journalism and media

MDPI

*Article*

# Gifts or Capture? A Critical Analysis of ZANU-PF Oligarchs' Multimillion Dollar "Donations" to Zimbabwe's Culture Industry

**Takunda Maodza**

Department of Marketing, Public Relations and Communication, Walter Sisulu University, Butterworth 4960, South Africa; tmaodza@wsu.ac.za

**Abstract**

This qualitative study examines the extent to which the multimillion-dollar gifts that were given to Zimbabwe's culture industry by President Emmerson Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF oligarchs were symptomatic of capture. Guided by Althusser's Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus concept and the media capture model, the study also sought to understand the strategies that were deployed by Mnangagwa's administration to capture the culture industry and the implications for democracy in Zimbabwe. Mnangagwa succeeded longtime ruler Robert Mugabe in 2017 after a military coup. He vowed to democratise Zimbabwe. Data gathered through digital archival research and subjected to van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis confirm that, acting through oligarchs associated with ZANU-PF, Mnangagwa captured musicians, clerics, journalists and social media influencers for hegemonic gain. This occurred as Mnangagwa extended his presidency from 2028 to 2030. Critics claimed the presidential term extension violated Zimbabwe's constitution.

**Keywords:** Zimbabwe; culture industry; capture; ZANU-PF oligarchs; hegemony

## 1. Introduction

Democracy is backsliding in post-Robert Mugabe Zimbabwe (S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Ruhanya, 2020). Citizens had hoped for a new era following Mugabe's removal from power by the military in 2017. Mugabe ruled the southern African country for 37 years. Emmerson Mnangagwa pledged to democratise Zimbabwe when he succeeded Mugabe as president. The military coup was organised by Mnangagwa's ally, army general Constantino Chiwenga. Chiwenga became vice president. ZANU-PF sustains its hegemony largely through violence (Mwonzora & Helliker, 2020; Kriger, 2012; S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006), but Mnangagwa introduced a complex carrot-and-stick political strategy to sustain his rule. Operating through oligarchs associated with ZANU-PF, Mnangagwa targeted the culture industry for capture and control. Zimbabwe is experiencing economic challenges. The economic situation made it difficult for players in the culture industry to survive by their craft (Mhiripiri, 2012). ZANU-PF oligarchs donated gifts to popular musicians, clergymen, footballers, comedians, and social media influencers. These included cars and houses worth millions of American dollars. This study examines the extent to which the gifts were symptomatic of capture by regime forces. It contributes new knowledge on how African semi-autocratic governments appropriate the culture industry for political gain. The timing of the "donations" was suggestive of an intention to capture the culture industry. It happened as Mnangagwa sought to extend his rule from 2028 to 2030. The

Check for updates

Academic Editor: Anthea Garman

Received: 12 September 2026
Revised: 20 October 2026
Accepted: 20 October 2026
Published: 26 October 2026

**Copyright:** © 2026 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license.

president's rivals contested the extension as a violation of the national constitution (Ndlovu & Muringa, 2025; Maodza, 2025). Musicians who were given vehicles and money included Leonard Zhakata, Alick Macheso, and Jah Prayzah, real name Mukudzei Mukombe. When initially approached, musicians like Thomas Mapfumo dismissed the gifts as an attempt by ZANU-PF to capture musicians. Mapfumo was later promised US$1,000,000 on condition he played at Jah Prayzah's wedding and at businessman Wicknell Chivayo's birthday. As this study was being conducted, there were efforts by ZANU-PF oligarchs to give musician Winky-D a vehicle and money. Winky-D is a dancehall artist whose music criticised the government. He rejected the gifts. Clergymen who received the presents included Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi (Zion Christian Church), Emmanuel Makandiwa (United Family International Church), Ubert Angel (Spirit Embassy) and Apostle Rodney Chipoyera (Kingdom Prosperity Ministries). Eunor Guti of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa Forward in Faith Ministries International (ZAOGA) rejected a vehicle and USD$2,000,000. Makandiwa initially rejected the gifts but later accepted a million-dollar cash donation and three luxury vehicles. Football legends Peter Ndlovu, Moses Chunga and Sunday Chidzambwa and journalists Charles Mabika and Pathisani Sibanda also received gifts, as did some social media influencers including Rutendo Matinyarare.

The study demonstrates how the post-Mugabe ZANU-PF introduced complex political survival strategies blending violence with appeasement and containment. The risk is that once captured, the culture industry is silenced through incorporation. Music has always played an important role in Zimbabwe's democratisation. It challenged British settler rule in the colonial era (Matiza & Mutasa, 2020; Pfukwa, 2008; Chirere & Mhandu, 2008). Music contested Mugabe's dictatorship after independence (Matsilele & Msimanga, 2022). The church also played a significant role before and after Zimbabwe's independence (Baloyi, 2022; Tarusarira & Hunt, 2015; Zakeyo, 2012; Chirongoma, 2008). The study highlights the centrality of the culture industry in Zimbabwean politics and the adverse implications of its capture on the country's democratisation. It tries to answer the questions: What strategies were deployed by Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF administration to capture the culture industry for hegemonic gain? To what extent should donations by regime forces to the culture industry be considered instruments of capture? What are the implications of capture on democracy in Zimbabwe? The study contributes new knowledge on how some authoritarian African governments attempt to sustain their rule through the appropriation and instrumentalization of the culture industry. Whereas research on media capture in Zimbabwe is confined to mainstream news media (Mabweazara et al., 2020; Maodza, 2025), the study widens the horizon by demonstrating how the culture industry was captured by regime forces, threatening democracy in the process.

*Autocratic Regimes, Media Capture and Implications for Democracy*

Globally, electoral authoritarian regimes, also known as illiberal democracies like ZANU-PF, capture the media and culture industry for hegemonic purposes. Where in the past violence was used to safeguard power, today's authoritarian regimes "are evolving" and "refashioning authoritarianism for the modern age" (Kendall-Taylor et al., 2020, p. 103). Such regimes, as observed by Coşkun (2020, p. 638) and Schedler (2013, p. 328), "retain the electoral system" but "tend to change the rules of the game and to transform or destroy political institutions such as the legislature, independent courts, elections, political parties, the media." From this viewpoint, media capture should be viewed as an attempt to normalise the authoritarian agenda through the promotion of dominant ruling class views while simultaneously undermining opposition voices. This explains why Pajnik (2026, p. 1) treats media capture as "a mode of governance and a process of ideological normalisation". Exploring media capture in Eastern Europe, Pajnik (2026, p. 1) argues that there are "shared

patterns and variations" in how undemocratic governments capture the press. In Viktor Orbán's Hungary, the media are owned by pro-government forces. Anti-government media outlets are defunded in Slovenia. In Croatia, media capture "operates through clientelism" (Pajnik, 2026). Some authoritarian regimes capture the media through third parties to maintain some semblance of democracy (Mazzoleni et al., 2003). Regardless of their modes of operation, "authoritarian populist actors draw on shared playbook of media control yet differ in the intensity, institutional embedding and ideological articulation strategies" (Pajnik, 2026, p. 3). For this reason, Coşkun (2020, p. 638) stresses the need "to analyse and clarify the methods used to redesign these institutions (culture industries) as this helps us to grasp the latent authoritarian engineering behind this process and to develop new ways of fighting against it". Captured media lose their autonomy and normalise undemocratic political cultures. Pajnik (2026, p. 13) contends that the longer an authoritarian populist government stays in power, "the more entrenched and sophisticated its mechanisms of media control become" and such regimes adopt "indirect methods of media control than overt censorship". This confirms Althusser's (1971) assertion that private institutions can be weaponised by those in power for hegemonic purposes.

