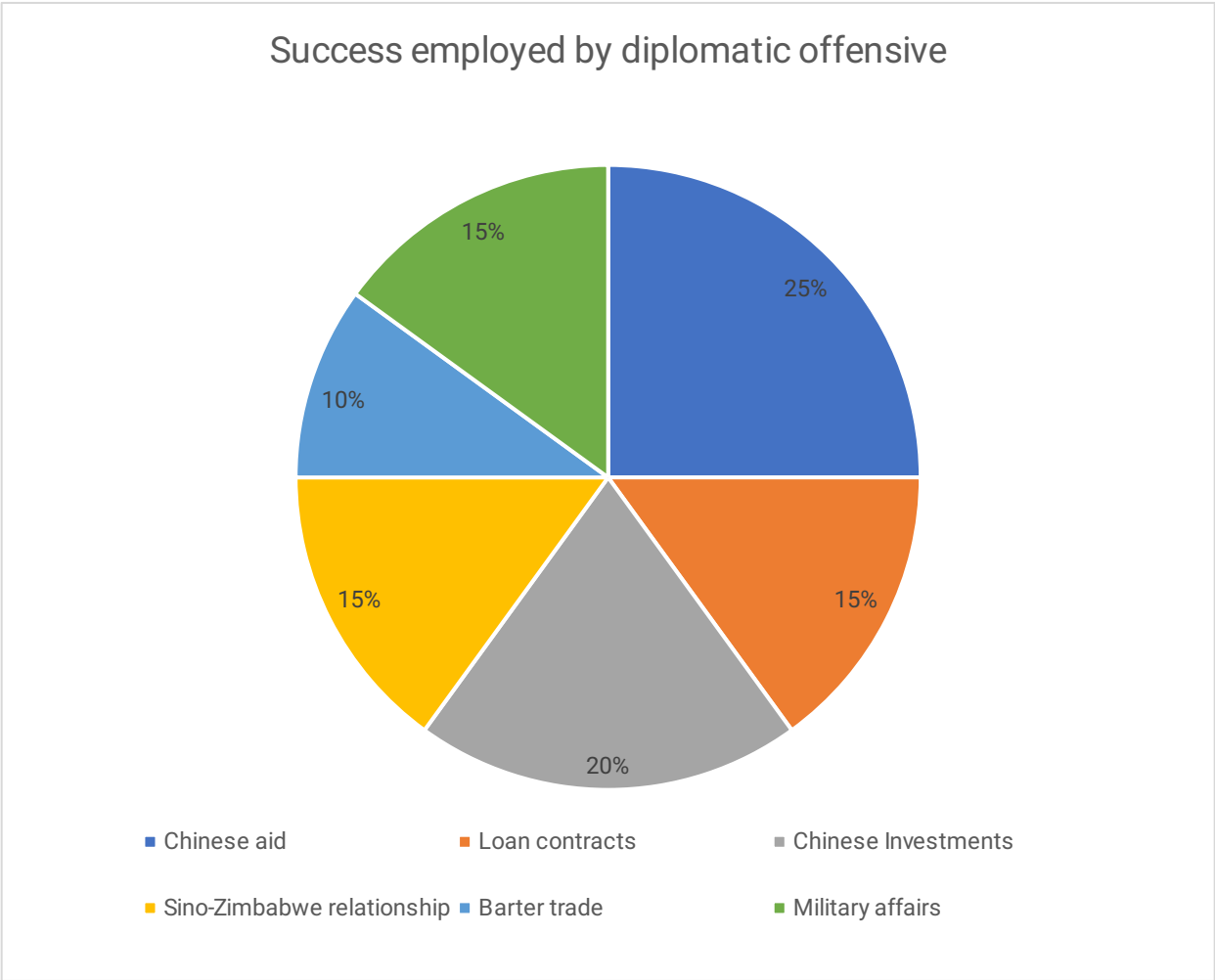


Fig 4.4 Source (Author 2024)

The findings above showed that, there are success employed by Zimbabwe in the diplomatic offensive. The success comprises of Chinese aid at 25%, Loan contracts at 15%, Chinese investments at 20%, Sino-Zimbabwe relationship at 15%, Barter trade at 10% and Military affairs at 15%. This success managed or helped Zimbabwe in dealing with socio-economic challenges which the country was facing and to a greater extent it was a success.

