

# Human rights: Perceptions and making the discourse functional: A case of Gokwe Central community.

Ndondo Shepherd

Lupane State University

**Abstract-** There is a wide spread assumption that most people know their rights in Zimbabwean communities. This is evident when people are confronted with situations they perceive to be oppressive, it is not uncommon to hear them saying 'You cannot do this to us, we know our rights very well'. Despite this clamoring about human rights, many violations occur with a lot of people failing to claim their rights. The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of the Gokwe central community towards the causes of human rights violations in the area. The main focus was on how people react when their rights are violated. A descriptive research paradigm was adopted. A stratified sampling procedure which included teachers, community leaders, school pupils and ordinary community people was used to come up with a sample 60 respondents from Gokwe central community. The study established that lack of human rights education has led to the violations of human rights in the community. The study also found that human rights are violated because people are afraid to report cases of human rights violations because they feel they don't have adequate protection from authorities. Lack of resources to pursue justice was also found to be the main cause of human rights violations in the community. This study highlights the urgency for the provision of human rights education to all stakeholders in the community through intensive workshops and open platforms in which the government and non-governmental organizations will be playing a complementary role. Human rights education must get much attention from primary schools up to tertiary level. Paralegal training for the community members was also highlighted as this will see community members being able to pursue justice.

**Index Terms-** human rights; violations; community

## I. INTRODUCTION

Gokwe Central community is going through a host of humanitarian problems. This has seen perpetual violations of human rights becoming one of the major ills in the community. Stemming from the socio-economic and political aspects, lack of human rights education has a great bearing on the misperceptions or lack of an in-depth philosophical perception of what human rights are. International efforts on human rights issues has not sufficiently steered the government of Zimbabwe and in turn the Gokwe central community into improving the human rights record. Political polarization has brought mayhem to the community especially during election campaign periods. During these periods local and international print and electronic media were awash with reports of human rights violations. Besides human rights violations associated with party politics,

there is an increase in domestic violence and child abuse. Land disputes are also on the increase with two cases resulting in deaths(CCJP Newsletter June, 2010).This scenario has motivated the researcher to find out what really precipitates these human rights abuses in a community where there are human rights organizations conducting awareness campaign programmes.

## II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Human rights

The concept of human rights is reflected in many cultures, religions and philosophy. The human rights violations are detrimental to human development. Human rights instruments, organizations and institutions are in place to protect fundamental rights. It is imperative to have an in depth understanding of the concept before finding out how human rights are violated and the causes of these violations

### Philosophical understanding of human rights

In many cases there is a gross misinterpretation in the notion of human rights. From the layman's view, rights may be perceived to be personal to the individual. The understanding is however superficial hence it is therefore imperative that an in-depth understanding of human rights must be explored. A right is in fact a faculty of a free and rational human being (CCJP Newsletter 1, 2006). It is imprinted by nature on his/her heart (inalienable). The faculty is personal and precious, no one must interfere with it. As an innate disposition a right is an inner imperative, something an individual must have because it is his/hers.

Rights cannot be given to us by any secular power, institution or government (Human Rights Newsletter 26, 2002). It therefore means that no one may take or remove one's right. Rights are not peculiar to a certain group of people, they are universal. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 2 aptly defines human rights as universal right or claims, something which all people, everywhere at all time are entitled to, simply because they are human.

A right exists for a good end. We have no right to evil. A right is not genuine if, in its expression, a bad end results (Maura and Sakala, 1998). It is however critical to note that rights are not absolute. Rights bring corresponding duties and responsibilities (Starkey, 1991). These rights are relational, that is, if I have rights, others have the same rights too. This therefore leads to the understating that my rights must not interfere with (or block) the rights of other intelligent beings. The state has the major responsibility of creating a good atmosphere for human rights to be observed. Through this , the state will

foster self development, education in its citizens, truth seeking activities and self expressiveness which all relates to the end which human rights aim at achieving, that is, to experience the fullness of life (Tomaseuski 1993).