This study examines the extent to which ZANU-PF attempted to capture the culture industry during Mnangagwa's rule. It treats donations by Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF oligarchs to the culture industry as reflective of capture. The donations were made as Zimbabwe experienced economic challenges. The targeted sectors are key pillars of democracy in Zimbabwe. For example, music performs the "journalistic function of communicating daily issues in ways that challenge the powerful and give a voice to the disadvantaged" (Mano, 2007, p. 61). It is "unconventional journalism" (Matsilele et al., 2023) challenging totalitarianism in weak democracies (Guzura & Ndimande, 2015, p. 1). Media capture remains under-theorised in Zimbabwe (Maodza, 2025; Ureke, 2016). Little has been studied about Mnangagwa's attempt to capture the culture industry. Extant literature examines how Mugabe tried to capture the music industry through covert strategies (Mhiripiri, 2012). These included the banning from state-controlled airwaves of music that was critical of Mugabe. In some instances, ZANU-PF politicians and oligarchs acquired shareholdings and controlled major music recording and distribution companies (Mhiripiri, 2012, p. 4). This effectively redefined the political economy of music production. It stifled alternative voices (Vambe & Vambe, 2006). Mhiripiri (2012, p. 4) bemoaned Mugabe's capture tactics noting that, "there is now complete control not only of the airwaves through restrictive legislation, but of the music industry in particular through its direct ownership and control by government and party officials". Mugabe also deployed strategies including the "commissioning musicians to play favourable music, giving of gifts ranging from musical instruments, studios and even farms to sympathetic artists, inviting musicians to perform at government sanctioned festivals" (Mhiripiri, 2012, p. 4). Zimbabwe's musicians are prone to capture as very few "manage to survive on music earnings alone" (Mhiripiri, 2012, p. 4). Mhiripiri's (2012) study was carried out as Mugabe's rule was under threat from Morgan Tsvangirai's opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). It is important to examine how Mnangagwa attempted to capture the culture industry despite his earlier promises to democratise Zimbabwe.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

The study is informed by Louis Althusser's (1971) Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses concept, and the media capture theory (Dragomir, 2024; Stiglitz, 2017). Althusser suggests that the state operates through state apparatuses—the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) and the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). The RSAs, which are the army, police, courts, and prison, among others, "function by violence" (Althusser, 1971,

p. 79). The ISA, as represented by the church (religion), school (education), family, and culture (the arts, sports, literature, etc.), "function by ideology" (Althusser, 1971, p. 80). The RSA belongs to the public domain and the ISA to the private realm. However, "private institutions can perfectly well function as ISA" and "the same ruling class is active in the ISA" (Althusser, 1971, p. 80). While the state can deploy violence through the use of RSAs, it can only employ ideology in the ISA, as noted by Althusser (1971, p. 80) when he posited that "the class in power cannot lay down the law in ISA as easily it can in the RSAs". Thus, the ISA is considered "a site of struggle" (Althusser, 1971, p. 80) where hegemony is negotiated. Althusser's concept aids understanding of how and why oligarchs associated with Mnangagwa offered gifts to celebrities in the culture industry. It must be understood within the context of arts and culture as constitutive of an ideological arena propagating discourses supportive of or undermining power. The gifts must be construed as efforts by ZANU-PF to forestall negative discourses from the targeted celebrities in the culture industry who hitherto criticised the state. It is also interpretable as an effort to sustain positive discourses by celebrities known to support ZANU-PF. The media capture theory draws from a broader phenomenon known as state capture in political science (Dragomir, 2024). Stiglitz (2017) outlines four components of media capture. These are capture through ownership takeover, regulatory capture, capture through state financing, and capture via state control of public service media. With regulatory capture, the state weaponises the law to silence critical media. The control of public service media happens when the government influences managerial and editorial decisions at publicly owned media. State financing constitutes capture when government and private players influence media content through subsidies and advertisements. Drawing from Stiglitz's (2017) definition of capture, the researcher notes that capture works differently in different political contexts. In the Zimbabwean context, it operated openly, especially during Mnangagwa's presidency. The donation of vehicles and other valuables to celebrities in the culture industry in Zimbabwe must be understood as capture through financing. Some artists who were given gifts were known for composing music critical of the government.

## 3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach and an interpretive design. Through the digital archival method, the researcher purposively collected data posted on Facebook, Instagram, and X by oligarchs associated with Mnangagwa after donating gifts to celebrities in the culture industry worth millions of dollars. These oligarchs were Wicknell Chivayo, Kudakwashe Tagwirei, and Paul Tungwarara. Mnangagwa also donated luxury vehicles and money. The researcher subjects the remarks of the donors and beneficiaries as they exchanged gifts to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is interested in power and its use for hegemonic purposes. The researcher uses van Dijk's (2005) ideological square to critically examine the remarks. Since van Dijk's framework is interested in the binaries of "us" (ingroup) versus "them" (outgroup), it is important to analyse the donor's remarks in a political context where ZANU-PF experienced factionalism and Zimbabweans were deeply divided over Mnangagwa's rule. By also subjecting the remarks of beneficiaries (victims) of the donations to CDA, the researcher comprehends the depth of the capture of Zimbabwe's cultural industry. CDA is applied at the macro and micro levels. The macro level examines strategies that ZANU-PF oligarchs employed to legitimise Mnangagwa's rule (ingroup) and to delegitimise others (outgroup). The macro-level analysis also shines a light on how the ingroup emphasised negative things about others (outgroup) and de-emphasised negative discourses about themselves. At the micro-level analysis, the researcher identifies the actors and their roles in the social and political context. Thus, what roles were played by Chivayo, Tungwarara, Tagwirei and Mnangagwa in discourse formation and to what

effect in the context of capture? The researcher presents the findings of the study in the following section. The first section identifies the main actors (donors) and beneficiaries (musicians, clerics, etc.), as well as the instruments of capture (gifts). The second segment presents the strategies of capture that Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF employed. The last section deals with the implications of capture on democracy in Zimbabwe.

