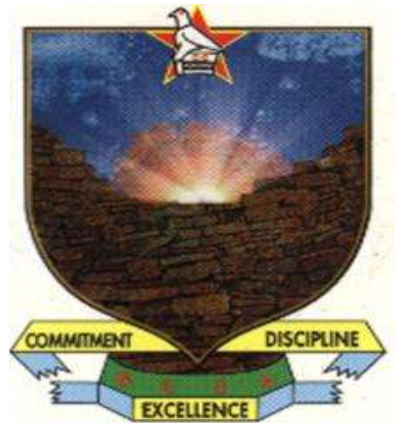


BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK



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**"Factors influencing the Non-Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse amongst
community members: A Case of Budiro, Harare, Zimbabwe"**

**A dissertation submitted to Bindura University of Science Education, Faculty of
Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of Social Work, in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in
Social Work.**

2024

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to the unwavering love and sacrifice of my mother, whose determination and hard work have been the cornerstone of my education. Her selfless dedication to providing me with the opportunity to learn has been the driving force behind my pursuit of knowledge and success. Without her sacrifices, none of this would have been possible. I also dedicate this work to my brother, Tinashe whose insightful ideas and encouragement have been invaluable throughout the course of this project. His unwavering support and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in shaping the direction and depth of this research. His belief in me has been a constant source of inspiration. To my mother, sister and brother, I offer my deepest gratitude and dedication. This work stands as a testament to the love, support, and sacrifices that have shaped my journey, and I dedicate its completion to each of you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Mr Njovu whose guidance, expertise, and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping this research project. Your mentorship and encouragement have been invaluable, and I am deeply appreciative of the time and effort you have dedicated to ensuring the success of this endeavor. I am also grateful to God almighty for granting me the strength, wisdom, and resilience to navigate the challenges and triumphs of this research journey. Your divine guidance has been a source of inspiration and hope, and I am humbled by the grace that has sustained me throughout this endeavor. I extend my sincere thanks to the officials at Childline who graciously allowed me to conduct my research within the organization. Your willingness to facilitate my access and provide valuable insights has enriched the depth and scope of this study. I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with you and for the support you have extended to me. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge my good friends whose unwavering support, encouragement, and understanding have been a constant source of strength. Your friendship has been a pillar of strength throughout this process, and I am deeply thankful for your presence and belief in me.

ABSTRACT

Child sexual abuse is a pervasive problem that affects millions of children worldwide, yet it remains largely underreported. This study aimed to investigate the social and cultural causes of nondisclosure of child sexual abuse and its effects on victims. Using a mixed-methods approach, we conducted surveys and interviews with victims, families, and community members. Our findings revealed that social factors such as fear of retaliation, fear of not being believed, and fear of family breakdown, as well as cultural beliefs and values that prioritize family honor, shame, and silence, contribute to nondisclosure. Moreover, nondisclosure was found to have severe and long-lasting effects on victims, including mental health problems, low self-esteem, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships. Our study highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to address the social and cultural causes of nondisclosure, provide support to victims, and prevent further trauma. The findings have important implications for policy, practice, and future research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

WHO: World Health Organisation

UNICEF: United Nations International Emergency Fund

CSA:.....Child Sexual Abuse

CPRI:Caribbean Policy Research Institute

LIST OF TABLES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study's context, the problem statement, study purpose, research goals, study boundaries, research limitations, key term definitions, ethical considerations, and an outline of the dissertation.

1.2 Background of study

Worldwide, child sexual abuse is a pervasive and extremely alarming problem that has lasting effects for children's development and well-being. It is a global problem that affects children from all backgrounds, as emphasized by Lonne and Daroowalla (2013). The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that a staggering number of children who are about one in four girls and one in 13 boys who experience sexual abuse before the age of 18. This underscores the urgency of combating child sexual abuse with a comprehensive strategy. In addition, the WHO points out that only a small proportion of children report sexual abuse to an adult, due to various barriers such as fear of reprisal, ignorance of reporting mechanisms and social stigma. In addition, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the issue by experts and the general public, as well as the fear that you will not be believed or accused of abuse. These issues highlight the necessity of a multipronged strategy to

combat child sexual abuse, one that includes victim and family support services, education, and awareness-raising.

The incidence and prevalence of child sexual abuse differ significantly across countries. In high-income nations, approximately 20 percent of children experience some form of sexual abuse before turning 18. The rates are likely higher in low-income countries, potentially due to various factors such as cultural variations in defining child sexual abuse, inadequate awareness and education, underreporting, insufficient resources for victims, social taboos, and a lack of understanding about the long-term effects of child sexual abuse. These factors contribute to the disparity in reported cases and highlight the need for improved awareness, education, and support services globally.

Child sexual abuse (CSA) affects approximately 150 million girls worldwide, David (2016). In the Caribbean, especially in Jamaica, CSA is a serious problem deeply rooted in cultural beliefs that hinder preventive measures, Caribbean Policy Research Institute (2018). The patriarchal society in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries contributes to the vulnerability of females, especially adolescents, to sexual abuse, Wang (2015), Fakunmoju (2016), Rawat (2014). Understanding cultural norms is critical to identifying risk factors that increase the likelihood of sexual exploitation of female youth and developing effective prevention policies, Gupta (2018). Cultural norms have an impact on societal attitudes towards CSA and the sense of safety victims have in reporting abuse, as noted by Caprioli and Crenshaw (2017). Identifying and addressing these cultural norms can help establish a secure

environment for CSA victims to report abuse. Furthermore, studies consistently illustrate a correlation between cultural norms and the prevention of CSA, as highlighted by Jeremiah (2017), Martinello (2020), and Seth and Srivastava (2017).

A number of studies have found that rates of disclosure of child sexual abuse are particularly low in sub-Saharan Africa. This phenomenon is attributed to various factors, including societal stigma, inadequate support services, and the normalization of child sexual abuse within certain cultures. A study carried out in South Africa by Omar (2007) revealed that only 25% of child sexual abuse victims divulge their experiences. Dr. Omar's research also identified cultural beliefs and norms as significant barriers to disclosure. For instance, many individuals consider child sexual abuse to be a private matter that should not be openly discussed. Additionally, there is a prevailing belief that children should not question adults, even in instances of abuse. These cultural convictions create substantial obstacles for children in disclosing instances of abuse. In addition, traditional beliefs and practices, such as female genital mutilation and early marriage, have also been found to contribute to low rates of disclosure, Omar (2007). This is different compared to Asia where rates of disclosure of child sexual abuse vary greatly across Asia. For example, in China and Japan, rates of disclosure are low. However, in India, the rate of disclosure is slightly higher. Wang (2014) found that only about 8% of child sexual abuse victims disclose the abuse. The study also found that children who do disclose the abuse often face negative consequences, such as being blamed for the abuse, Guo (2014). In addition, many children are afraid to disclose the abuse because they fear that they will be removed from their families. Typically, countries where child sexual abuse is culturally more tolerated are believed to have lower rates of disclosure.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, rates of disclosure of child sexual abuse are also variable. Nevertheless, they are generally believed to be lower than those in North America. Several factors are considered to contribute to these lower rates of disclosure, including limited understanding of child sexual abuse, apprehension of retaliation, and a lack of confidence in the legal system. Treffers (2016) argues that only around 30% of child sexual abuse victims disclose the abuse. The study also found that children who do disclose the abuse often face negative reactions from adults. For example, some adults blame the child for the abuse, while others express disbelief, Bonavota (2016). The rates differ significantly from those in Europe, reflecting substantial disparities in the disclosure rates of child sexual abuse. As indicated by a study carried out in the Netherlands by De Wit and fellow researchers in 2019, more than 55% of child sexual abuse victims report the assault. However, the study also found that only around 10% of these disclosures lead to a formal report. This is likely due to the fact that many children do not want to report the abuse to authorities. They may be afraid of the consequences, such as having to testify in court, Knaap (2019). However, disclosure rates are generally thought to be higher than in other regions. This is likely due to several factors, such as improved legal systems and increased education and awareness of child sexual abuse.