4.5.1 Military Affairs

China has the closest military ties with Zimbabwe in the African continent. Many Zimbabwe's senior officials and military commanders received training in China, including the legendary guerilla war hero General Josiah Magama Tongogara. The military continues to play a prominent role in Zimbabwean politics, and the two countries' militaries' high level of cooperation and exchange has been an important component of their strong relations. Since the implementation of Western military embargoes, China has become an increasingly important source of military equipment (Banks, 2011). In military Zimbabwe got the help from China after all other international countries withdrew their military help for Zimbabwe. Foreign affair representative postulated that, China and Zimbabwe have strong military ties. Some of the freedom fighters received their training from China. It is a long-time strong military affair this is also a benefit from Zimbabwe because the military tie also protects the interests of Zimbabwe.

China is the first country from the East to engage with Zimbabwe on military help. The scholarly findings showed that, China and Zimbabwe have a long-time military tie because it was noted that the freedom fighter also received their training in China during the Chimurenga wars.it was noted that the military ties were and are strong till date.

4.5.2 Zimbabwe has received Chinese aid

Zimbabwe received aid from China and the aid helped the people to a greater extent. The aid came in different forms like food, military, and equipment. Zimbabwe was

struggling to provide adequate food, military assistance then China chipped in and helped hence that helped the country to boost the socio-economic crisis. Representative of PLAN international and World vision noted that, international donors have been playing a significant role in Zimbabwe. These international donors offered a variety of assistance like financial, food and humanitarian aid. There has been a shortage of consumer goods but because of the help of the international donors Zimbabwe was helped. Main aids were coming from United Kingdom, Australia, and China.

China has been playing significant roles in helping Zimbabwe. She has been receiving different aids from China. The findings showed that, China have been playing significant roles in Zimbabwe. More so different aids were offered like the financial, humanitarian and food. Zimbabwe has been facing some challenges like shortages of consumers, lack of foreign exchange reserves and the declining of GDP. So, the findings showed agreed that the international organizations came as a rescue to Zimbabwe.

4.5.3 Loan Contracts

Zimbabwe relies heavily on international donors and a variety of humanitarian and relief organizations for financial assistance, owing to a declining GDP, a lack of foreign exchange reserves, and a general shortage of consumer goods. Remittances from Zimbabweans living abroad are also a significant source of income for those who have been left behind. According to reports, over three million Zimbabweans have fled to neighboring countries. Zimbabwe has received Chinese aid. Zimbabwe relies heavily on international donors and a variety of humanitarian and relief organizations for financial assistance, owing to a declining GDP, a lack of foreign exchange reserves, and a general shortage of consumer goods. Remittances from Zimbabweans living abroad are also a significant source of income for those who have been left behind. According to reports, over three million Zimbabweans have fled to neighboring countries. The government official representative avers that Zimbabwe had a close relationship with China which enabled China to give Zimbabwe contract loans. Zimbabwe was given interest free loans to recover from socio-economic challenges by China. Zimbabwe was also given loans to develop infrastructure. The People's Republic of China has extended several

loan agreements to Zimbabwe. Interest-free loans, for example, were provided for the construction of the Zimbabwe National Sports Stadium in Harare (Brautigam, 2009). It is noted that China is the one which gave Zimbabwe loans to maintain the infrastructure in the country like roads, bridges, stadiums and many other developments. More commonly, China's Export and Import Bank (EXIM Bank) has awarded Zimbabwe low-interest loan agreements with long maturities. EXIM Bank, one of China's largest policy banks, is primarily involved in construction and infrastructure projects across the African continent. The Bank, which is solely owned by the Chinese government, boasted more than 260 projects in 36 African countries in the fourth quarter of 2006. EXIM Bank, as the sole provider of Chinese government concessional loans, offers package deals designed specifically to meet the needs of African governments. Its loans are mostly used for infrastructure development in Africa, such as power plants, telecommunications projects, transportation infrastructure, but also mining, manufacturing, housing, and health care. China EXIM Bank made a concessional loan to Zimbabwe's Ministry of Water in 2001 for infrastructure development. The District Development Fund (DDF) used this loan to purchase equipment worth \$8 million for the development, maintenance, and upgrading of road infrastructure.