## 4. Findings

### *4.1. Targeting and 'Gifting' Popular Musicians, Clerics and Other Celebrities as Capture*

Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF government systematically targeted popular musicians, clerics and social media influencers, among other celebrities for capture. The actors were Mnangagwa, Wicknell Chivayo, Kudakwashe Tagwirei, and Paul Tugwarara. These constituted the main donors. Chivayo, Tagwirei, and Tungwarara are businessmen and the president's close allies. The targeted victims (beneficiaries), who happened to be celebrities across the culture industry, included Jah Prayzah (real name Mukudzei Mukombe), popular sungura musicians Alick Macheso, Leonard Zhakata, Nicholas Zakaria, Peter Moyo, and Suluman Chimbetu (see table below). They have a huge following individually and combined. They have a huge influence on Zimbabwean society through their music. Media reports claimed Chivayo had individually donated vehicles and money estimated to be over US$60 million to musicians, clerics, and skit makers, becoming the major 'donor' (see Fortune Africa Magazine). In a social media post, Chivayo claimed to have donated over US$100 million. This has never happened in Zimbabwe's history. Gospel musicians who benefitted from the donations included Olivia Charamba, Mambo Dhuterere (real name Darlington Mutseta) and his wife Dorcas Vambe, Mathias Mhere and Dorcas Moyo. These are not small names in the gospel music industry. Dorcas Moyo, for example, was in 2024 crowned the Africa Female Gospel Artiste of the Year. In 2025, she won two awards, confirming her popularity in Zimbabwe and Africa (Tshuma, 2025). Olivia Charamba has won several awards, including the best female musician, best gospel musician, and best gospel album. Mambo Dhuterere is a decorated gospel musician. The same applies to Sungura musicians like Alick Macheso, Leonard Zhakata and Nicholas Zakaria. Macheso has won several awards confirming his popularity and influence in society. In 2014, he won four awards at a ceremony organised by the Zimbabwe Music Awards (Muzari, 2014), while in 2024 he was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement award in South Africa (Katiyo, 2024). Jah Prayzah also won several awards in Zimbabwe and Africa. He became the first Zimbabwean to win the MTV Africa Music award in South Africa when he bagged the Listeners' Choice award in 2016. In 2018, he won three awards in Zimbabwe at the National Arts Merit Awards. Chimurenga musician Thomas Mapfumo is a global icon. These achievements explain why the musicians were targeted for capture through material gifts. The gifts were mainly luxury vehicles and "money for fuel", which ranged between US$10,000 and US$20,000. The gifts were also given to young contemporary musicians, including Killer T (Kelvin Kusikwenyu), Enzo Ishall (Stephen Kudzanai Mamhere), Freeman HKD (Emegy Sylvester Chizanga), Jah Master (Rodney Mashandure), She Calaz (Tawanda Mumanyi) and ExQ (Enock Munhenga). Their music resonated with young Zimbabweans. This generational inclusivity also manifests in the list of clerics who were given gifts, including Emmanuel Makandiwa, Ubert Angel, Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi, Ian Ndlovu, AFM president Amon Madawo, and several African apostolic church leaders with a huge following in Zimbabwe. Eunor Guti, wife of the late ZAOGA church founder, Ezekiel Guti, claimed to have been offered US$2,000,000 and a Toyota Land Cruiser vehicle, which she rejected. Chivayo alleged to have offered Guti US$250,000. This complex spiderweb approach ensured that demographically all interest groups were captured. The targeted celebrities are no ordinary people in society. Celebrities are individuals with "attention-

getting, interest riveting and profit generating value" (Rein et al., 1997, p. 15) and have the "capacity to attract attention, generate some surplus value or benefit derived from the fact of being well known" (van Krieken, 2012, p. 10). Consequently, celebrities can be important legitimation vehicles in semi-autocratic political environments, and as observed by Kendall-Taylor et al. (2020, p. 103), authoritarian regimes are "evolving" and "refashioning authoritarianism for the modern age". The material and monetary 'gifts' extended to popular musicians, clerics and comedians, among other celebrities in Zimbabwe must be viewed as part of a process by Mnangagwa's administration of seeking "ideological normalisation" (Pajnik, 2026, p. 1) through deployment of Ideological State Apparatuses. The church, arts, and culture industry constitute the Ideological State Apparatuses usable in the exercise of soft power. They "function by ideology," and whereas the music industry and the church are private institutions, "the same ruling class is active in the Ideological State Apparatus" (Althusser, 1971, p. 80). This explains why the Ideological State Apparatus is a site of struggle. Chivayo's gifts to Guti (church) and Winky D (music)—who rejected them—represent both the exercise of soft power through persuasion and capture, while the rejection is reflective of resistance. In this micro context, the Ideological State Apparatus is reflective of a site of struggle characterised by dominance and resistance. The acceptance of the gifts is demonstrative of the extent to which Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF could stretch to dominate the culture industry. Once captured, the culture industry serves the interests of the capturer, who in this instance is Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF, by generating cultural products that legitimise his rule or through silence.

The Table 1 below shows celebrities who received gifts from Mnangagwa and his associates.

**Table 1.** Artists who received gifts from ZANU-PF oligarchs.

| Musician/Cleric/Comedian | Vehicles and Money 'Donated' |
|---|---|
| Jah Prayzah | Mercedes-Benz S500<br>Range Rover Autobiography<br>Ford Ranger Platinum Plus |
| Alick Macheso | Mercedes-Benz GLE400d<br>Toyota Fortuner (was involved in an accident and was given a replacement)<br>Toyota Aqua (For Macheso's manager) |
| Leonard Zhakata | Toyota Fortuner |
| Suluman Chimbetu | Mercedes-Benz GLE 300d |
| Nicholas Zakaria | Toyota Fortuner |
| Peter Moyo | Mercedes-Benz C200 AMG |
| Olivia Charamba | Toyota Fortuner |
| Mechanic Manyeruke | Toyota Fortuner |
| Mambo Dhuterere and Mai Dhuterere | 2023 Toyota Fortuner |
| Sandra Ndebele | Mercedes-Benz GLE400d |
| Diana Samkange | Mercedes-Benz C-Class |
| Mathias Mhere | Mercedes-Benz C-Class |
| Andy Muridzo | Mercedes-Benz C-Class |
| Killer T (Kelvin Kusikwenyu) | 2023 Mercedes-Benz GLE350d |
| Jah Master | Mercedes-Benz C200 |
| Sniper Storm | Mercedes-Benz C200 |