### **Human rights and related concepts.**

We can hardly talk about human rights without a mention of some fundamental concepts. Human rights are compatible with freedom, democracy and justice. Hence the concepts have a great bearing in this study. For instance, political violence which is mostly reported during election campaign period in the community is a restriction to freedom of speech/expression and association. This also account for cases of domestic violence and child abuse. A bid to pursue freedom and justice may fuel domestic violence and lack of freedom may lead to child abuse. By and large, without freedom, democracy will remain elusive and justice will not be realized hence human rights will not be a practical concept. It is therefore essential to look closely at these concepts from scholarly work so that an in-depth understanding of human rights is enhanced.

### **Freedom**

Freedom is realizing that what is inside us, outside (Nyamakura 2000). This means being able to realize one's potential, realizing peace, happiness, love, creativity, participation, independence and spirituality. In a research on freedom carried out by the Africa Community Publishing and Development Trust (2006) in Gokwe North, Matobo and Masvingo district, most respondents felt that they are free when they have enough food, water, shelter, warmth and comfort. Some felt free when there were accorded the opportunity to choose their own development programmes. Others felt free when their rights were observed, were able to use their talents for the benefit of the nation. Most crucial in the concept of freedom is freedom of expression.

Freedom of expression is the absence of unnecessary restrictions, thus telling the truth without fear, speaking out without harassment (Nyamakura 2000). The ACPDT (2006) observes that freedom is the invisible fiber that binds relations together. Freedom is a very important concept as it promotes basic human rights, it removes fear and boosts confidence. When people are free to express themselves, mutual trust is built and also positive relationships are enhanced leading to peace. Freedom of expression brings with it accountable leaders who use persuasion rather than force. This in-turn provides the cornerstone on which a democratic and prosperous society is built (Starkey 1991). This therefore means that the promotion of freedom in the society is compatible with the fostering of human rights and the merits which are accompanied by the free society (some of which are mentioned above) and this will see the positive results of promoting human rights in our society and in the area under study in particular.

### **Democracy**

Democracy has its roots in the Greek City States. It is made up of two Greek Words, Demos meaning people and Kratos meaning rule. It therefore means the rule of the people. During that time, the entire population participated directly in government decisions of the city state (Babarinde, 1994).

Democracy therefore entails the full participation of all citizens in political, economic, social and cultural decision making through appropriate laws, policies, institutions, processes and attitudes, in a way which promotes equality, growth of individuals and well being (Babarinde, 1994). In addition, a democratic process is not violent, it is based on respecting the dignity and rights of each human being and it is used as power in the positive sense that is, enabling people to achieve their chosen goals through persuasion and effective organization (Otubanjo, 1992).

The most inspiring example of classical participatory democracy is the Greek City State of Athens about 500BC. All citizens participated directly in governance by carrying out legislative and judicial functions (Boyd 1966). The most relevant feature of classical democracy for us is the active participation of citizens, shared leadership and the control of executive power. This saw Athens flourishing as individual potentials were given a fertile ground to manifest. Equality of citizens meant human rights were observed. So can we say classical participatory democracy can be a panacea to day today violations of human rights in many parts of the world? Can our quality of life take a new turn through classical democracy?

We must however take cognizance of the weaknesses of classical democracies as this may also reflect the flaws in democracy today. Women and slaves were not considered as citizens and had no political rights (Stumpf, 1989). This meant some groups of people had their rights violated. This can also be reflected in many societies today, the marginalized people, for instance, poor are excluded from decision making, and they have a sense of inferiority and despair. In an ACPDT (2006) research on the effects of poverty, some respondents describes the internal effect of poverty:

Other people do not listen to you, they toss you around. You accept this, as you are afraid of giving offence.

We must also note that, classical participatory democracy was only suitable for a small area like a city state. It is also important to note that citizens could be influenced by skilled orators to make unwise decisions. A case in point is the Athenians who sentenced Socrates (469 – 399BC) one of the greatest philosophers of all time to death for heresy and subverting the minds of the young. These flaws in democracy may be found militating against democratic principles and human rights practices in Zimbabwe and in the area under study.

Acknowledging the liberal ideas of political equity and respect for human dignity, Karl Marx (1818-1883) recognized that democracy was not possible under capitalism as capitalism leads to huge inequalities and restrictions on freedom. He emphasized that for democracy to work, citizens have to be equal economically as well as politically without any divisions based on class (Kneller, 1984). A classless society has however remained an illusion. According to Marx, as long as people fall into classes, the concept of democracy cannot be determined. This notion can help explain the prevalence of human rights violations in states which claim to be democratic. This is what ACPDT (2006) refers to as 'distorted democracy'. In this situation children grow up in authoritarian families and later on become either dominant or submissive and therefore unprepared for democracy.