Southern Africa, which includes nations like Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho, and Namibia, has a serious problem with child sexual abuse. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 14.8% of girls and 4.4% of boys in this region have experienced sexual abuse. This makes the Southern African region one of

the highest-risk regions with child sexual abuse in the world. The national and regional studies conducted by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency in 2019 reveal alarming prevalence rates. Research indicates that in Zimbabwe, approximately one in three girls and one in seven boys encounter sexual violence before turning 18. Similarly, a study in South Africa revealed that one in four girls and one in five boys undergo some form of sexual abuse before reaching the age of 18.

According to Sadek (2017), a number of issues, including inadequate reporting, have resulted in an absence of trustworthy data regarding the frequency of child sexual abuse in the Southern African region. In Lesotho, Dlamini (2004) discovered that merely one percent of child sexual abuse cases are formally reported, likely influenced by cultural taboos and the associated shame. Similarly, Kamanzi (2014) in South Africa obtained comparable findings. He found that many cases are reported after a long period of time which can make it difficult to investigate and prosecute offenders.

The traditional cultural practices such as child marriages and gender norms can contribute to child sexual abuse, Sadek (2017). In Lesotho, a study conducted by Mokhele (2011) revealed that child marriage significantly contributes to child sexual abuse, as the research found that over half of the participants were married before reaching the age of eighteen. According to Pouw (2009), cultural customs like virginity testing and traditional circumcision can elevate the likelihood of child sexual abuse. The issue of virginity testing by older women is used to test if a girl child has had sexual intercourse. This practice is criticized for being invasive and potentially

traumatic for the girl as it would lead to stigmatization and sexual violence to girl who are found to be impure.

Sadek (2017) argues that the role of poverty and socio economic factors contributes in perpetuating child sexual abuse and it's non-disclosure. Poverty has been identified as a major risk factor since children living in poverty are more vulnerable to abuse due to factors such as lack of support and supervision, Fourie (2014). This is because they will be staying in unsafe environments. Myers (2012) argues that lack of access to education and healthcare can also make children vulnerable to abuse in South Africa. In Botswana, a study by Akumu (2009) found out that poverty, parental unemployment and a big number of family members were all risk factors for child sexual abuse in Botswana.

The issue of addressing child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe requires urgent and critical attention. While comprehensive national data on child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe is limited, available studies and reports indicate a concerning prevalence of this form of abuse. The Budiriro community in Harare, Zimbabwe, has been identified as an area where child sexual abuse is particularly prevalent, making it a crucial focus for research and intervention. Zimbabwe's complex history has influenced the prevalence and response to child sexual abuse. Mapfumo (2015) has written about the psychological and distressing behaviors that can be exhibited by female survivors of child sexual abuse. Factors such as economic challenges, political instability, and social inequalities have contributed to an environment where children are vulnerable to abuse. It is crucial to investigate the influence of these factors on the Budiriro community to comprehend the distinct obstacles encountered by children in this locality.

While specific statistics on child sexual abuse in Budiriro may be limited, available data from national and regional studies in Zimbabwe indicate a disturbingly high prevalence. For instance, a study conducted in 2019 by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency revealed that one in three girls and one in seven boys in Zimbabwe encounter some type of sexual violence before reaching the age of 18. These statistics underscore the pressing necessity to tackle the issue of child sexual abuse in Budiriro and develop effective interventions.

According to Musariri (2015), cultural norms and traditions might contribute to the underreporting of child sexual abuse. Early marriages and child labor are prevalent in this region, exposing children to potential abuse. Mapfumo (2015) delves into the psychological effects experienced by female survivors of child sexual abuse, bringing attention to the distressing aftermath that impacts the community. The Budiriro community in Harare stands out as a focal area due to its documented prevalence of child sexual abuse, warranting a deeper exploration of the distinct challenges confronting children in this locality. Holden (2019) and Letourneau, Schoenwald, and Sheidow (2004) contribute to the understanding of the complex dynamics surrounding child sexual abuse disclosure. Victims often face significant barriers, including fear of reprisal, social stigma, and the potential for further harm. Lack of awareness about support services, limited knowledge of reporting mechanisms, and cultural beliefs further hinder disclosure. These insights lay the groundwork for exploring the factors influencing non-disclosure in Budiriro.

One more factor contributing to the underreporting of child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe is the lack of trust in the justice system. Many victims are skeptical that reporting the abuse will result in the delivery of justice. This lack of confidence can be linked to various factors, such as inadequate resources for law enforcement and the courts,

corruption, and a lack of transparency. Furthermore, many victims are unaware of the laws safeguarding their rights. Mpofu (2015) discovered that victims of child sexual abuse frequently refrain from reporting the abuse due to their lack of faith in the legal system to provide assistance. For example, victims may have experienced corruption within the legal system or may have seen others who have reported abuse and received no help.

Another reason for non-disclosure is the fear of retaliation from the perpetrator. In some cases, perpetrators threaten victims or their families if they report the abuse. This fear can be amplified by the fact that many perpetrators are in positions of power, such as relatives, teachers, or community leaders. The threat of retaliation can prevent victims from coming forward, even if they know that it is wrong. Mawanza (2019)'s research has found that many people in Zimbabwe are not aware of the laws that protect victims of child sexual abuse. This includes laws that make child sexual abuse a crime and laws that provide victims with access to support services. As a result, many victims do not know that they have a right to report the abuse and seek help.

Another reason for non-disclosure is the lack of support services for victims. In Zimbabwe, there are very few resources available to help victims of child sexual abuse. This includes a lack of support groups, counseling services, and other forms of assistance. In addition, there is often a lack of awareness about these resources, making it difficult for victims to access them. Children who have experienced sexual abuse in Zimbabwe have restricted access to support services, including a shortage of trained counselors, safe shelters, and other crucial resources. Consequently, victims often find themselves with nowhere to seek assistance and may feel compelled to suffer in silence. One example of this is a study by Dr. Chirongoma (2022) which

found that many victims of child sexual abuse do not receive the counseling and other support they need to recover from the trauma.

One of the main reasons for non-disclosure is fear of stigma and social exclusion. Many victims of child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe fear that if they disclose the abuse, they will be ostracized by their community and family. Moreover, many Zimbabwean communities have a limited comprehension of child sexual abuse and its consequences. This restricted awareness can result in a failure to recognize the significance of reporting cases of child sexual abuse. Dr. Victoria Dorkenoo's research revealed that in specific Zimbabwean communities, victims of child sexual abuse are frequently blamed for the abuse and encounter social exclusion. For example, some communities believe that a victim of child sexual abuse has brought shame upon their family and must be punished. This fear of being ostracized can prevent victims from coming forward.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Child sexual abuse is a pressing issue with severe implications for the well-being of children worldwide as illustrated by Hamby (2014). A worrying pattern of unreported cases of child sexual abuse in Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe, obstructs the identification and assistance for victims, perpetuating a cycle of harm. Effectively addressing this issue requires thorough exploration and comprehension of the factors that lead to the underreporting of child sexual abuse within this particular community by actively involving the victims from the community in the research process, as suggested by Eldh, Årestedt, and Berterö (2020). The research will center on minors under the age of eighteen who have been subjected to sexual abuse but have chosen not to disclose

it for specific reasons. The study will explore the mental and social repercussions of this non-disclosure.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the prevalence and factors that influence non-disclosure of child sexual abuse in the Budiriro community of Harare, Zimbabwe.