**Table 1.** *Cont.*

| Musician/Cleric/Comedian | Vehicles and Money 'Donated' |
|---|---|
| Freeman HKD | Mercedes-Benz GLE400d |
| ExQ | Mercedes-Benz GLE450 |
| Enzo Ishall | Mercedes-Benz GLE400 (USD130,000) |
| Seh Calaz | Mercedes-Benz GLE350d (USD90,000) |
| Jeys Marabini | Toyota Hilux GD6 double-cab (USD46,000) |
| Chief Hwenje (Admire Sibanda) | Toyota Hilux GD-6 plus USD50,000 |
| Dorcas Moyo | Toyota Fortuner |
| Taruvinga Manjokota (Sugar Sugar) | Toyota Fortuner and US$50,000. |
| Bishop Nehemiah Mutendi (ZCC) | Mercedes-Maybach (Involved in an accident and replaced with a Range Rover Autobiography SV.<br>Donated US$1,000,000 and pledged an additional US$5,000,000 to ZCC. |
| Emmanuel Makandiwa and wife<br>Ruth Makandiwa (UFI) | Rolls-Royce Cullinan Black Badge<br>Mercedes-Maybach GLS 600<br>Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon.<br>US$1,000,000 cash |
| Walter Magaya | Mercedes-Benz GLS 600 Maybach<br>US$1,000,000 |
| Prophet Ian Ndlovu and wife<br>Moses Chunga (football legend) | Toyota Land Cruiser; Toyota Fortuner<br>Toyota Fortuner |
| Peter Ndlovu (Football legend) | BMW X6 |
| Sunday Chidzambwa | Toyota Fortuner, US$20,000 cash |
| Madzibaba Lawrence Katsiru (Johane Masowe Chishanu church leader) | Lexus LX450D; Mercedes-Benz GLS450 |
| Freddy Kapfupi Manjalima (comedian) | Toyota Aqua x2 (Involved in an accident and was given a replacement) |
| Admire 'Bhutisi' Kuzhangaira (comedian) | Mercedes-Benz C200 |

Table 2 below shows vehicles donated by Mnangagwa to some footballers, musicians and church leaders.

**Table 2.** The vehicles that were donated to some footballers, musicians and church leaders by Mnangagwa.

| Musician/Clerics/Comedian/Footballer | Vehicle and Other 'Gifts' |
|---|---|
| Comic Elder (real name Leroy Tadiwanashe Zaware) | Ford Raptor double cab |
| Walter Musona (footballer) | Ford Ranger Wild Track |
| Emmanuel Jalai (footballer) | Ford Ranger Wild Track |
| Tabeth Mutinhiri (footballer) | Ford Ranger Wild Track |
| AFM president Aman Madawo | Toyota Land Cruiser 300 Series |
| Madawo's AFM church | 30-seater bus, US$300,000 |
| Jowani Masowe Vadzidzi vaJesu Church | Seven new Toyota pickup trucks |
| Chitungwiza Harmony Singers | 30-seater bus |
| Light Machine Gun (LMG choir) | 15-seater minibus |
| Chitungwiza Harmony Singers Choirmaster Arnold Dzangare | Toyota Hilux Travo |
| Johane Marange Apostolic Church | 12 truckloads of cement, US$100,000 fundraised |
| Emmanuel Makandiwa's UFIC | Pledged US$2,000,000 |

President Mnangagwa's ally businessman Kudakwashe Tagwirei also donated US$1,000,000 to Johane Marange Apostolic Church to support its energy investment at Headlands in Manicaland province. Tagwirei also offered US$200,000 to UFIC youths for business start-up funding (see The Day Star, 10 June 2025), while the president's other close associate and advisor, Paul Tungwarara, gave a social media influencer, Rutendo Matinyarare, a Toyota Land Cruiser 300 Series and US$200,000 (Wafawarova, 2026). Matinyarare had consistently criticised Mnangagwa's attempt to extend his rule and raised serious allegations against his family. That Matinyarare apologised to the president and his family after receiving the gifts is suggestive of capture. Scott Sakupwanya, another businessman and ZANU-PF politician closely associated with President Mnangagwa, also gifted a young popular Zimbabwean musician, Junior Spragga Madikiwani, with a Toyota truck, US$50,000, and appointed the artist brand ambassador for his football team, Scotland FC. Sakupwanya also pledged a Toyota Fortuner for Spragga's music manager, among other lucrative offers. Chivayo also bought Spragga a house worth US$150,000 and furniture worth US$50,000.

### *4.2. Weaponisation of Poverty, Bandwagonism and Showboating as Capture Strategies*

It also emerged that Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF deployed several strategies to capture the culture industry. These included the weaponisation of poverty, bifurcation of citizens (patriots versus sellouts) and showboating—publicly rewarding celebrities.

### *4.3. Weaponisation of Poverty*

Operating mainly through oligarchs associated with the party, ZANU-PF instrumentalised poverty to capture celebrities. The Zimbabwean economy has been struggling for decades, with critics attributing the situation to ZANU-PF's maladministration. ZANU-PF blames Western sanctions. The culture industry has not been spared the hardships. Celebrities—who in functional economies ought to live large—are poor. ZANU-PF took advantage of the economic meltdown to "perform" acts of philanthropy on the celebrities. For example, when he bought Jah Prayzah a Ford Platinum for US$110,000, Chivayo said he was buying the musician the car because he was popular but poor. In a video he posted on Facebook and X, buying the vehicle at an auto dealership in Harare, Chivayo is heard telling the dealer, "On 4 July it is Jah Prayzah's birthday, and I promised to give him some little US$250,000. He is failing to sleep over it. You know he is poor. He is a good musician, but he does not have money". Chivayo said he wanted Jah Prayzah's fans to see the musician driving luxury vehicles matching his status as a celebrity, adding, "also phone the boy and give him $250,000. I have no time to meet him". When he offered Winky D a vehicle and he rejected it, Chivayo derided the musician for driving cheap, pre-loved Japanese vehicles like Honda Fit and Toyota Wish to his shows. This implied that Winky D was poor, and the businessman was aware of his "poverty". Chivayo claimed his offer to Winky D was driven by the desire to "upgrade" him. In Zimbabwe, Honda Fit and Ipsum are low-class vehicles used as a pirate taxi. Chivayo remarked:

> If Winky D comes out and says I need a car, I will give him even tomorrow. He is a nice young man. He has support of his people (fans) although I cannot compare him with Jah Prayzah. These are our celebrities. In America, these are the celebrities who drive Lamborghinis. They are the giants. I don't want him to come to a show driving a Japenese (pre-loved car). I want him to arrive (for a show) in brand new BMW X5 or brand-new car of his choice because I know music does not pay. They are paid US$3000 or US$4000. The money is not enough for him to buy a new car, so it (gift) was about uplifting his status (interview on Denny J Show).