Commenting on problems in relation to democracy Gandhi in Settel (1985; 162) says:

Democracy is a great institution and therefore is liable to be greatly abused. The remedy therefore is not the avoidance of democracy but reduction of the possibility of abuse to the minimum.

This therefore means that although there are flaws in democracy from classical time to the present day, the solution lies in a close check on these shortcomings with an aim of minimizing them so that, the dignity of the human person may be realized.

### **Justice**

According to Rawls (1971) justice implies fairness. Morrison (1999) sees the essence of justice down from three maxims: that is, justice is giving and getting what is deserved: justice lies in the rights being observed and justice implies that the needs of each are met through the contribution of each according to ability. Justice therefore refers to the quality of being just, quality of rightness and fairness. The concept of justice, just like democracy can be traced back from the classical time. Kant's transcendental idealism impacted strongly on theories of justice. Thus the emerging of human rights in Western Societies historically stemmed from people thinking beyond the limits of their cultural norms in order to establish just institutions and governments (Starkey, 1991). Kant's categorical imperative puts straight the concept of justice and human rights, 'Acts that what you do becomes the universal good'.

Justice is compatible with democracy and freedom and human rights as it removes fear and accommodates everyone into decision making and the best of the community's developmental potential can be tapped resulting in a high quality of life in the community.

### **Reflection of human rights from philosophers.**

The idea of human rights can be traced back from the Greek City States. There were rights accorded to all citizens, for instance, the word 'isogoria' was used for equal freedom of speech. The word 'isonomia' was used to mean equality before the law. Aristotle (384 – 322) treated natural rights as political rights among fellow citizens. Stoic philosophers (300BC – 200AD) promoted the principle of liberty equality and brotherhood. Thomas Hobbes (1651) published his book *Leviathan* in which he regarded the right to life as fundamental. John Locke (1688) wrote of the rights to life, liberty and property. In this scholastic philosophy, Thomas Aquinas (1225 – 1274) upheld the right of believers to follow their conscience in religious matters. William of Ockam (1285 – 1347) claimed freedom of property (or those things necessary for a minimum standard of living) as inalienable human rights on account of the dignity of the human person.

### **Reflection of human rights in religion**

Literature gives evidence of great support of the idea of human rights in the world's biggest religions. In African traditional religion a person earns respect just because he or she is a human being (Tiberondwa 1998), nothing can substitute humanity. Early Christian thinkers, Tertullian and Lactantius (4<sup>th</sup> AD) argued for the freedom to choose one's religion and against

state interference in religious matters. In addition to this age long support for freedom, the Old and the New Testaments proclaim the dignity of the human being due to their creation in the image and likeness of God. Most religions are guided by golden rule which reflects the dignity of the human person. For instance, Christianity says: in everything, do to others as you would have them do to you, for this is the law of prophets (Mathew 7:12). Buddhism says: Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful (Udana Varga 5, 18). Islam: No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself (Sunnah). Judaism: what is hurtful to you do not to you fellowmen. Taoism: regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain, and your neighbour's loss as your loss. The area understudy is Christian dominated, one would be left wondering if truly Christian ethics are adhered to as human rights are grossly violated.