1.5 Research Objectives

To examine the social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

To examine cultural factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

To investigate the effects of non-disclosure on the victims.

1.6 Research Questions

What are the social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse?

What are the cultural factors that lead to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse?

What are the effects of non-disclosure on the victims?

1.7 Assumptions

It is assumed that child sexual abuse cases in Budiriro are significantly under-reported.

It is assumed that there are social as well as cultural factors that leads to nondisclosure of child sexual abuse.

It is assumed that there is possible absence of awareness and knowledge concerning

child sexual abuse, its consequences and support services within the Budiriro community.

It is assumed that power dynamics such as relationship between the perpetrator and the victim may play a role in the decision not to disclose child sexual abuse.

It is assumed that the research findings will be useful in developing policies and interventions to address non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

1.8 Significance of the study

Recognizing the factors that impact the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse is essential for creating successful prevention and intervention approaches. Studying this issue in the Budiriro community, people can gain insights into how cultural and social factors influence the reporting of Child Sexual Abuse. This research could aid in the development of culturally appropriate interventions that are more likely to succeed within this specific community.

1.9 Delimitations

The research will focus on the factors that contribute to the underreporting or non-disclosure of child sexual abuse, rather than the factors that contribute to the abuse itself. It will examine the reasons why victims and survivors often remain silent or fail to report the abuse, rather than exploring the causes of the abuse itself. It will specifically involve adults with knowledge of or experience with child sexual abuse in the community. Limitations may include a small sample size that may not be fully representative of the entire community, as well as reliance on self-reported data, which could introduce bias.

1.10 Limitations of the study

The results of the study may have limited applicability beyond the specific individuals involved in the sample. Generalizing the findings may be challenging. Additionally, this study will not examine the experiences of child victims of sexual abuse. Its main focus is on the factors that contribute to the concealment of such abuse, without delving into the influence of individual or community factors on disclosure rates, the impact of gender or age on the decision to disclose, or the effectiveness of different intervention strategies in promoting disclosure rates. The study will rely on participants' memory and may be subject to recall bias.

1.11 Definition of key terms

As defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2021, child sexual abuse includes sexual interactions involving a child and an adult, or between two children with an age or power difference. This includes both physical and non-physical acts, which can occur in online or offline settings. Child sexual abuse includes any sexual activity that involves a child who is unable to comprehend or consent to the activity, or that violates societal norms and laws. This can manifest in various ways, such as physical touch, sexual explicit content exposure, and online abuse or exploitation, all of which are harmful and unacceptable forms of child sexual abuse. Additionally, any sexual behavior between a child and an adult, or between children with a significant age or power difference, is considered child sexual abuse, Rosenberg (2001).

Non-disclosure refers to the process whereby an individual does not share information about a traumatic event, such as child sexual abuse, with others, Riggs (2020). Non-disclosure within the framework of child sexual abuse can also refer to the act of a

child or adolescent not disclosing or reporting the abuse they have experienced.

1.12 Dissertation outline

Chapter one outlines the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of study, research objectives, delimitations of the study, limitations of the research, definition of key terms, ethical considerations and the dissertation outline.

Chapter two of the dissertation focuses on the literature review which is the identification of major literature which supports and validate the factors influencing non-disclosure of child sexual abuse. It will also focus on the theoretical framework which will be used to investigate the problem. In this study, ecosystem theory serves as a framework to examine the various systems at work in the Budiriro community that contribute to the concealment of child sexual abuse. The study uses this theory to find that non-disclosure of child sexual abuse affects the specific circumstances in which the Budiriro children live.

Chapter three will focus on the research methodology. A research methodology which can be used for a study like this would be qualitative research, which involves gathering in-depth information. The chapter will also focus on the target population, sampling size and techniques, data collection methods, tools, presentation, ethical considerations and data analysis.

Chapter four of the dissertation will focus on the data presentation and analysis. This is when the results of the research will be presented and there will a discussion of their significance. The data will be presented in figures, tables, graphs and pie charts for the purpose of clarity.

Chapter five focuses on the summary, conclusions and recommendations. The summary should link with the objectives which were stated at the beginning of the dissertation. Conclusion will explain why the results came out like that and it should not summarize what has been stated in the abstract. There should also be recommendations based on the research's findings.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter offers an overview of the current literature on child sexual abuse, focusing specifically on the difficulties and ramifications associated with not disclosing such abuse. This includes the factors that hinder survivors from speaking up, the effects of remaining silent, and the methods for promoting disclosure and providing support. The chapter is going to talk about the theoretical framework which is going to be used for the research. The research is going to use the ecological systems theory. This chapter will also feature a comprehensive literature review that aligns with the study's background, problem statement, and research objectives. The review will identify and analyze existing research on the topic, revealing gaps in current knowledge and understanding. Additionally, it will propose potential solutions and recommendations to address these gaps and advance the field of study.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, introduced in the 1970s, provides a insightful model for understanding the complex factors that influence human development and behavior, by examining the interrelated systems and environments that shape individual growth and experiences. This theory posits that development is shaped by the interconnections and reciprocal influences within various environmental

systems. Unlike earlier studies that focused solely on the child or

parent, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory recognizes the dynamic interactions between individuals and their environments. According to Bronfenbrenner (1989), development is influenced by multiple systems, including microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems. The microsystem represents the closest, most direct environments that impact an individual, such as their family and school. The mesosystem describes the interactions and relationships between these environments, while the exosystem comprises the larger social structures and cultural contexts that shape an individual's experiences, including societal norms, values, and institutions. The macrosystem represents the cultural and societal norms that shape development. This theory was applied to understand how different environments and interactions shape children's experiences, acknowledging the reciprocal influences between children and their environments. By examining these various systems and their interconnections, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of the complex factors that influence human development.

2.1.1 The Ecological systems theory

The immediate surroundings that exert the most significant impact on an individual make up the microsystem, involving their individual characteristics, beliefs, and personality traits, Bronfenbrenner (1989). This closely interwoven environment also includes the daily interactions with family, household members, and individuals with whom the person regularly engages in direct, in-person contact. Additionally, the microsystem can encompass individuals beyond the home who have consistent and regular interactions with the person, such as teachers, coworkers, or friends, Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000). In the case of children, this could involve educational environments, while for adults, it might include workplaces, social

settings, or community facilities. According to Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000), the microsystem serves as the framework for the factors that impact an individual's psychological development and behavioral patterns. Additionally, Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized that the systems influencing the microsystem can impact the individual both independently and in conjunction with each other, leading to the second level of the ecological system, known as the mesosystem.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the mesosystem is a system composed of interconnected microsystems. The mesosystem emerges from the relationships between different microsystems in an individual's life, such as the interaction between school and home. Bronfenbrenner also noted that these systems can work together or in conflict with each other, creating complex mesosystem layers. Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) emphasize that the microsystem and mesosystem must always include the individual as a central component. In contrast, the exosystem, the third level of the ecological environment, consists of systems that influence the individual's environment but do not directly involve them. Like the mesosystem, the exosystem is comprised of interconnected microsystems, but these systems operate externally, shaping the individual's context without direct participation or interaction.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000), and Brim (1975), the exosystem differs from the mesosystem in that at least one of the interconnected microsystems does not have the individual at its center. For instance, the exosystem comes into play when a parent's work life indirectly affects their home life, causing them to bring stress into their personal space. Similarly, a parent's home

life can impact their work life, such as when a child's illness forces a parent to miss work, influencing the work environment even though the child is not directly involved in it. This illustrates how the exosystem operates through indirect connections between microsystems.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that the macrosystem establishes the framework for interactions across microsystems, mesosystems, and exosystems. The macrosystem represents a cultural blueprint specific to a society or subculture (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Bronfenbrenner demonstrated how family culture emerges within the microsystem, influenced by individual family members' mesosystems and exosystems. However, these systems are ultimately shaped by the broader societal culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For instance, if a family relocates to a foreign country with a different culture, while the family may uphold their native language at home, the children, through their interactions at school and socialization, may become bilingual, whereas the adults may not adopt the foreign language. This example illustrates how the macrosystem influences the interplay between microsystems, mesosystems, and exosystems.