Subjecting Chivayo's remarks deriding Winky D as a poor follower of opposition leader Nelson Chamisa after he refused the gifts to van Dijk's (2005) Critical Discourse Analysis (ideological square analytical instrument) reveals how the businessman de-emphasises the negative about the ingroup (ZANU-PF) and emphasises the negative about the outgroup (Chamisa and Winky-D). His remarks implied that association with Chamisa and opposition politics bred poverty while supporting ZANU-PF and Mnangagwa guaranteed prosperity. This is an attempt at legitimising Mnangagwa and delegitimising Chamisa. Chivayo also de-emphasises the negative about ZANU-PF when he stated, "these are our celebrities (Winky D). In America these are the celebrities who drive Lamborghinis". He is silent on why popular musicians like Winky D and Jah Prayzah were poor when, in functional economies, such celebrities ought to be rich. His silence exonerates Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF from presiding over an economic crisis, which birthed popular but poor musicians. Chivayo instead mocks Winky D for allegedly supporting Chamisa, whom he dismissed as not destined to govern Zimbabwe, and asserts, "we know who the holy spirit ordained and he will always govern (Mnangagwa)". This operation of discourse at the macro-level (van Dijk, 2005) implied that Mnangagwa was chosen by God to lead Zimbabwe and his presidency was eternal. Such remarks were not only crudely ideological but also othered Chamisa.

On inviting Chimurenga music legend Thomas Mapfumo to play at his birthday and Jah Prayzah's wedding for a whopping USD$1,000,000, Chivayo claimed to be acting out of generosity after hearing that "Mukanya is struggling", adding, "I play his music . . .how can I let Mukanya struggle". He described Mapfumo's one-million-dollar deal as a "retirement" package and warned, "If he (Mapfumo) fails to use it wisely, it is his problem". Mukanya is Mapfumo's alias. Mapfumo, who relocated to the United States of America in the early 2000s, had initially dismissed the gifts as attempts by ZANU-PF at soliciting support from musicians. In an interview with Nehanda Radio, Mapfumo defiantly claimed:

> They are looking for support from musicians and those musicians are poor. Do not laugh at those boys when they accept vehicles. They have never had such luxurious cars. . . They do not stand for the people because they are poor, *Vava kungoti chamuka inyama* (they are accepting whatever comes their way) . . .Imagine if the money being used to buy those cars was channelled to hospitals and repairing damaged roads. People are languishing in poverty even in rural areas. . .The money can be used for the benefit of people, not individuals. They have their own cars. Why are you giving them cars? If you give them vehicles, will it uplift the lives of people who deserve decent lives? (interview on Nehanda Radio)

Mapfumo's remarks suggested that ZANU-PF was capturing the targeted musicians for ideological purposes. His remarks challenge power. On record for having equated the gifts to "stealing from the people", Mapfumo later agreed to play at Chivayo's birthday and Jah Prayzah's wedding for US$1,000,000. He was flown from his USA base to Harare for the shows. Senior ZANU-PF politicians welcomed Mapfumo at the Robert Mugabe International Airport in Harare. Chivayo died in a horrific helicopter crash two days after Mapfumo's arrival. Mapfumo claimed to have been paid in advance. He described the payment as a business deal and not a donation. When journalists sought to understand why he later accepted Chivayo's US$1,000,000 deal, Mapfumo claimed the businessman was his top music fan and there were no reasons for him to "I ignore the things that he wants to do for me?. . . Because he associates with Mnangagwa? Do I know where he gets his money?" He challenged Zimbabweans to report Chivayo to the police if he committed any offence, adding, "He is assisting poor musicians facing challenges in the current economic environment" (see Nehanda Radio, 16 August 2026). Mapfumo argued that musicians in Zimbabwe were failing to get "meaningful rewards from their music" and Chivayo was

only assisting them. By arguing that he could not refuse Chivayo's deal simply because the businessman was associated with Mnangagwa, Mapfumo subtly reverses into "ideological normalisation" (Pajnik, 2026, p. 1), having actively condemned the president in the past. The musician endorsed Chamisa in the run-up to the 2023 elections won by Mnangagwa (see New Zimbabwe.com, 4 February 2022). When he gave Jeys Marabini a Toyota Hilux GD6, Chivayo indicated he was rewarding the musician for his "continued support at ZANU-PF rallies and national events". The remarks bifurcated Zimbabweans into "us" and "them"—or what van Dijk (2005) terms the "ingroup" and "outgroup", "patriots" and "sellouts" (Ranger, 2005). Such politics polarises the nation and damages any prospects for democracy. It meant musicians supportive of Mnangagwa's government were entitled to life-changing gifts. Artists deemed to be rebellious were sidelined once attempts to capture them failed.

The centrality of poverty and its weaponisation through performances of philanthropism also manifested when Chivayo donated a Toyota Fortuner to popular Sungura musician Leonard Zhakata. Zhakata thanked Chivayo and revealed how his old vehicle had caused him problems while on a musical tour in Manicaland province (see *Hmetro*, 26 November 2024). His remarks reflected the depth of poverty within Zimbabwe's music industry, which exposed musicians to political manipulation by ZANU-PF oligarchs. Zhakata is not an ordinary artist but a music icon who should be deriving ample benefits from his craft. Owing to poverty, some musicians reportedly sold vehicles donated to them by Chivayo. In an interview on the Denny J Show, Chivayo claimed Enzo Ishall sold a Mercedes-Benz he bought the musician for US$130,000. He reportedly sold the car for US$60,000. Ishall was failing to maintain the vehicle. Chivayo alleged that Ishall told a dealer that he sold the car because "he got it for free" and needed money (interview on the Denny J Show). Likewise, Jah Prayzah traded a Mercedes-Benz S500 Chivayo bought him for an office to avoid "renting" premises. These cases demonstrate the extent to which poverty exposed popular musicians to capture.

Sungura musician Taruwinga Manjokota's (popularly known as Sugar Sugar) case is demonstrative of the extent to which ZANU-PF captured musicians for hegemonic purposes. Manjokota—a modest musician with over two decades in the industry—released a song titled *Todye Modododo*. It became an instant hit owing to its controversial lyrics. *Mudododo* is a nut harvested from the Amarula fruit, eaten in dry rural Zimbabwe. For one to eat the nut, they must break the Amarula fruit's hard shell usually with a stone, often injuring their thumb in the process. When translated, *Todye Mudododo* means "we are eating Amarula nuts". Contextually, *Todye Mudododo* could be a euphemism that Zimbabweans are struggling. Probably reading the negativity in the lyrics, ZANU-PF oligarchs scrambled to "gift" Sugar Sugar. Chivayo gave the musician a Toyota Fortuner vehicle (2026 model) and US$40,000 in cash. He expressed concern that Sugar Sugar had "never owned a car", adding, "for thanking E.D (Mnangagwa) and speaking good about the country, I give you another US$20,000. . .So, I have increased the money to US$40,000 cash on collection". Paul Tungwarara, an advisor to the president, donated US$10,000. Posting on his social media handle, Tungwarara claimed the song *Mudododo* "perfectly describes the prosperity ushered by President E.D Mnangagwa", noting, "We are all eating *Mudododo* in a free country. . .it is *Mudododo* 2030 and beyond"—implying Mnangagwa would remain in office beyond 2030. In his message of appreciation to Chivayo, Sugar Sugar thanked Mnangagwa. He explained that his song meant that Zimbabweans were enjoying their country's mineral wealth. Interestingly, in an interview later with podcaster DJ Ollah 7, Sugar Sugar revealed how he wallowed in poverty prior to the donations, saying, "In my life I had never owned a car. This is the first time I am driving. All this time I used public transport and people would mock me". He narrated how, growing up in rural Buhera, he damaged his thumb as

he cracked the Amarula fruit for nuts. If the political-economic and social conditions were right, the musicians would not have survived on hand-outs.