### **International human rights instruments**

Notwithstanding the emphasis of human rights by philosophers and the reflection of these rights by different religions, continual abuse of these rights by individuals, institutions and government which are expected to be custodians, is witnessed. The mass killings of human beings during the First World War informed the formation of the League of Nations (LON) and subsequently the United Nations (UN) after the Second World War when mass killings occurred because of the arrogance of the Nazi's under Hitler. The UN in turn gave birth to a very important human rights instrument, the UDHR in December 1948. The General Assembly proclaims this UDHR as a common standard of development for all people and all nations to the end that every individual and every organ of society keeping this Declaration constantly in mind shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for the rights and freedom and by progressive measure, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and absence, both among the people of member states themselves and among the peoples territories under jurisdiction. The African Charter (Banjul Charter) on Human Rights was formed reflecting the UN system dealing with universal human rights in an African context. The Charter contains articles on people's rights, freedom, security and development. These instruments reflect the need for the respect of the human person without discrimination on racial lines. In response to violence and human rights violation mostly during election time the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) came out with some principles guiding democratic elections. Freedom of association is stressed as one of the major principle. It is unfortunate that that some governments who are signatories to these principles were quick to craft some statutes which water down these principles in their own land. Zimbabwe crafted the Public Order Security Act ( POSA) and the Access Information and Privacy Act (AIPPA) which renders these principles null and void. Going through literature, one may be compelled to think that the issues of human rights violations were put to an end. This however is far from reality. Are states signing for these instruments for different agendas? Maybe some of these instruments are not legally binding hence they can be closely manipulated by institutions.

### **A Legal understanding of human rights**

For an organization to come out with a product of high quality and to achieve high success in its goals, it has to come up with a constitution which includes aspects which are agreed upon by stakeholders to be driving forces in development. Countries cannot operate without constitutions. The Zimbabwean constitution chapter three guarantees the rights of individual citizens. The constitution is the supreme state law which must not be tempered with unless it is absolutely necessary. Through the Zimbabwean constitution every person is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms and it is the duty of every person to respect and abide by the constitution of Zimbabwe. The provision of the Bill of Rights protects those rights and freedoms subject to such limitations on that protection as specified under each right and freedom. If the fundamental rights in the constitution are violated or are about to be violated, one is greatly encouraged to apply to the Supreme Court. The constitution chapter three contains rights which were derived from the UDHR and subsequently the African Charter and looking at the constitution as the supreme law makes the whole issue of human rights legally binding.

Given this scenario, it is expected that the human rights be minimal and citizens of Zimbabwe in general and the area under study in particular should be realizing their potentials in a conducive environment fostering development in the country. On the contrary the fundamental rights and freedoms remain an illusion. May be people need to get an awareness of the constitution so that they can claim their rights when they are violated. If they know that human rights are legally binding why then are they being abused wantonly?

### **Civil education and human rights**

In a research carried by the ACPDT (2006) on understanding of civic education, respondents summarized Civic education as the study of freedom and how to exercise rights. Civic education can also be defined as the study of how a country can be organized (socially, economically and politically) to promote the well being of its citizens (Ake, 1992). Lack of Civic education was found to be the major cause of moral decadence and underdevelopment as citizens do not know their rights and responsibilities leading to human rights violations and suppression of developmental potential (Nziramanga, 1999). Despite the voter education programmes which mostly surface towards election time, do we have some civic education programmes in Gokwe Central Community?

Civic education on a national level was greatly facilitated by the formation of the Civic education network (CIVNET). CIVNET grew out of the Church/NGO voter education project in 1994 with co-founder members being CCJP, Legal Resources Foundation (LRF), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (Zimrights) and Edwina Spicer Production (ESP). Each agency contributes its particular expertise. CIVNET is organized through provincial committees with provincial officers connected to civic activities in every district and many wards (ACPDT, 2006). The vision and mission of CIVNET is being the catalyst for responsible citizenship in an environment of sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

ACPDT through its community publishing concept from 1995 – 2005 has seen democracy through Civic education. This included carrying out Civic education, research, developing participatory methods and processes of Civic education helping to set up civic network voter education, constitutional debate and producing civic education materials. The community publishing was greatly inspired by Socrates who understood education as to 'lead out'. The concept was aimed at leading out people out of darkness to light (knowing their rights). This would in turn give a basis for community development. As we learnt from classical literature leading people to light may be dangerous. Socrates was sentenced to death for that, so challenges are expected in this endeavor.

One driving force behind the concept of community publishing was the idea of the Brazilian Educator, Paulo Freire. He believed that the purpose of education is radical transformation (Kneller 1984). He found a way of breaking through the apathy of the oppressed by basing on generative themes: the issues communities feel strongly about. These themes included democracy, freedom and justice which are all human rights concepts. These presented creatively to learners in a way that helps them analyze their problems and action to solve them. The key principle of Freire's education include dialogue between participants and facilitator as equals, working with people, not for them and linking reflection to action. This is a move from what Freire terms domesticating (helping people to fit obediently into society led by a dominant group) education to a liberating (enabling people to become critical, creative and free to transform a society) education. Through this concept, cultural barriers are broken, people will realize that they all have the same dignity as members of the human race. They should enjoy thinking without fear of victimization. They will claim their rights when violated. It seems the community publishing concept did not cover much ground in the area under study. The impact in the area should be reflected by the change in behavior.