Reciprocal influence is a crucial aspect of the ecological systems theory, indicating that development is a bi-directional process where individuals both impact and are influenced by their environment. Regarding child sexual abuse, this indicates that the child both impacts and is impacted by their surroundings. Through the application of ecological systems theory, researchers can pinpoint specific factors that may influence the disclosure or concealment of child sexual abuse. For example, the microsystem encompasses elements such as the family environment, which influences relationships,

support, and values within the family. The exosystem includes societal attitudes, legal frameworks, and policies addressing child sexual abuse, while the macrosystem encompasses cultural beliefs and norms related to the issue. Furthermore, a child's understanding of sexual abuse, cultural background, individual traits, stage of development, and availability of external support all play a part in determining whether to disclose instances of abuse.

Using the ecological systems theory, the researcher pinpointed possible interventions to promote the likelihood of disclosing child sexual abuse. One approach involves improving education and awareness about child sexual abuse within families and communities, equipping children with a better understanding of what constitutes abuse and strengthening their confidence to report it. Another approach is to establish safe and supportive environments where children can share their experiences, such as child helplines or support groups. These interventions target the microsystem and exosystem levels, addressing family and community factors that influence disclosure.

Although Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory does not explicitly address spiritual factors, it is possible to infer how spirituality might fit into the model. For example, an individual's regular religious practices would be part of their microsystem. If parents enroll their children in religious education but don't participate themselves, the religious institution becomes a direct influence on the children's microsystem, while indirectly affecting the parents' exosystem. Furthermore, individuals may choose to incorporate their faith into their personal relationships within their microsystems, such as seeking spiritual counsel from a mentor or finding

solace in a religious community, thereby integrating their beliefs into their daily interactions and support networks.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Introduction:

Child sexual abuse is a widespread global concern that significantly impacts the wellbeing and growth of children. This study focuses on the Budiro community in Harare, Zimbabwe, where child sexual abuse has been identified as particularly prevalent. The complex historical, economic, and social context of Zimbabwe contributes to an environment where children are vulnerable to abuse, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of the factors influencing non-disclosure in this specific community.

2.2.1.1 Global Perspective on Child Sexual Abuse

Lonne and Daroowalla (2013) highlight the global scope of child abuse and neglect, underscoring the need for a comprehensive approach to address this universal issue. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), disturbingly high numbers of children experience sexual abuse, with roughly twenty-five percent of girls and eight percent of boys under the age of 18 having been victimized. Moreover, a staggering ninety percent of these children fail to report the abuse to an adult, often due to fear of retaliation, unfamiliarity with reporting processes, and shame, highlighting the need for increased support and resources for these vulnerable young individuals.

Additionally, there is a lack of awareness and understanding among professionals and the general public, as well as fear of not being believed or being blamed for the abuse. These factors emphasize the urgent need for a multifaceted approach to address child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse rates and prevalence vary significantly worldwide, with high-income countries reporting around 20% of children experiencing abuse before age 18. Low and middle-income countries likely have even higher rates, potentially due to different cultural definitions of child sexual abuse, underreporting, limited awareness and education about child sexual abuse and disclosure, insufficient resources for victims, cultural taboos surrounding child sexual abuse, and limited understanding of the long-term effects. These factors lead to diverse prevalence rates and underscore the importance of developing culturally appropriate strategies to combat child sexual abuse worldwide, acknowledging the unique cultural contexts and nuances that influence disclosure, support, and prevention efforts.

Child sexual abuse (CSA) impacts an estimated 150 million girls worldwide, according to David (2016). In the Caribbean, particularly in Jamaica, CSA is a prevalent issue that deeply affects communities, driven by strong cultural beliefs that impede prevention efforts, as highlighted by the Caribbean Policy Research Institute (2018). Jamaica's patriarchal society, similar to many other Caribbean nations, contributes to violence against females, undermining their empowerment and increasing their vulnerability to sexual abuse, particularly among female adolescents, as outlined by Wang (2015), Fakunmoju (2016), and Rawat (2014). Understanding

cultural norms is essential for comprehending the risk factors that elevate the likelihood of sexual abuse among female adolescents and for shaping effective prevention policies, as emphasized by Gupta (2018). Cultural norms not only influence prevention policies but also societal attitudes toward CSA, affecting whether victims feel secure in reporting abuse, as indicated by Caprioli and Crenshaw (2017). Recognizing cultural norms can establish a safe and supportive environment for CSA victims to report abuse, as suggested by Caprioli and Crenshaw (2017). Research consistently demonstrates a connection between cultural norms and CSA prevention, as evidenced by Jeremiah (2017), Martinello (2020), and Seth & Srivastava (2017).

Rates of disclosure for child sexual abuse are alarmingly low in sub-Saharan Africa, with studies attributing this to stigma, lack of support services, and cultural normalization of the abuse, Omar (2007). In South Africa, only 25% of victims disclose the abuse, with cultural beliefs and norms being a significant barrier, Omar (2007). Specifically, many people view child sexual abuse as a private matter not to be discussed, and children are often expected to remain silent and not question adults, even in cases of abuse. Cultural beliefs create significant barriers for children when it comes to reporting abuse. Additionally, traditional practices like female genital mutilation and early marriage have been linked to low disclosure rates, Omar (2007). This pattern contrasts with Asia, where disclosure rates for child sexual abuse vary widely. For instance, China and Japan exhibit low disclosure rates, while India's rate is slightly higher. Research by Wang (2014) revealed that only about 8% of child sexual abuse victims disclose the abuse, and those who do often face negative consequences, such as being blamed for the abuse, Guo (2014). Furthermore, fear of

being separated from their families deters many children from reporting the abuse. Overall, disclosure rates are generally lower in countries where child sexual abuse is more culturally acceptable.

Latin America and the Caribbean, rates of reporting child sexual abuse vary, but are generally believed to be lower than in North America. Several factors contribute to these lower disclosure rates, including limited awareness about child sexual abuse, fear of retaliation, and distrust in the legal system. Treffers (2016) asserts that only about 30% of child sexual abuse victims disclose the abuse, and those who do often face negative reactions from adults, such as blame or disbelief, Bonavota (2016). In contrast, Europe exhibits significant variation in disclosure rates. A study in the Netherlands by De Wit (2019) and colleagues found that approximately 55% of child sexual abuse victims disclose the abuse, but only around 10% of these disclosures result in a formal report, likely due to children's reluctance to involve authorities, possibly out of fear of the consequences like testifying in court, Knaap (2019). Overall, disclosure rates in Europe are believed to be higher than in other regions, possibly due to factors such as greater education and awareness about child sexual abuse, and more supportive legal systems.

2.2.1.2 Local overview of child sexual abuse

Zimbabwe grapples with its own issues related to child sexual abuse, influenced by a turbulent history characterized by economic hardship, political unrest, and social disparities. The area of Budiriro, marked by high poverty rates, is particularly susceptible to child sexual abuse, with cultural norms and practices contributing to underreporting of such cases. Common occurrences of early marriages and child labor

in this region make children more vulnerable to abuse. Furthermore, Mapfumo (2015) explores the psychological repercussions experienced by female survivors of child sexual abuse, emphasizing the extensive effects on the community. The high incidence of child sexual abuse in the Budiriro community in Harare requires a comprehensive exploration of the unique challenges encountered by children in this locality. Holden (2019) and Letourneau, Schoenwald, and Sheidow (2004) contribute to understanding the intricate dynamics surrounding disclosure of child sexual abuse. Victims often encounter significant obstacles, including fear of retaliation, social stigma, and the potential for further harm. Limited awareness of support services, scant knowledge of reporting procedures, and entrenched cultural beliefs further impede disclosure. These insights provide a foundation for exploring the factors influencing underreporting in Budiriro.