Further, when social media activist Rutendo Matinyarare criticised Mnangagwa's bid for an extended presidential term, Chivayo labelled him "a sell-out" not worth gifting. In social media rage, Chivayo slammed Matinyarare, accusing him of insulting the party and the president. The businessman revealed how he "used to have a lot of respect for this guy (Matinyarare)" and had intended to "give him a (Toyota) Land Cruiser 300 Series and $250,000. . .but the moment you flip flop you become a sell-out". The remarks again bifurcated Zimbabweans into "us" and "them", in-group and outgroup. They illustrate how capture operated through material rewards and punishment. That Matinyarare was later given a luxury vehicle and US$200,000 by another ZANU-PF oligarch, Paul Tungwarara, with instructions to apologise to the president and he complied, confirms the extent ZANU-PF stretched to capture the culture industry.

The church was captured in a similar fashion. AFM president Amon Madawo revealed how President Mnangagwa donated over US$300,000 towards completion of a church in Norton. AFM had struggled to complete the construction due to resource constraints. Madawo, who was given a Toyota Land Cruiser 300 Series vehicle by Mnangagwa during the official opening of the church, declared that he was ZANU-PF, adding, "If you do not belong to ZANU-PF where else can you belong?" Madawo challenged the church to support Mnangagwa, saying, "If you are saying down with ED (Mnangagwa), who then are you supporting? If you are saying down with ZANU-PF, who are you supporting? I am ZANU-PF" (New Zimbabwe.com, 7 August 2016). Subjected to van Dijk's (2005) ideological square, Madawo's remarks promote discourses supportive of Mnangagwa and ZANU-PF's rule while undermining alternative political choices. It divides Zimbabweans into "us" and "them", "patriots" and "sell-outs" (Ranger, 2005).

AFM elders and Deacons later released a press statement distancing the church from Madawo's remarks. They emphasised the church's "longstanding position of political neutrality, non-partisanship and independence from partisan political interests" (Pindula News, 26 August 2026). The fact that AFM leadership dismissed Madawo's remarks and reaffirmed the church's political neutrality demonstrates how capture created discord within the church. It implies that capture is not always a smooth hegemonic process. It comes with its own wrangles, internal divergence, and discord. Further, it highlights how "private institutions can perfectly function as ideological state apparatus" (Althusser, 1971, p. 80). The rejection by ZAOGA church's Eunor Guti of Chivayo's gifts, which included a luxury vehicle and US$2,000,000, also demonstrated how some targeted celebrities in the culture industry fought back against capture by the state. When she rejected Chivayo's gifts, Guti claimed that "there was no mind or will of God there". This constitutes counter-capture and counter-hegemonic discourses. Guti confirms this when she revealed that, "Another night this man was sent by another man, who I don't know to say, I plead with you mom to receive the gift that we are giving you. This man was serious and wanted to push me into those things. I said no, I need to pray". The usage of the words "we are giving you" is neither accidental nor coincidental. It implies bigger forces beyond Chivayo—a system at work. Guti claimed to have rejected the gifts even though her church desperately needed money for projects.

On the contrary, Makandiwa accepted Chivayo's US$1,000,000 cash donation to his church. He dismissed concerns from the church over the origins of the money, saying, "They are people who say you cannot just receive money from people whose origins you do not know but I received your dollar last week (as an offering) and I never asked you where it came from". This demonstrates the extent to which ZANU-PF oligarchs had bifurcated the church as an institution. It is especially the case when juxtaposed with Guti's rejection of

Chivayo's gifts. These divisions are even more salient when ZCC's Mutendi revealed that his congregants had implored him to reject Chivayo's money as it was "dirty". Mutendi remarked that "some people said to me, Bishop you are being given dirty money. I asked, dirty money? Where did the dirty come from? Blood? Does it have blood?" (The Day Star Facebook post, 6 April 2026). He claimed some institutions were recipients of American donations but raised issues when the donor was Chivayo, again reinforcing the "us" versus "them" discourse. Three months after receiving a brand-new Rolls-Royce Cullinan Series II Black Badge (2026 model) from Chivayo, Apostle Rodney Chipoyera of the Kingdom Prosperity Ministries denounced anyone criticising Mnangagwa as "demonic". Chipoyera's wife, Farai, got a Toyota Land Cruiser Prado and US$50,000 from Chivayo as a birthday gift. Delivering a sermon at his church, Chipoyera said, "Exempt yourself from the nonsense of speaking against fathers even the national father—the president. You have no right to speak against him. You are too little. You are too young. It's not politics. Its spirituality" (see The Day Star, 24 September 2026). He insisted that, "upward correction is demonic", adding, "you should shut up. If you see yourself correcting leadership, it's demonic whether it's (leadership) right or wrong. You are not qualified to correct your father." It is clear from these remarks that Chipoyera used the pulpit to disseminate discourses that buttressed Mnangagwa's hegemonic interests and othered alternative political views as demonic. Discourses of othering are hidden within scripture. The church becomes an extension of politics—an institution and platform through which ideological state apparatuses attempt to exert influence in service of power.

### *4.4. Bandwagonism and Showboating as Reflective of Capture*

Data gathered also showed how the public handover of vehicles to celebrities ignited bandwagonism within the culture industry. Celebrities joined the queue in anticipation of gifts. Journalists—who must play the watchdog role—did the same in violation of ethical etiquette. They begged Chivayo for gifts on social media in a confirmation of the operationalisation of capture—behave well by supporting Mnangagwa and get rewarded, or wallow in poverty. For example, Sungura musician and Zimbabwe Music Rights Association vice chair First Farai (real name Farai Batani) beseeched Chivayo for a vehicle in a post that went viral online. Referring to Chivayo as "my lord", First Farai said that while he was aware that "gifts come to those who are patient, a closed mouth does not get fed", and "a goat that gives birth in public wants people to drive away dogs" (New Zimbabwe.com, 23 May 2024). He narrated how he was struggling despite having been in the music industry for many years. First Farai claimed he neither had musical instruments nor a vehicle to ferry his band to shows, adding, "Please assist me with those things so that I can fend for myself. I have 17 band members. We are now jobless" (New Zimbabwe.com on Facebook, 23 May 2024).