This concept of human rights built on a very strong philosophy must be seen to be producing positive results. Babarinde and Ogunyeni (1992) note that during times of economic, social and political crisis, many people became afraid and passive. Apathy becomes widespread prolonging a situation of injustice. This will greatly militate against development as potentially fruitful ideas are suppressed. During election time, Gokwe Central Community has been gripped by fear and human rights are left on the mercy of politically powerful. A legacy of fear is left in people after elections, the poor suffer from the lack of basic necessities like food and shelter and this makes them more vulnerable to human rights abuses.

### **Ethical education and human rights**

Human rights have a lot to do with education, thus knowing good and bad. This leads us to ask the question that confronted Socrates and the sophists in classical time: can *arête* (virtue) be taught? This question is still very important in philosophy of education and even more so for those who undertake the task of educating for democracy in places where democracy has been overthrown, forgotten in practice or never existed. (Navarro, 1998). A recent attempt to answer the classical question was through a research carried out by Navarro (1998) on extreme poverty and ignorance of many people in Chile together with the

many unresolved and unpunished crimes against human rights committed during the military regime. She thinks of ethical education as a way of championing human rights and democracy.

Navarro (1998) had to grapple with many questions: Can something of this kind be taught? Who had been teachers of the man who tortured and murdered their fellow human beings? What kind of ethical education did they offer? Why didn't it work? Focusing on these questions may give us an insight on the causes of human rights violations in Zimbabwe in general and in the area under study. The research hypothesized that probably the man who tortured their fellow human beings received an indoctrinating ethical education based on unquestioned traditional or religious beliefs that they later abandoned. Acknowledging the weakness of ethical education based on indoctrination, Tugendhat (1994) had a view that ethical education has to be approached in a dialogical way. This means that future citizens can and should be helped in finding reasons for taking the decision in favour of morality, but these reasons should appeal to freedom and rationality and not to the authority of religious and traditional beliefs. Navarro (1998) suggested some moral questions to be asked in a dialogue like: How would you like it if someone did this to you? These questions would be asked children and would help them understand the rather complex argument: if you do not like to be treated badly, you should suppose that no one likes it, and if you expect others not to treat you in a way you do not like, you should not treat them as you would not like to be treated yourself. Is the ethical education we get in Zimbabwe appeal to freedom and rationality? Can we say the type of ethical education we get in Gokwe Central Community contributes to the high incidence of human rights violations?

### **The role of human rights non governmental organizations**

Notwithstanding the human rights instruments and laws protecting human rights, abuses continue to be witnessed. This scenario gave birth to some human rights Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The Amnesty International is one of these human rights NGOs to emerge because of increasing cases of degrading treatment of humans (Human Rights Newsletter no. 22/2007). Its main duty is to monitor and investigate torture, cruel, human treatment and prison conditions. Amnesty International asserts that, no one has an inborn ability to torture someone or treat someone in a degrading manner. The human rights NGO Forum believes that human rights violations are perpetrated by some important institutions like government to further political interests (Human Rights Newsletter 22/2007). So what can be done to such institutions taking into cognizance that that they have included human rights issues into to their constitutions? Facing this challenge, is Amnesty International living up to expectation or is pursuing a different agenda altogether?

A lot of violence rocking Southern Africa led to the formation of yet another organization called Amani Trust in 1990. Amani is a Swahili word for peace. This organization is leading in writing about violations of human rights in different countries including Zimbabwe. With these organizations, one would be tempted not to believe that human rights abuse is rife in Zimbabwe and in the area under study. It is therefore critical

to examine how these organizations function and find their limitations in executing their duties.