Another significant factor contributing to the underreporting of child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe is the lack of confidence in the legal system. Many victims lack confidence that reporting the abuse will lead to achieving justice. This distrust stems from various issues, including inadequate resources for law enforcement and the courts, instances of corruption, and a lack of transparency. Furthermore, many victims are unaware of the laws safeguarding their rights. Mpofu (2015) discovered that victims often refrain from reporting child sexual abuse due to their skepticism about receiving assistance from the legal system. For instance, they may have witnessed or experienced corruption within the legal system, or observed others reporting abuse without receiving the necessary support.

The fear of retaliation from the perpetrator is another factor contributing to non-disclosure. In certain instances, perpetrators threaten victims or their families if the abuse is reported. This fear is compounded by the reality that many perpetrators hold positions of authority, such as relatives, teachers, or community leaders. The potential for retaliation can deter victims from speaking out, even if they recognize the wrongdoing. Mawanza's (2019) research has shown that a considerable portion of the population in Zimbabwe lacks awareness of the laws intended to safeguard victims of child sexual abuse. These laws encompass criminalizing child sexual abuse and providing victims access to support services. Consequently, many victims are unaware of their right to report the abuse and seek assistance.

Another factor contributing to non-disclosure is the absence of support services for victims. In Zimbabwe, there is a notable scarcity of resources available to assist victims of child sexual abuse, including a lack of support groups, counseling services, and other forms of aid. Moreover, there is often limited awareness about these resources, posing challenges for victims in accessing them. The insufficient provision of support services for victims of child sexual abuse encompasses a lack of trained counselors, secure housing, and other essential resources. Consequently, victims frequently find themselves with nowhere to seek help, leading them to feel compelled to remain silent. For example, research conducted by Dr. Chirongoma (2022) pointed out that numerous child sexual abuse victims do not receive the essential counseling and support needed for their recovery from the trauma.

The fear of being stigmatized and ostracized by their community and family is a significant reason why many victims of child sexual abuse in Zimbabwe choose not to speak out about their experiences. These victims worry that disclosing the abuse will lead to social isolation and rejection, making it harder for them to seek help and support. Moreover, numerous communities in Zimbabwe lack awareness about child sexual abuse and its repercussions. Insufficient awareness about child sexual abuse can lead to a lack of understanding about the necessity of reporting such abuse. Dr. Victoria Dorkenoo's research indicates that in certain Zimbabwean communities, victims of child sexual abuse are frequently held responsible and isolated. Some communities believe that victims bring shame to their families and warrant punishment instead of support and protection. This misconception can exacerbate the suffering of the victims and contribute to their silence. This fear of social exclusion acts as a deterrent for victims to come forward.

2.2.1.3 Regional overview of non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse poses a significant challenge in the Southern Africa region, encompassing countries such as Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa, Lesotho, and Namibia. As per the World Health Organization, an estimated 14.8% of girls and 4.4% of boys in this region have encountered sexual abuse, rendering the Southern African region one of the highest-risk areas for child sexual abuse globally.

In 2019, a nationwide and regional study conducted by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency unveiled alarmingly high levels of child sexual abuse, indicating

that around thirty-three percent of girls and fourteen percent of boys in Zimbabwe had encountered some form of sexual violence before reaching the age of 18. Similarly, research in South Africa found equally alarming rates, with around twenty-five percent of girls and twenty percent of boys having experienced sexual abuse before reaching adulthood, highlighting the urgent need for effective prevention and support strategies in both countries.

Sadek (2017) argues that the limited availability of reliable data on the occurrence of child sexual abuse in Southern African region stems from underreporting and several other challenges. In Lesotho, Dlamini (2004) discovered that only one percent of cases of child sexual abuse are officially reported, likely influenced by cultural taboos and shame associated with the issue. Similarly, in South Africa, Kamanzi (2014) unearthed analogous findings, noting that many cases are reported after a prolonged period, posing challenges for the investigation and prosecution of offenders.

According to Sadek (2017), traditional cultural practices like child marriages and gender norms can contribute to child sexual abuse. A study by Mokhele (2011) in Lesotho revealed that child marriage significantly influences child sexual abuse, with over half of the research participants being married before the age of eighteen. Additionally, Pouw (2009) argues that cultural practices such as virginity testing and traditional circumcision can elevate the risk of child sexual abuse. Virginity testing, conducted by older women to ascertain if a girl child has engaged in sexual intercourse, has drawn criticism for its invasive nature and potential to cause trauma

and stigmatization, leading to an increased risk of sexual violence against girls deemed impure.

Sadek (2017) asserts that poverty and socioeconomic factors play a significant role in perpetuating child sexual abuse and its underreporting. Poverty has been recognized as a major risk factor, as children living in impoverished conditions are more susceptible to abuse due to factors such as inadequate support and supervision, as noted by Fourie (2014). This is exacerbated by their exposure to unsafe environments. Myers (2012) contends that lack of access to education and healthcare also increases children's vulnerability to abuse in South Africa. Additionally, in Botswana, a study by Akumu (2009) revealed that poverty, parental unemployment, and a large number of family members all contribute to risk of child sexual abuse.

In summary, this literature review offers a thorough analysis of child sexual abuse from global, national, and regional viewpoints, situating the study within the intricate cultural, historical, and social context of Zimbabwe, providing a nuanced understanding of the issue and its complexities in the country. By synthesizing insights from diverse sources, the research aims to unravel the factors contributing to non-disclosure in the Budiro community, with the ultimate goal of informing targeted interventions to protect the well-being of children in this vulnerable setting.

2.2.3.1 Based on the objectives and questions

Child sexual abuse is one of a widespread and profoundly troubling problem that affects communities globally, crossing cultural and geographical lines. This research concentrates on the Budiriro community in Harare, Zimbabwe, seeking to conduct a thorough examination of the extent of child sexual abuse and the underlying reasons why victims often remain silent, shedding light on the complex factors contributing to the underreporting of this critical issue. The research objectives are delineated to explore social and cultural dimensions contributing to non-disclosure, as well as to understand the repercussions on the victims.

2.2.3.2 Social Factors Influencing Non-disclosure

It is essential to understand the reasons why victims of abuse choose not to disclose their experiences in order to create effective interventions. Research by Eldh, Arestedt, and Bertero (2020) emphasizes the importance of directly engaging with victims to uncover the complex factors behind non-disclosure. Social elements, such as the fear of being judged and the stigma within close-knit communities, can contribute to the perpetuation of silence, Finkelhor (2015). Furthermore, the impact of power dynamics, especially when perpetrators hold positions of authority, is a significant aspect that warrants further investigation, Johnson (2017).

As highlighted by Finkelhor (2015), an esteemed authority in child abuse research, the apprehension of societal criticism and stigma frequently acts as a major obstacle to reporting cases of child abuse. This fear hinders individuals from stepping forward and

seeking assistance out of worry about being held accountable, labeled, or

excluded by their community. In the specific context of Budiriro, where community connections are strong, the fear of damaging family reputations may significantly contribute to the reluctance to speak out about these abuses, as noted by Jones (2018). Additionally, as highlighted by Johnson (2017), social power dynamics play a role, with a focus on the influence of perpetrators in authoritative positions within the community. This imbalance of power can create an environment where victims feel unable to speak out about abuse, leading to a culture of silence.