Contract loans has been given to Zimbabwe so that she can maintain her infrastructure development. The scholarly findings showed that, the relationship between China and Zimbabwe is strong. It was noted that Zimbabwe was given loans who were interest free. These loans were used to boast socio-economic issues in Zimbabwe more, so the loans were used to develop infrastructure like roads, power plants, hospitals among other projects.

4.5.4 The Chinese Investment in Zimbabwe

As Zimbabwe's economic situation worsens, capital flight has increased, and traditional investors have become more critical of the political regime and its poor human rights record. UNCTAD classified Zimbabwe as one of the underperformers in terms of FDI potential and performance in 2004. The country was ranked 131st in terms of FDI potential and last in terms of FDI performance (Bolewski& Rietig, 2008). Thus, Chinese investment coincides with much-needed foreign capital inflows. Aside from financing

several development projects and helping in sectors such as infrastructure and agriculture, "China Inc" has several commercial projects in the country, attracted through the Zimbabwean government's investor program, the National Economic Development Programme (NEDPP), among others. Launched in April 2006, NEDPP was created to address the economic challenges which have resulted in acute levels of poverty, migration from Zimbabwe and significant informal sector activity.

China saw that Zimbabwe was left out alone with other international countries and she was struggling socially and economically that is when she decided to invest in Zimbabwe this notion was supported by the foreign affairs representative who stated that, *"China saw that Zimbabwe was in socio-economic crises, China agreed to invest in Zimbabwe so that Zimbabwe will address its economic challenges which has resulted in acute levels of poverty. Investments of China helped the country a lot "*. These investments have boosted Zimbabwe's socioeconomic growth and created jobs for many people in Zimbabwe. However though the Chinese have invested in Zimbabwe many people are being paid less for hard labor especially in the mining sector.

There are many investments which we noted which were done by China to Zimbabwe trying to help her boost her economic activities. The scholarly findings showed that, China indeed helped Zimbabwe in its socio-economic crisis by investing its capital. Cash inflows were noted and that helped Zimbabwe to rise again as well as solving its problems. Different investment projects were implemented, and development projects are helping different sectors such as infrastructure and agriculture. One scholar postulated that these investments would benefit a lot of people by creating jobs and boosting the economy. Zimbabwe to secure critical foreign investments it must enhance the international community and these projects will create jobs and foreign investments will inject crucial cash in the economy. Foreign investors helped the country to boost its socio-economic activities in various ways.

4.5.5 The Sino-Zimbabwean Commercial Relationship

Over the last decade, bilateral trade between China and Zimbabwe has increased. After South Africa, China is now Zimbabwe's second largest trading partner. Even though the Zimbabwean dollar has been devalued several times since 2000, the trade relationship

is improving. The goal of this section is to go over Zimbabwe's main commodity exports to China and, conversely, Zimbabwe's main imports from China. The country's appetite for mineral investments and raw materials has underwritten China's trading relationship with Zimbabwe. The signing of an economic and technical agreement between the two countries in early 2004 deepened bilateral trade even further (Faku, 2019). The signing of the agreement between China and Zimbabwe strengthened the relationship of the two countries. Part of the agreement called for Zimbabwe to increase production of one of its main exports, tobacco. Zimbabwe, which is rich in natural resources and mineral deposits such as platinum, ferrochrome, coal, copper, diamonds, emeralds, gold, and silver, offers significant investment opportunities in the mining sector as well as some cash crops. Considering rising global commodity prices, China's appetite for natural resources to support its fast-paced urbanization and development has spurred Chinese investment in these mineral resources across Africa. The government official postulated that China built the commercial relationship with Zimbabwe to help Zimbabwe to boost its economy. China is now the largest trading partner of Zimbabwe and the trading relationship have improved. Many exports to China have noted hence that helped Zimbabwe to boost its economy.