### **Human rights and poverty**

The effect of poverty is devastating and harms the whole society, even from high income groups. The ACPDT (2006) cites passivity, apathy, dependency, out breaks of violence, a sense of inferiority and despair as effects of poverty. Respondents from a research on poverty by UNDP (2002) said that the most painful, yet least visible effect is internal oppression. The characteristics of internal oppression were cited as: having no sense of one's own value, being very shy, silent, and afraid, isolated, despairing, ignored and controlled. In ACPDT (2003) publication, respondents described the internal effects of poverty:

Poverty robs people's minds. It takes away one's voice and freedom. Poverty kills humanity. By living like a slave one begins to think like a slave.

The state of poverty and human rights can be likened to Plato's allegory of the cave, the poor are those in great darkness and it's difficult for them to see light. One who wants to bring light may risk death because those (poor) who are used to darkness cannot readily accept light.

### **Related studies on human rights**

The research carried by UNESCO (2000) in Southern Africa found out that human rights are mainly violated because people are unaware of their rights. The need for human rights education was realized. This propelled the operationalisation of human rights and democracy in 2001. This is a sub regional pilot project being implemented in Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This is an intervention measure to promote the teaching of human rights and democracy value concepts and issues as part of school curriculum in selected carrier subjects. Though this research recommends the education of the children as the main solution to human rights violation, it fails to recognize that people out of school are also found to be the main perpetrators of human rights abuses.

In a research carried out by Maura and Sakala (1998), human rights abuses were found to be perpetrated on people who do not know their rights, hence the recommendation of human rights education on all people. Maura and Sakala(1998) assert:

People who know their rights are better placed to claim them when they are violated and they are also likely to respect other people.

As the above literature reveals, the concept of human rights cuts across ages, cultures, religions and institutions. This in recognition of the fact that human rights lay a standard for the development of life worth living. To safeguard the development of high quality life, many human rights instruments and organizations are in place to make checks and balances. The main thrust is to find out the limitations inherent in human rights instruments, organizations, institutions which are custodians of human rights so that human rights violations are minimized hence improving the quality of life.

### **Statement of the problem**

There are three organizations carrying out awareness campaigns on human rights in Gokwe central community.

Despite the efforts from these organizations, there is a wanton violation of human rights. It is from this background that this study sought to find out the perceptions of the Gokwe central community towards the causes of human rights violations. The main focus is how they perceive human rights and the course of action to pursue when their rights are violated.

### Research question

The following research question guided the study: What are the perceptions of the Gokwe central community towards the causes of human rights violations?

Against this background the following questions need to be addressed.

1. Which human rights programmes are in Gokwe central community?
2. What is the people's understanding of human rights?
3. What are the causes of human rights violations in the area?
4. What quality of life can people have through observing human rights?
5. How can human rights violations be prevented or minimized?

## III. METHODOLOGY

### Research design

The descriptive survey was used for this study. It was qualitative as it sought to find perceptions of community members on human rights violations through the use of open ended questionnaires, observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

### Sampling procedure

A sample was drawn from a four strata population comprising non recipients of human rights education, recipients of human rights education, human rights educators and community leaders. A stratified sampling technique was used there by making the sample representative of the population.

### Findings and Discussions

This study found that human rights are grossly violated due to the lack of human rights education. Although there are some organizations raising awareness campaigns on human rights, inherent weaknesses in the human rights delivery system that makes it difficult for organizations to achieve their objectives. In most cases these organizations depend on 'one off' event workshops such that people will be left without an in depth understanding of human rights as a lot of content is compressed leading to the loss of the whole essence of the workshop. In this situation follow up workshops would be essential for participants to have in-depth knowledge of human rights. It was however revealed that these follow up workshops were difficult to come by. The study also revealed that the human rights organizations fail in their endeavor to safeguard human rights violations because they do not have an enforcement power. They only pass information without some corrective or punitive powers to deter would be perpetrators. In this light the weaknesses inherent in human rights organizations give a way to perpetual violations in the area. The study also revealed that rampant materialism and greedy has triggered corruption which is a fertile ground for