According to Rapholo (2014), there is a significant occurrence of child sexual abuse by both family and non-family members, often going undisclosed and unreported. In many cases, the abuser has power over the child or is responsible for their care, making disclosure even more difficult. Research in the Polokwane area by Rapholo and Makhubele (2019) and Rapholo (2014) shows that children, especially in cases of abuse within the family, are often reluctant to report sexual abuse due to familial conditioning to keep personal matters private. This cultural and familial pressure to maintain secrecy can lead to continued abuse by trusted individuals, including family members, teachers, and other authority figures, as highlighted by Dawes and Higson-Smith (2005), Ferrara (2002), and Meadow (2007). As a result, children become more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation by those they trust.

Spies (2006) notes that children who have been subjected to sexual abuse are frequently coerced into silence through intimidation, including threats, accusations, or incentives. Research by Rapholo (2014) shows that victims of child sexual abuse may

not readily disclose their experiences until they have established trust with a trusted individual, such as a caregiver. However, children may face challenges in sharing their experiences due to fears of negative reactions from caregivers, De Voe & Faller, (2002), Malloy and Lyon (2013). Spies (2006) and Ntlatleng (2011) emphasize the crucial role of caregivers in nurturing children's growth and empowering them to disclose instances of sexual abuse. In fact, Getz (2013) suggests that caregiver involvement is crucial for successful disclosure and support for the child. Therefore, caregivers' responses and support are essential in helping children overcome the barriers to disclosing sexual abuse.

Abusers tend to target children who are emotionally vulnerable, taking advantage of their need for attention and affection, as well as their sexuality. This often occurs within close and familiar relationships. Consequently, victims may grapple with a range of complex and conflicting emotions towards their abusers, including feelings of loyalty, gratitude, and betrayal, as emphasized by Kendall (2013). This emotional confusion can further complicate the trauma and make it harder for victims to disclose the abuse. Some victims express concern for the wellbeing of the perpetrator, both physically and emotionally, if they were to disclose their sexual victimization. Perpetrators may even threaten self-harm or suicide as a means to prevent the victim from revealing the abuse. According to Kendall (2013), some victims of abuse have expressed reluctance to report the abuse due to concerns that their abuser would be punished or imprisoned, highlighting the complex emotions and loyalty that can exist between victims and their abusers.

Child sexual abuse concealment is often influenced by societal factors, especially secrecy. Typically, the abuse takes place when the child is alone with the perpetrator. In her book *Trauma and Recovery*, Herman (2017) highlights how secrecy is frequently used to hide incidents of child sexual abuse, often through threats, intimidation, and the abuse of power. The perpetrator's tactics to compel the child to keep the abuse hidden convey the message that revealing the abuse will result in severe consequences for the victim, their loved ones, and the perpetrator. This communicates to the child that maintaining the falsehood to protect the secret is virtuous, while telling the truth would be the gravest sin.

2.2.3.3 Cultural Factors Underpinning Non-disclosure

It is essential to examine the cultural elements that contribute to the lack of disclosure in order to fully comprehend this issue. Societal norms and cultural beliefs play a significant role in shaping our attitudes towards child sexual abuse (CSA), influencing its prevalence and prevention strategies. Regrettably, child sexual abuse (CSA) is frequently considered a taboo subject, creating challenges for individuals to openly share their experiences. This cultural silence around CSA can result in underreporting, as observed by Perpetrada and Ninos (2018). In traditional communities such as Budiriro in Harare and Jamaica, conversations about sex and sexual abuse are often discouraged, particularly when the perpetrator is a family member or acquaintance, as highlighted by Gondo (2019) and Smith (2019). This cultural taboo can perpetuate the silence and stigma surrounding CSA, contributing to its prevalence and making it more difficult for victims to disclose their experiences, as noted by McKibbin (2017) and Reid (2014).

Mavhinga's research (2016) highlights how patriarchal structures discourage victims from speaking out against child sexual abuse, as societal expectations often prioritize respecting authority figures over seeking justice. Considering these cultural factors provides a comprehensive understanding of how tradition and child sexual abuse disclosure are intertwined. In patriarchal societies, a power imbalance perpetuates a culture of silence and acceptance of child sexual abuse, as noted by Caprioli and Crenshaw (2017). For instance, in Jamaica, patriarchal beliefs perpetuate sexual violence against females, often disregarding legal protections like the Sexual Offences Act. These beliefs perpetuate male dominance and entitlement, viewing females, including minors, as accessible for sex. In the Caribbean, patriarchal beliefs have disempowered females, creating challenges for preventing child sexual abuse. These beliefs also foster a sense of sexual entitlement among males, who may view female adolescents as legitimate targets after menstruation, as observed by Jones and Jemmott (2016).

In the Bapedi tribe, the Ubuntu principle emphasizes family unity and loyalty, leading to a reluctance to disclose child sexual abuse. Children fear reporting abuse by a family member, as they may be blamed for the consequences the perpetrator might face. This fear can result in victims being held responsible for the disclosure, leading to further trauma and silencing, as noted by Caprioli and Crenshaw (2017). Moreover, the perception that sexual abuse is a lesser crime, shared by both communities and law enforcement, perpetuates victim blaming and contributes to a culture that discourages disclosure, as highlighted by Elntib (2020). In this cultural context, black women are often victim-blamed, creating systemic barriers to preventing child sexual abuse, especially primary prevention, as highlighted by Wadsworth (2018). This

blame also damages the child's relationships with family, friends, and community members, consistent with the findings of Mathebane (2017) and Sekudu (2019), which show that many African households prioritize unity and protection of one another, sometimes at the cost of holding perpetrators accountable.

The limited knowledge about child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention policies and support services in Jamaican communities contributes to the high rate of sexual abuse among female adolescents, according to CPRI (2018). Research by Palmer et al. (2012) and Samms and Cholewa (2014) shows that many Jamaicans are unaware of where to seek help or report abuse, leading victims to turn to family members instead of professional services. This cultural tendency to seek help within the family perpetuates silence and underreporting, exacerbating the CSA issue and hindering prevention efforts. Alarming, a US study found that 73% of children delayed disclosure for at least a year, and 47% waited over 5 years, highlighting the need for increased awareness and support, as emphasized by Singh (2013).

2.2.3.4 Effects of Non-disclosure on Victims

It is crucial to analyze the consequences of non-disclosure on victims to comprehend the lasting effects of these traumatic experiences. According to Brown (2018), delayed disclosure can impede access to timely intervention and support services, worsening the severity of the trauma. Through exploring these effects, the study seeks to highlight the importance of addressing non-disclosure to mitigate the profound consequences on the victims' well-being. Smith and Johnson's (2020) study emphasizes the considerable psychological impacts, such as anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, that victims may suffer as a result of prolonged non-

disclosure. This literature review aims to uncover the specific ways in which non-disclosure affects children, emphasizing the urgency of addressing this issue to break the cycle of harm and provide essential support.

The repercussions of non-disclosure on the mental and social well-being of victims necessitate comprehensive examination. According to research by Smith and Johnson (2020), the psychological impact of delayed disclosure can result in long-term trauma. Additionally, their research has identified depression as another common effect of child sexual abuse, likely stemming from similar factors that contribute to anxiety. Huang (2001) outlines that symptoms of depression encompass feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and despair. In severe instances, depression can result in suicidal thoughts. Additionally, child sexual abuse can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which manifests through symptoms like nightmares, flashbacks, sleep disturbances, memory impairment, and reduced concentration.