This commercial relationship between Zimbabwe and China proved to be success because it helped Zimbabwe in boosting its economy. Findings postulated that, the commercial relationship between China and boosted the economy. Many exports were noted to China and the income of exports increased. More so Zimbabwe increased its main export which tobacco and cotton. In the mining sector Zimbabwe production is highly in gold, diamond, copper, coal among other minerals hence that boosted the economy and helped the country to solve its socio-economic challenges hence the diplomatic offensive strategy can be noted as crucial for the development of a country particularly Zimbabwe.

4.5.6 Trade by Barter

Zimbabwe was facing challenges in international trade since it was barred from penetrating international market due to sanctions which was imposed to it. China willingly decided to engage Zimbabwe with the barter trade due to these barter trade

Zimbabwe was able to repay loans to China. One scholar postulated that; sanctions affected the countries' socio-economy to a greater extent. One scholar supported the notion in the literature review saying that sanctions are backfiring Zimbabwe because for example trade should be a two-way street, but it is now a failure (Abdullar, 2010). Sanctions are the root cause of the socio-economic crisis Zimbabwe is facing because these sanctions had harsh conditions which were not favorable to the country. The Chinese government has repeatedly expressed a desire for barter in African trade and investment arrangements modeled on relations with Luanda and dubbed the Angola Model. Zimbabwe is at a significant disadvantage in international trade due to a lack of foreign exchange reserves. Harare now has an appealing alternative thanks to China's willingness to enter into barter trade agreements. The specifics of these transactions are unknown, but a significant portion of Zimbabwe's exports to China are used to repay loans provided as part of the barter trade agreement. One of the largest deals of this type was a US\$58 million exchange of agricultural equipment for tobacco. Such arrangements necessitate a high level of trust and represent an investment in Zimbabwe's stability. International studies students postulated that for trade to be viable it should be a two-way street whereby both countries benefit the expenses of each country fairly without manipulating each other.

Barter trade was also a tool in solving the socio-economic challenges which was in the country. The scholarly findings showed that, barter trade was an essential to Zimbabwe because of diplomatic offensive because the trades enable Zimbabwe to repay loans and to boost its economy because the economy was crippled due to restrictions imposed to Zimbabwe about penetrating international market. Zimbabwe was only trading with African countries only and that did not help to boost the economy which was already crippled.