What makes First Farai's case disturbing is the fact that he was ZIMURA deputy chair. ZIMURA protects and promotes the copyright and neighbouring rights of musicians. His case confirms the depth of poverty in Zimbabwe's arts and culture industry, which exposes artists to capture by regime forces. Further, the fact that a journalist with Zimbabwe's biggest media conglomerate (Zimpapers), Takawira Dapi (photovet), begged Chivayo for gifts buttresses this argument. In a post on Facebook, Dapi said:

> I am Takawira Dapi. The first entertainment video photographer since 1990. Please Sir Wicknell, I am begging for a car as the first patriotically voluntary arts, culture, patriotic and humanitarian video-photojournalist since 1990 (see Takawira Photovet Dapi Facebook post, 19 May 2025).

Claiming to have been once robbed while on night duty, Dapi also begged Chivayo for US$4 500 to cancel a debt he owed the municipality. "If you do not have a car reserved

for me, you can even give me a job", the journalist added. This demonstrates the extent to which professionals in the culture industry were susceptible to capture. Another journalist with the same media house, Pathisani Sibanda, got a house worth US$150,000 and a Toyota Fortuner from Chivayo. When Zimpapers management flagged the gifts as above the acceptable company limit of US$100, Chivayo claimed to have bought the house for US$80 and the luxury car for US$100 (see The Day Star, 14 May 2026). Sibanda thanked Chivayo, saying, "No words can capture my gratitude. I testify that you have changed my life. I am happy. Be blessed. Tears of joy are flowing down my cheeks". That Sibanda accepted a gift that violated journalism ethics underlines the extent to which he was ready to sacrifice his job. In stable economies, celebrities like Sibanda earn enough to procure basics like housing and cars without the embarrassment of publicised donations, which reduced them to charity cases. Sibanda's case also demonstrated the extent to which oligarchs stretched to capture the culture industry. Other celebrities who begged Chivayo for gifts included musicians Seh Calaz and Nicholas Zakaria. It is significant to note how the ZANU-PF oligarchs indulged in showboating as the majority of Zimbabweans languished in poverty. The US$1,000,000 cash donation to Makandiwa was exhibited in church. The president's US$2,000,000 pledge to Makandiwa was announced in church. Tungwarara's Toyota Land Cruiser ZX car donation to Rutendo Matinyarare was announced on X. Tungwarara posted on X, "Dear @matinyarare, your car is ready to be collected. Congratulations! Let us find an amicable way of resolving our differences". Scott Sakupwanya announced a donation of a Toyota luxury vehicle and US$50,000 to musician Spragga, in public. He appointed the musician a brand ambassador for his football team, Scottland. Chivayo announced his donations on social media. At first glance, these acts of showboating seem banal, yet they implied that the donor's pockets were deep enough to reward good political behaviour within the culture industry—behaviour supportive of Mnangagwa.

## 5. Discussion

Findings demonstrate how Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF captured the culture industry through gifts worth millions of dollars for hegemonic purposes. It rewarded praise singers and lured critics with gifts to forestall negative discourses that undermined its rule. For example, the gifts that were extended to musicians Winky D, Leonard Zhakata, Sugar Sugar and even the whopping one-million-dollar payment to Thomas Mapfumo—who has for years criticised government through his music—should be understood within the context of media capture. Although Mapfumo argued the payment was a business transaction, the amount involved breaks records in a poor economy like Zimbabwe. Literature on media capture suggests four ways of control. These are capture through ownership, financial incentives, censorship, and cognitive capture (Stiglitz, 2017). It would appear ZANU-PF captured the culture industry through material and financial rewards as well as censorship. Sugar Sugar and Matinyarare's gifts are symptomatic of capture through material rewards and censorship, which resultantly influenced their cultural products, with dire consequences for alternative views and democracy in Zimbabwe. Sugar Sugar literally reconstructed *Mudododo*'s meaning. From bemoaning poverty, Sugar Sugar publicly announced that contrary to public interpretation of the lyrics, the song celebrated Zimbabwe's mineral endowment and benefits thereof. Words have polysemic meanings and interpretations, but it may be difficult to appreciate how a poor musician like Sugar Sugar derived benefit from Zimbabwe's mineral wealth without an end to his poverty. Taken within this context, it then implies Sugar Sugar tried to dilute the import of the lyrics, which were critical of the state. Matinyarare profusely apologised to Mnangagwa for having criticised his #ED2030 political ambitions online. Mapfumo, who had earlier dismissed Chivayo's gifts to Zimbabwean artists as an attempt by ZANU-PF at soliciting

support, somersaulted and applauded the businessman for helping musicians struggling under difficult economic conditions. Mapfumo's shift in position is an acknowledgement of Pajnik's (2026, p. 1) claim that media capture leads to "ideological normalisation". This reinforces Dragomir's (2024) assertion that struggling economic conditions enable capture by the powerful for hegemonic purposes. If anything, as observed by Schiffrin (2018), media capture is evolving and manifests as acts of philanthropy at times, thereby posing a danger to the culture industry—which is then exposed to appropriation by the state through third parties (oligarchs). The deployment of prominent ZANU-PF oligarchs like Chivayo to perform acts of philanthropy on poor musicians must be analysed from this viewpoint. Thus, while statements by those artists who seemed to have been successfully captured confirmed the efficacy of the ideological state apparatus, it must be noted that refusal of gifts by celebrities including Winky D and Guti confirms Althusser's (1971) assertion that the IDS is a site of struggle.

## 6. Conclusions

The study sought to understand the extent to which donations to the culture industry by Mnangagwa and oligarchs linked to the president constituted capture. It also attempted to comprehend some of the strategies that were deployed by Mnangagwa's ZANU-PF to capture the culture industry and the implications of capture on democracy in Zimbabwe. Findings are suggestive that Mnangagwa's administration attempted to capture the culture industry for hegemonic gain. In some instances, it won, while it faltered in others. The capture of the culture industry harms democracy in Zimbabwe by suffocating voices that challenge power. Music and the church have always played a central role in Zimbabwe's democratisation during the colonial period and even after independence. For example, culture industry institutions like music play a journalistic role by challenging dictatorship (Matsilele et al., 2023; Guzura & Ndimande, 2015; Mano, 2007). Future studies may examine the music and other productions by artists given gifts by ZANU-PF and Mnangagwa and ascertain the extent to which their outputs confirm capture.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not applicable. In terms of our research guidelines in our university, information and data already accessible in the public platforms may be used for research without requiring any ethical clearance. Such usage does not constitute any harm, violation of privacy, or copyright violation.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors on request.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declare no conflict of interest.