Research by Finkelhor (2015) and Cohen (2011) highlights that child sexual abuse victims often struggle with shame, guilt, and self-blame, which can have long-lasting impacts on their self-esteem and emotional well-being. Both scholars note that victims commonly internalize the abuse, feeling responsible for what happened and carrying a deep sense of shame and self-blame, which can be damaging and persistent. Additionally, as noted by Huang (2001), victims may harbor anger towards their abuser, sometimes directing this anger towards themselves or others. These emotions can lead to challenges in their interactions with others, as the victims may struggle to control their emotions and may lash out unpredictably.

The failure to disclose child sexual abuse can also result in difficulties in establishing and sustaining healthy relationships for the victim. As stated by Huang (2001), individuals who have endured child sexual abuse frequently face challenges in both romantic and platonic relationships, likely arising from the trauma of their early experiences. The trust issues and emotional difficulties resulting from the abuse can make it challenging for victims to trust others, even those close to them, as highlighted by Huang (2001). This lack of trust may stem from the violation of trust experienced during the abuse. Consequently, victims of child sexual abuse may struggle to open up, potentially straining their relationships, as noted by Cohen (2011).

In conclusion, the problem of non-disclosure of child sexual abuse in Budiriro demands a focused and nuanced exploration of the factors contributing to this silence. This study aims to enhance comprehension of the particular obstacles encountered by victims of child sexual abuse in the community through direct engagement with them. This will inform the development of targeted interventions that prioritize the well-being and support of these children, addressing their unique needs and promoting their healing and recovery.

2.3 Summary

The chapter contains literature review and theoretical framework. Literature review draws on contemporary scholarship to provide a comprehensive foundation for the study's objectives and research questions. This research seeks to integrate knowledge from multiple scholars to understand the complex interplay of social and cultural

factors that contribute to the underreporting of child sexual abuse in Harare's Budiriro community, Zimbabwe, in order to shed light on the underlying reasons for the silence surrounding this issue.

CHAPTER III :

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

A research methodology which was used for a study like this would be qualitative research, which involves gathering in-depth information. The researcher utilized qualitative approaches, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, to gather and analyze non-numeric data. This approach, as noted by Creswell (2014), provides in-depth insights into the factors contributing to the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse in Budiro, Harare, as well as the views and experiences of parents and caregivers. Qualitative methodology, as emphasized by Burgess (1982), is particularly suited for this study as it captures the nuanced thoughts, feelings, and values of the participants, offering a rich understanding of the research context.

3.1 Research designs

A research design is a deliberate and systematic approach that outlines how to collect and analyze data to answer research questions, as described by Burns (2005). It serves as a blueprint for conducting a study, ensuring that the data collected will provide meaningful insights and answers to the research questions. This research was in form of a case study since they involve in-depth analysis of few cases. Yin (2014) highlighted that case studies offered detailed insights into the specific experiences and challenges encountered by sexually abused children, as well as the factors contributing to the non-

disclosure of their abuse. Another research design which used

is the phenomenological studies which can be also called lived experiences. The purpose of this design was to come out with meanings of experiences that the community members have for non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

3.2 Site and participant selection

Site selection refers to the process of choosing the specific community or setting for the study. In this research, the site was Budiriro community in Harare. Participant selection refers to the process of choosing specific people to participate in the study. For example, the researcher chose to interview adults who have lived in the Budiriro community for at least 10 years and children who have been sexually abused.

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection involved gathering relevant information from various sources to address the identified research problem, as stated by RCR (2005). This section of the study looked into the data collection methods and instruments that were used and how the researcher utilized them during research.

3.3.1 In-depth interviews

Boyce (2006) describes an in-depth interview as a qualitative research technique that entails conducting thorough, individual discussions with a small number of participants to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their thoughts, emotions, and experiences concerning a particular subject, program, or situation. Marshall (1997)

argues that in-depth interviews present the deep meaning of information provided in the participant words and they are simple to use. According to Boyce (2006), in-depth interviews offer a significant advantage in that they yield richer and more detailed information compared to other data collection methods like surveys, and also provide a more intimate and distraction-free setting, allowing for a more nuanced and in-depth exploration of participants' thoughts and experiences. The researcher designed an In-depth Interview guide which aimed to guide in obtaining information from the participants. The researcher also used in-depth interviews because it allowed the participants to participate freely and also showing actions that can be useful to the researcher. It was appropriate because the researcher was able to acquire deep information from the in-depth interviews which were done individually with the participant.

3.3.2 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews involve selecting and interviewing specific individuals who possess specialized knowledge, expertise, or experiences that can provide valuable insights, information, and perspectives on a particular topic or issue, as described by Kunar (1989). Key informants are participants who present deeper information pertaining to the research study but they will not be the actual people under study but because they hold higher and relevant positions they are able to provide information that is of paramount importance to the researcher. The researcher reached out to the caregivers of the survivors of child sexual abuse so as to capture their views towards factors which leads to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

3.3.3 Focus group discussions

Baral (2016) defines a focus group discussion as a qualitative research approach that gathers individuals with similar backgrounds or experiences to engage in a collective conversation about a particular topic of interest. This approach encourages participants to share their thoughts, opinions, attitudes, and ideas in a dynamic and interactive setting, fostering open discussions and debates among group members. The researcher facilitates the conversation, gathering valuable insights from the interactions and discussions that emerge among the participants. The researcher focused on group discussions to build up to the data which had been collected from in-depth interviews and also to gain communal information from the participants.

3.4 Data analysis

Researchers distill collected data into meaningful insights through data analysis, a process outlined by LeCompte (1999). Patton (1987) breaks down this process into three stages: categorization, data reduction, and identifying connections and patterns. In this study, thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was employed to categorize and examine patterns and themes in the qualitative data. Through thematic analysis, the researcher uncovered significant themes and used them to address the research questions, providing a rich understanding of the data.

3.5 Reliability and validity

Validity refers to the accuracy with which a research method assesses the intended concept or phenomenon. For instance, a researcher studying fear related to Child Sexual

Abuse disclosure should use a method that effectively captures that experience.

Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency of a research method in producing similar results across different applications. Semi-structured interviews, for example, are considered a reliable method for collecting qualitative data, as they would yield similar findings when used in different communities or contexts, ensuring consistency and dependability in the research findings. This is because the interviews are guided by a set of questions, but there is also room for flexibility and follow-up questions. This allows for a more consistent data collection process while still allowing for individual differences. In terms of validity, qualitative research often relies on the concept of trustworthiness which means that the findings are trustworthy and credible.

3.6 Methodological assumptions

There are a few key methodological assumptions that the researcher discussed in the research. Firstly, the researcher assumed that the participants in the study were honest and forthright in their responses. Secondly, the researcher assumed that the data which was collected was an accurate reflection of the participants' experiences. Finally, the researcher assumed that the themes that were identified through thematic analysis were meaningful and useful.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Qualitative research involving children required careful consideration of ethical principles to ensure their rights and wellbeing are safeguarded. The researcher emphasized obtaining informed consent, ensuring that participants comprehended the

research's purpose, potential risks, and benefits. Additionally, the researcher maintained confidentiality and protected participants' personal information, upholding their privacy and trust. By doing so, the researcher ensured a responsible and ethical research conduct that respects the vulnerability of child participants. The researcher also considered the potential impact of the research on the participants and the community as a whole.

1. Informed consent: Informed consent is a necessary requirement wherein participants or their guardians must provide their consent after being fully informed. According to the American Psychological Association (2017), the consent form must delineate the study's objectives, the participants' expected responsibilities, and any potential risks and benefits.

2. Confidentiality: The National Institutes of Health (2018) emphasizes the importance of maintaining strict confidentiality of the data collected from the study, ensuring that it is only accessible to the researchers involved, and safeguarding the identities of the participants.