4.6 Challenges faced in achieving the diplomatic offensive

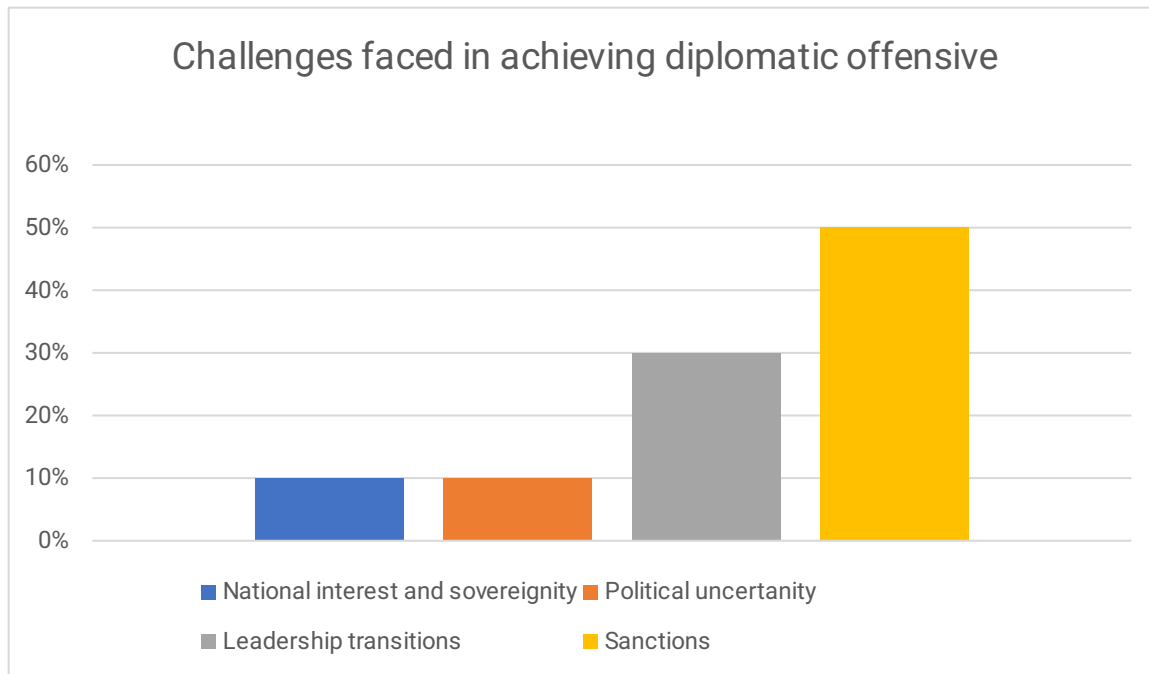


Fig 4.5 Source: (Author ,2024)

The findings above showed the challenges which are faced or faced in achieving the diplomatic offensive in Zimbabwe. Challenges like national interest and sovereignty at 10%, political uncertainty at 10%, leadership transitions at 30% and sanctions at 50%.

4.6.1 National Interests and Sovereignty

The national sovereignty affected Zimbabwe. The conflicts which Britain and Zimbabwe have its because of the sovereignty and national issues. Britain was against Zimbabwean governments priorities. Plan international and parliament representative reported that, they failed to agree on issues to with human rights and regime change Britain argued that the Zimbabwean government is abusing power and there is human rights violation as a result Britain imposed sanctions to Zimbabwe which was a harsh

strategy which crippled the Zimbabwean economy up to date. One scholar argue that the national sovereignty affected Zimbabwe at large. The western countries wanted Zimbabwe to be democratic, but Zimbabwe failed to do so hence imposition of sanctions. In the literature review Zimbabwe struggled to democratize and that led to sanctions, and nothing came out positive because of sanctions.

Sovereignty was a fiasco for Zimbabwe. The findings showed that the national sovereignty affected Zimbabwe at large. Zimbabwe wanted to protect its interests from Western countries fearing for the colonization which once happened, but Britain did not see it that way instead Britain views the Zimbabwean government as a human right abuser, and the Zimbabwean government was not willing to respond to the regime change preached by Britain, so the findings showed this as a challenge or a threat to the diplomatic offensive.

4.6.2 Political Uncertainty and Leadership Transitions

One of the most difficult challenges in diplomacy is balancing national sovereignty and individual state interests with the need for global cooperation. Nations sometimes prioritize their own interests, making it difficult to find common ground on global issues like climate change, human rights, and trade protocols. Diplomatic challenges revolve around sovereignty and national interests (Gonye, 2019). It is true that diplomatic challenges revolve sovereignty and national interest these two factors should be balanced so that they will be a progress and development in the country failing to balance the two progress and development can be hindered. Sovereign nations fiercely defend their autonomy, which can lead to disagreements over issues such as territorial integrity, border disputes, and self-determination. These tensions can stymie international agreements, trade negotiations, and global cooperation. Diplomacy seeks common ground, mediates conflicts, and promotes dialogue to advance both national interests and the larger goals of global stability and cooperation. Keeping this delicate balance in check is a key function of effective diplomatic efforts.

The change in leadership can affect almost everything in terms of policies on how to achieve socio-economic growth. A government official and a political science student argued that diplomatic difficulties are greatly impacted by political unrest and shifts in

leadership. Abrupt regime changes, coups, or rigged elections can all pose a threat to diplomatic relations and international agreements. Foreign policy priorities can change because of leadership changes, which can impact both bilateral and multilateral interactions. Developing relationships with new leaders who may have opposing agendas and adjusting to shifting political landscapes are challenges that diplomats often face.