## References

Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation). In *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (B. Brewster, Trans.; pp. 142–147, 166–176). Monthly Review Press.

Baloyi, E. (2022). The church and politics in Zimbabwe. *African Theological Journal for Church and Society*, *3*(2), 20–38.

Chirere, M., & Mhandu, E. (2008). Songs that won the war of liberation and poems that grapple with the war and its aftermaths. *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, *2*(5), 271–283. [CrossRef]

Chirongoma, S. (2008). A historical exploration on church and state in Zimbabwe. In *Changing relations between churches in Europe and Africa: The internationalization of Christianity and politics in the 20th century* (pp. 135–152). Harrassowitz Verlag.

Coşkun, G. B. (2020). Media capture strategies in new authoritarian states: The case of Turkey. *Publizistik*, *65*(4), 637–654. [CrossRef]

Dragomir, M. (2024). The capture effect: How media capture affects journalists, markets and audiences. *Central European Journal of Communication*, *17*(36), 162–184. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Guzura, T., & Ndimande, J. (2015). Music, political space and power in Zimbabwe: A critique. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*, *6*(6), 1–19.

Katiyo, B. (2024, July 15). Superstar Macheso gets Jozi lifetime achievement award in South Africa. *Hmetro*.

Kendall-Taylor, A., Frantz, E., & Wright, J. (2020). The digital dictators. *Foreign Affairs*, *99*(2), 103–115.

Kriger, N. (2012). ZANU PF politics under Zimbabwe's 'power-sharing'government. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, *30*(1), 11–26.

Mabweazara, H. M., Muneri, C. T., & Ndlovu, F. (2020). News "media capture", relations of patronage and clientelist practices in sub-Saharan Africa: An interpretive qualitative analysis. *Journalism Studies*, *21*(15), 2154–2175. [CrossRef]

Mano, W. (2007). Popular music as journalism in Zimbabwe. *Journalism Studies*, *8*(1), 61–78. [CrossRef]

Maodza, T. (2025). A diagnosis of daily news' framing of anti-Mnangagwa protests through the media capture lens. *Journalism and Media*, *6*(3), 130. [CrossRef]

Matiza, V. M., & Mutasa, D. (2020). War songs and hope during the Second Chimurenga in Zimbabwe: A critical discourse analysis approach. *South African Journal of African Languages*, *40*(3), 351–357. [CrossRef]

Matsilele, T., & Msimanga, M. J. (2022). Popular music and the concept of the dissident in post-independence Zimbabwe. In *Indigenous African popular music, volume 2: Social crusades and the future* (pp. 59–75). Springer International Publishing.

Matsilele, T., Msimanga, M. J., & Tshuma, L. A. (2023). Popular music and political contestations in Zimbabwe: An analysis of Winky D's and Jah Prayzah's music. *Journal of African Media Studies*, *15*(3), 291–308. [CrossRef]

Mazzoleni, G., Stewart, J., & Horsfield, B. (Eds.). (2003). *The media and neo-populism: A contemporary comparative analysis*. Praeger.

Mhiripiri, N. A. (2012). Dancing through the crisis: Survival dynamics and Zimbabwe music industry. In V. Y. Mudimbe (Ed.), *Contemporary African cultural productions* (pp. 1–28). African Books Collective.

Muzari, G. (2014, March 19). The curse of music awards. *The Herald*.

Mwonzora, G., & Helliker, K. (2020). Learning and performing political violence: ZANU-PF youth and the 2008 presidential run-off election in Zimbabwe. *African Studies*, *79*(4), 367–386. [CrossRef]

Ndlovu, J., & Muringa, T. P. (2025). No to third term! Pastoral statement by the church in Zimbabwe as an indictment on president Mnangagwa's bid to amend the constitution. *Religions*, *16*(4), 489. [CrossRef]

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2006). Nationalist-military alliance and the fate of democracy in Zimbabwe. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, *6*(1), 49–80. [CrossRef]

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J., & Ruhanya, P. (2020). Introduction: Transition in Zimbabwe: From Robert Gabriel Mugabe to Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa: A repetition without change. In *The history and political transition of Zimbabwe: From Mugabe to Mnangagwa* (pp. 1–22). Springer International Publishing.

Pajnik, M. (2026). The authoritarian playbook: Media capture and the normalisation of populism. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 1–18. [CrossRef]

Pfukwa, C. (2008). Black September et al.: Chimurenga songs as historical narratives in the Zimbabwean liberation war. *Muziki*, *5*(1), 30–61. [CrossRef]

Ranger, T. (2005). The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe and its possible implications. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, *2*, 8–17. [CrossRef]

Rein, I. J., Kotler, P., & Stoller, M. R. (1997). *High visibility: The making and marketing of professionals into celebrities*. McGraw-Hill Companies.

Schedler, A. (2013). *The politics of uncertainty: Sustaining and subverting electoral authoritarianism*. Oxford University Press.

Schiffrin, A. (2018). Introduction to special issue on media capture. *Journalism*, *19*(8), 1033–1042. [CrossRef]

Stiglitz, J. E. (2017). Toward a taxonomy of media capture. In A. Schiffrin (Ed.), *In the service of power: Media capture and the threat to democracy* (pp. 9–18). National Endowment for Democracy.

Tarusarira, J., & Hunt, S. (2015). Christianity, resistance and conflict resolution in Zimbabwe. In *Handbook of global contemporary Christianity* (pp. 266–284). Brill.

Tshuma, M. (2025). *Dorcas Moyo makes it 3 CLIMA Africa awards, B-metro*. Available online: www.heraldonline.co.zw (accessed on 20 July 2026).

Ureke, O. (2016). State interference, para-politics and editorial control: The political economy of 'Mirrorgate' in Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Media Studies*, *8*(1), 17–34. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Vambe, M. T., & Vambe, B. (2006). Musical rhetoric and the limits of official censorship in Zimbabwe. *MUZIKI: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, *3*(1), 48–78. [CrossRef]

van Dijk, T. (2005). Politics of ideology and discourse in encyclopaedia of language linguistics. In R. Wodak (Ed.), *Violence of politics and language*. Elsevier.

van Krieken, R. (2012). Theorizing celebrity society. *The Newsletter of the Research Committee on Sociological Theory, International Sociological Association*, 3–4.

Wafawarova, R. (2026, June 14). *The activist, the landcruiser, and the price of dissent: When patriotism became transactional*. Nehanda Radio.

Zakeyo, M. (2012). The church, politics and the future of Zimbabwe. *Religion in the Public Sphere*, *8*(1), 211–235.

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.

https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia7040222