human rights violations. It was also revealed that the government and non-governmental organizations are not playing a complementary role in human rights issues. This has far reaching implications in this discourse in that, non government organizations have power to disseminate information about human rights, on the other hand, the government has power to use the state instruments to protect the people from their rights being violated. If there is no cooperation in this endeavor, it therefore means human rights violation will go on unchecked. This has resulted in most victims and sympathizers of human rights violation victims being dissuaded by fear from reporting their cases because of lack of protection from authorities like the police and community leaders. It was also established that poverty, which manifests itself through failure to pursue justice due to lack of resources like travelling expenses, or paying for legal expenses has led to the violations of human rights. The study also found that political polarization has led to the violations of human rights coupled with greedy and corruption.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions have been arrived at after a systematic consideration of the research findings relative to the sub problem questions. According to the findings of this study, three organizations are conducting human rights awareness campaigns. Notwithstanding the presence of these organizations, it can be inferred that most people have a hazy idea of the concept such that it is difficult for them to claim their rights when abused. This reaffirms the notion by that people who know their rights are better placed to claim them when they are violated (Maura and Sakala, 1998). Political polarization on party lines and a generally corrupt system are the major causes of human rights violations. Fear to report human rights violation case due to lack of protection from authorities is also the main cause of human rights violations. Above all, poverty triggers fear which leads to the violation of human rights. This is in line with the findings by UNDP (2002) that poverty's most painful effect is internal oppression, thus having no sense of one's value, being shy, silent, afraid, isolated, despairing, ignored and controlled. This study concludes that through observing human rights, the society will see development in all spheres of life. This is well related to the sentiments echoed by Otubanjo (1992) when he advocated for the respect for human dignity and rights of each person, using power in a positive sense that is enabling people to achieve their chosen goals at the same time enabling community development. The above conclusions point to the following recommendations which are mainly directed to the following: the community; local authority; Ministry of justice legal and parliamentary affairs; Ministry of Education Sport and Culture and Human rights organizations.

The community should take a keen interest in human rights issues through attending human rights workshops or gatherings. The community is also encouraged to report cases of human rights violations to community leaders, police or human rights organizations. As the local authority has the crucial role in making things happen in the area, it is therefore recommended to open up arms to human rights organizations in their area as they are an invaluable source of development. They should also take a step further and join hands with human rights organization in

imparting human rights education. The ministry of justice should consider making more stringent polices to protect the violation of human rights. On the other hand the ministry of education sport and culture should consider introducing human rights education as a subject from primary school, democratic teaching methodologies must be encouraged. Human rights organizations are encouraged to have regular workshops in the area involving all stakeholders. They should also offer paralegal training to community members so as to cater for members of the community who cannot afford the expensive legal pursuit. Community leaders are recommended to attend all human rights workshops and gatherings and also encourage their subjects to be part of these gatherings. They should also work hand in glove with community members, police and human rights organizations on human rights issues.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Africa Community Publishing and Development Trust.2006.The Rainbow encircling the people:An African guide to Democracy. Cape Town: ACPDT.
- [2] Boyd, W. 1966. The History of Western Education. 8th ed. London: Adam Charles and Black
- [3] Maura , WP and Sakala , E,eds.1999.Yes You Do Count:A comprehensive training programme on human rights.Harare:CCJP

- [4] Navarro, M.1998. Ethical Education through philosophical discussion. Montcair: Joane Matkouski.
- [5] Nyamakura, S.ed. 2000. Human rights and Democracy. Harare: UNICEF
- [6] Nziramasanga, CK. 1999. The report on the presidential commission of inquiry into education and training. Harare: Government printers.
- [7] Starky ,H.ed. 1991. The Challenge of Human Rights Education. London: Cassell Educational Ltd.
- [8] Stumpf, SE. 1989.Philosophy, History andProblems.4th ed. New York: MacGraw Hill.
- [9] Universal Declaration of HumanRights December,1948.
- [10] Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Newsletter June 2006. Political violence, 25-26
- [11] Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace Newsletter 1 2010. Crisis in Governance, 14-16
- [12] Human rights Newsletter 26 2002. Human rights abuses, 15-18

#### AUTHORS

**First Author** – Ndondo Shepherd,Lupane State University,Lupane State University 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Zimdef house P O Box AC 225 Ascot Bulawayo,Email:ndondosh@gmail.com

Ndondo Shepherd is a lecturer in the Department of Educational Foundations at Lupane State University.His research interest is in social philosophies,African morality and education.