Political instability and leadership changes have a significant impact on diplomatic challenges. Diplomatic relationships and international agreements can be jeopardized by sudden regime shifts, coups, or planned and fixed elections. Changes in leadership can cause shifts in foreign policy priorities, affecting bilateral and multilateral engagements. Diplomats are frequently faced with the challenge of adapting to changing political landscapes and developing relationships with new leaders who may have opposing agendas. Political unrest in one country can have far-reaching consequences, causing regional tensions, conflicts, and complicating diplomatic efforts. Managing these uncertainties and maintaining continuity in diplomatic relations are critical challenges in the face of political instability.

Political leadership is a cause of concern for the failing or challenges faced in achieving a diplomatic offensive. The findings showed that if the regime changes principles is not followed can affect the whole process. In Zimbabwe the diplomatic offensive strategy is facing challenges because of the regime change which they failed to respond to. This issue of regime changes ignorance led to sanctions under Britain and the sanctions were too harsh that contributed to socio-economic challenges because was restricted from entering international market and other international relations were destroyed that led the diplomatic offensive strategy difficult to achieve.

4.6.3 Sanctions

Sanctions were imposed following a process that began in 1998. The IMF imposed unpublished sanctions for the first time in 1998, withdrawing financial support for land reform. In 1999, it withdrew its support for Zimbabwe's economic adjustment and reform. Mugabe introduced the land reform program me were by he gave the land back to the blacks the land which were taken by the whites during the colonial rule. More so

after independence the government under Mugabe removed sales taxes on the staple items of food and fuel for the poorest people and extended sales taxes to travel, hotel accommodation and other services (Fowale, 2010). It was noted that after independence in trying to compensate the Zimbabweans Mugabe removed taxes which were there during the British era and also, he introduced free education for all and free health services hence later on those principles led the country into financial doldrums and the socio-economic crises then started. Furthermore, after independence Mugabe introduced education for all and free health services for all however later it resulted in a pool of structural adjustment programmes. In March 2000, the United States passed the ZIDERA Act, effectively freezing Mugabe's claims as well as those of his family and top government officials. It also restricted Mugabe's and his close allies' travel and barred Zimbabwe from accessing IMF and World Bank loans. Sanctions proved to be the root cause of the Zimbabwe's socio-economic challenges up to date, proband manager asserted that, one animal which is making the diplomatic offensive fail is the sanctions. Sanctions were put by Britain to punish the country hence the sanctions contributed to socio-economic challenges which Zimbabwe faced from 2000 up to date. These sanctions restricted Zimbabwe to penetrate international markets, access loans to international banks and other international relations were broken so it's hard to have a successful diplomatic offensive.

Sanctions have proven to be a hindrance to the success of the diplomatic offensive. The findings showed that, sanctions contributed to a lot of problems Zimbabwe is facing today because Zimbabwe was banned from entering international markets, access of loans from international banks and some of the international relations were broken. Zimbabwe was only left with African relations which was not adequate for its rise hence a diplomatic offensive strategy keeps on facing challenges because of the sanctions.

4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided data presentation and analysis. This investigation's findings were relevant to the research objectives that directed it. The respondents of the government officials, western diplomats, business representative, civil society groups, researchers,

and students have been used to identify analyze the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards western countries from 2000-2023. This was done in accordance with the study's objectives and literature was used to support the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concisely summarizes the main points of the study; draws certain conclusions from the findings of the study; and makes certain recommendations. Thus, the major focus of this chapter is to provide a summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, and area of further study of the diplomatic offensive based on the insights gathered from the personal key informant interviews, in-depth interviews, and the focus group discussions that were conducted by the researcher. This body of research focused on the Analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards the Western countries from 2000-2023. The main aim was to examine Zimbabwe's socioeconomic diplomatic offensive towards Western nations. A basic interpretative qualitative study design was employed to gain deeper insights into the analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards Western countries. Data was generated from focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and in-depth interviews. The chapter also offers a summary of the research, conclusions, recommendations, and areas of further on the diplomatic offensive.

5.2 Summary

Chapter One introduced the study by providing a background to the study, stating the research problem, and asking the research problem that needed to be answered. The study analyzed the socio-economic challenges that led Zimbabwe to engage in the

diplomatic offensive with the Western countries. The findings were derived from the objectives of the study which are to explore the underlying political, economic, and social factors that have influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive, to examine the key policies and strategies employed by the Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive, to assess the response of Western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive and to examine the successes and failures of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive. More so the research questions also helped the researcher to explore the main aim of the research using research questions like what social factors have influenced Zimbabwe's strategic decisions in its diplomatic interactions with Western countries, what are the key policies and strategies employed by the Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive, what measures or policies implemented by western countries in response to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive and what challenges and success has Zimbabwe faced in its diplomatic offensive, and what factors contributed to these setbacks?. The second chapter critically reviewed the literature on key and relevant issues of the study about research questions and objectives. This chapter provided details on democracy and democratization in the developing world, how sanctioned regimes react to sanctions, economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe a major cost, economic sanctions cost of the sender are Zimbabwe sanctions backfiring, and economic diplomacy. This chapter also gave a general review of the theories that underpin the research and that provide a framework for comprehending the phenomenon under study.

In chapter three, an overview of the study's research methodology was provided. It emphasized empirical techniques that connected readers to the study progression by the study objectives. The researcher outlined the research methodology, research design, population, and sampling procedure, as well as the process and methods used to critically interrogate each of the research objectives stated in this chapter. This section discussed the primary and secondary research techniques used, as well as data analysis. The researcher outlined data collection methods, as well as interviews with key service providers and individuals involved in the study. The chapter also discusses the studies' ethical considerations. Finally, chapter four presents the study findings and data, and an analysis of the data, by analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic

offensive by Zimbabwe to Western countries from 2000-2023. This chapter focused on the data demonstration, analysis, as well as interpretation of findings. To questionnaires achieve the research objectives, interviews, and group discussions were employed to collect data. Following that, the findings were presented and analyzed using Excel and themes.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Exploring the underlying political, economic, and social factors that have influenced Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive.

In conclusion the findings suggested that there are many factors which forced Zimbabwe to engage into the diplomatic offensive towards Western countries. Some of the cause factors are poverty, unemployment, natural environment challenges and poor health services. However, efforts should be made to curb these challenges by creating projects to the people so that the unemployment rate can be curbed more so there is need for the government to engage to more investors with favorable conditions to both parties involved in the investment process.

5.3.2 Examining the key policies and strategies employed by the Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive.

In conclusion the findings demonstrated the policies and strategies which was used by Zimbabwe in its diplomatic offensive. The strategies were negotiations, building relationships, making alliances, effective communication, flexibility, using multi-faceted approach, silencing internal forces, advocacy approach and look east policy. However more effort should be put in all these policies and strategies to work because some of the strategies are temporary measures and other policies are difficult to follow.

5.3.3 Assessing the response of Western countries to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe did not accept the conditions which were proposed by the Western countries. So, by failing to accept the regime change and democracy principles Western countries-imposed sanctions to Zimbabwe and those sanctions also

contributed to socio-economic challenges in the country because Zimbabwe was banned to enter international market and international Organizations. However, Zimbabwe then engaged the Look East Policy, and this policy helped the country a lot.

5.3.4 Examining the successes and failures of Zimbabwe's socio-economic diplomatic offensive

In conclusion the findings demonstrated a myriad of success and challenges in achieving the diplomatic offensive. The successes which were noted were receiving of Chinese aid, loan contracts, Chinese investments, barter trade, Sino-Zimbabwe relationship, and the military affairs these proved to be a success in Zimbabwe, and they helped the crumpled country. However, some challenges were also noted in the road to achieve the diplomatic offensive like national sovereignty and interest, political uncertainty, leadership transition and sanctions. These challenges contributed more to the socio-economic challenges the country is facing up to date.

5.4 Recommendations

- o **Government:** The Zimbabwean government should adhere to democratic, and regime change principles so that Western organizations will be able to help in social and economic development. More so the economy should be stable so that inflation rates decrease and that will decrease this poverty disease.
- o **Non-Governmental Organizations:** Non-governmental organizations should not be silenced because it is a violation of human rights by signing bills which restricts them to operate freely as they are supposed to do.
- o **Citizens:** The Aid received from China and other countries should be shared equally among citizens to avoid corruption within the government. In addition, the Chinese investments and loans should also cater for hospital infrastructures and the medications.
- o **International Organization:** Before sanctioning a country, they should consider

the proportionality test because citizens, not human rights violators, bear the brunt of the consequences.

5.5 Areas of further research

- ▶ Research on environmental, cultural, and political factors that pushed Zimbabwe to engage in a diplomatic offensive towards the Western countries should be done.
- ▶ The issue of sanctions removal should be further researched to know if the blanket sanctions were removed completely as well as to know if the individual sanctions are still not affecting the country.
- ▶ More so further research should be done on issues that led to the imposition of sanctions by Western countries.

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RESEACH INSTRUMENTS

Appendix 1

Consent Form

I am a student at Bindura University studying for a master's degree in international relations. I am carrying out a study on the Analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards Western countries from 2000 to 2023. The information collected during the research will be used only for the study and it will be confidential. Participating in this interview is completely voluntary and the discussion will last for 30-45 minutes.

Ethical Considerations: Privacy and Confidentiality

Information that will be obtained in the interviews will be kept confidential. The information about you that will be collected during the research will also not be directly linked back to you. Privacy will be ensured for all the information you will be providing to the researcher. The research report will be written in such a way that no names will be attached to participants. Participation is voluntary and not forced, even later or during the study you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you agree with the conditions of the research study and you are willing to participate in the study, you may kindly sign below.

Signature of researcher.....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Appendix 2

Interview guide

I am a student at Bindura University studying for a master's degree in international relations. I am carrying out a study on the Analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards Western countries from 2000 to 2023.

1. What are the socio-economic challenges being faced by Zimbabwe that led to the diplomatic offensive towards western countries from 2000 to 2023?
2. Why is the diplomatic offensive affecting socio-economic issues in Zimbabwe?
3. What are the strengths of the diplomatic offensive in Zimbabwe?
4. How is the diplomatic offensive affecting relations with Western countries?
5. What other factors were affected by engaging in the diplomatic offensive?
6. Besides socio-economic challenges what are other challenges being faced due to the diplomatic offensive?
7. Which activities does Zimbabwe engage in to encounter Western countries?
8. Which challenges are affecting the success of the diplomatic offensive of Zimbabwe?

Thank you for your participation and time.

Appendix 3

Focus group discussion guide

I am a student at Bindura University studying for a master's degree in international relations. I am carrying out a study on the Analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards Western countries from 2000 to 2023.

1. What socio-economic challenges did Zimbabwe face that influenced the strategic decisions in its diplomatic interactions with Western countries?
2. What are the strategies being employed by the Zimbabwean government in its diplomatic offensive?
3. What policies or measures have Western countries implemented in response to Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive?
4. What challenges has the Zimbabwean government faced in its diplomatic offensive?
5. What are the advantages of Zimbabwean government in carrying out a diplomatic offensive?
6. Does the government have another way of solving socio-economic challenges besides engaging the diplomatic offensive?
7. Which other countries used the diplomatic offensive as Zimbabwe to solve its socio-economic challenges?
8. How long has Zimbabwe been engaged in this diplomatic offensive?

Thank you for your participation and time.

Appendix 4

Key informant interview guide

My name is Bartholomew Chimasha, a student at Bindura University studying for a master's degree in international relations. I am carrying out a study on the Analysis of the socio-economic diplomatic offensive by Zimbabwe towards Western countries from 2000 to 2023.

1. How far true is Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive motivated by economic consideration?
2. To what extent have social economic challenges influenced Zimbabwe in strategic decisions with the western countries?
3. What economic considerations motivated Zimbabwe to engage in its diplomatic offensive?
4. Why did Zimbabwe managed to seek recognition from the western countries?
5. How far is Zimbabwe in achieving its socio-economic goals through the diplomatic offensive?
6. Which countries are sabotaging Zimbabwe's diplomatic offensive since 2000 up to date?
7. Which counties are helping Zimbabwe to have a successful diplomatic offensive?
8. Which measures or policies employed by the Zimbabwe government so safeguard its diplomatic offensive?

Thank you for your participation and time.