3. Respect for participants: Researchers have a responsibility to treat participants with respect, dignity, and sensitivity, recognizing and honoring their cultural and personal beliefs, values, and practices, as emphasized by the American Psychological Association (2017). This includes being aware of power dynamics, avoiding exploitation, and ensuring a respectful and inclusive research environment.

4. Non-maleficence: Researchers have a duty to ensure that their study does not harm or put participants at risk. Identifying and addressing any potential risks is essential,

involving measures to minimize harm and guarantee the well-being and safety of participants during the research process.

5. Beneficence: Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that their study provides benefits to the participants, such as gaining new knowledge, receiving beneficial treatments, or contributing to the greater good, as emphasized by the National Institutes of Health (2018). This means prioritizing participant welfare and ensuring that the research has the potential to positively impact their lives or the lives of others.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This research utilized a qualitative design, employing semi-structured interviews to collect data from a specific group of individuals within the Budiriro community who have experienced childhood sexual abuse. The gathered interview data underwent thematic analysis, a meticulous process of coding and categorization, to reveal recurring themes, patterns, and insights derived from the participants' experiences and perspectives. The findings were interpreted and discussed in relation to existing literature on the disclosure of childhood sexual abuse. The study adhered to ethical principles, encompassing informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and the prevention of harm to participants.

CHAPTER IV:

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0. Introduction

This chapter is going to present and discuss findings in Budiriro community through in-depth interview, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. Discussion to the research finding is also going to be done in this chapter. The participants included seven in-depth interviews of adults of the community and key informant interviews of seven children who are survivors of child sexual abuse. A focus group discussion was also used as a way of strengthening the in-depth interviews. Individual interviews were carried out with the respondent, and informed consent was acquired prior to questionnaire administration. Participants were urged to freely express themselves and take the necessary time to recall pertinent information, with prompts used to guide their responses to important questions. The audio data collected were transcribed into text for thematic analysis, involving becoming familiar with the data, creating initial codes, reviewing them, and identifying themes, following the guidelines of Braun and Clarke (2014).

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Understanding the demographic characteristics of participants is essential for data analysis and enables the researcher to draw conclusions specific to genders or age

groups of respondents. Demographic traits are identifiable attributes of a population,

as explained by Sharma (2017). The demographic features of the respondents were examined, and the results are detailed in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1

Variables		Female	Male	Frequency	Percentage
Age range	Aug-15	4	1	5	26%
	16-25	2	2	4	21%
	26-34	5	2	7	37%
	35-45	0	3	3	16%
	50+	0	0	0	0%
Marital status	Married	2	4	6	32%
	Single	9	4	13	68%
Relationship to the Abuser	Family member	3	1	4	57%
	Acquaintance	3	0	3	43%
Level of Education	Primary	4	1	5	26%
	Secondary	2	4	6	32%
	Tertiary	5	3	8	42%

4.1.1 Distribution of respondents by age

The sample comprised of 19 respondents. 12 of them were community residents and parents to the victims of child sexual abuse and only 7 participants were key informants.

In the ages ranging from 8 -15 years, there were 5 participants, 4

females and 1 male participants. In the age group of 16-25 years, there were 4 participants, comprising of 2 males and 2 females. Within the age range of 26-34 years, there were 7 participants, including 5 females and 2 males. In the 35-45 age range, there were only 3 male participants and no females.

The age ranges shown above seem to show that there were many females who participated more than males and there were more females who were victims more than men.

4.1.2 Distribution of respondents by marital status

Out of the 19 participants, 6 of them were married, while the remaining 13 were single. Among those 6 who are married, there were 2 females and 4 males. Among the 13 singles, there were 9 females and 4 males. All these numbers shows that there were many females who are single and one of the reasons why they are single is because some of them are victims of child sexual abuse and they now find it hard to trust someone, some are single because they are still young. Some women were single because their husbands left them due to the fact that people thought they were responsible for the abuse of their children.

4.1.3 Distribution of respondents' level of education

The participants' education levels were divided into primary, secondary, and tertiary categories. 2 females and 1 male participants were at primary level. 2 females and 4 males reached secondary level. 5 females and 3 mea indicated that they reached tertiary level. According to respondents, many children who are being sexually

abused in their community are at primary level and it is hard for them to disclose. The educational level of the respondents can offer crucial insights into the factors that might contribute to the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

4.1.4 Distribution of respondents by relationship to the abuser.

The connection between the perpetrator and the child can impact the child's capacity to report the abuse, along with the resources and assistance accessible to them. According to the research conducted in the Budiriro community, it was found that most cases of child sexual abuse are perpetrated by a family member or someone known to the child, especially neighbors. Additionally, the study discovered that children who were sexually abused by non-family members were more likely to be residing in a single-parent household.

4.2 Presentation of findings

In this section, the research focused on the outcomes of the gathered data. The study explored the social and cultural influences contributing to the concealment of child sexual abuse, as well as the consequences of silence on the victims and strategies to overcome the obstacles to disclosure. Ultimately, the aim was to comprehend and tackle the intricate dynamics that uphold the secrecy surrounding child sexual abuse.

4.2.1 Social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

4.2.1.1 Fear of Blame, Judgment, or Disbelief

Several participants reported that they remained silent about their experiences because they feared their families would blame them and question their truth, leading to feelings of shame and doubt. To avoid this, they chose to keep their experiences hidden, prioritizing family harmony over their own need for disclosure and support.

“Some parents will not want their children to play with the abused child because they will say you will teach our children to be miscellaneous like you”(female survivor, 12years).

“Some community members blame the victims for their abuse because they think that they are responsible for their abuse in some way due to dressing (if the victim is a female) and many other factors”(male participant, 29 years).

"It's hard to acknowledge that this happens in our community, and I worry that I wouldn't know how to support someone who discloses abuse." (Male participant , 29 years)

“I was afraid they would not believe me and would blame me” (female survivor , 12 years).

From a psychological perspective, the fear of being blamed, judged, or disbelieved can be seen as a symptom of social anxiety or the fear of being negatively evaluated by others, which can lead to feelings of apprehension, self-doubt, and reluctance to

share one's experiences, especially those as sensitive as child sexual abuse. O'Leary (2012) argues that individuals may experience this fear due to the desire to be accepted and approved by others. The fear of blame, judgment, or disbelief can stem from a concern about one's reputation, self-esteem, or social standing. This fear can lead individuals to avoid taking risks, expressing their true opinions, or engaging in behaviors that may attract criticism or disbelief.

Sociologists examine the fear of blame, judgment, or disbelief in the context of social norms, values, and power dynamics, Renshaw and Breitman (2016). They argue that individuals' fears are shaped by societal expectations and the consequences that may arise from deviating from these norms. Societal norms and cultural beliefs can influence the fear of being blamed, judged, or disbelieved, particularly in cases where individuals hold marginalized identities or challenge prevailing ideologies. From a sociological standpoint, the fears of blame, judgment, and disbelief are also influenced by the powerful social institutions that shape our society, including the media and legal systems, which can perpetuate harmful narratives, stereotypes, and victim-blaming attitudes, thereby reinforcing the silence and stigma surrounding child sexual abuse.

From a philosophical perspective, the fear of blame, judgment, or disbelief can be explored in terms of moral responsibility, personal identity, and epistemology. Philosophers examine questions such as whether individuals should be held accountable for their actions, how one's sense of self is affected by external judgments, and how knowledge claims are evaluated. Some philosophical perspectives argue that the fear of blame, judgment, or disbelief can hinder personal growth, authenticity, and

the pursuit of truth. Others may emphasize the importance of social norms and accountability in maintaining ethical behavior and social cohesion.

4.2.1.2 Non-Disclosure Influenced by Personal and Immediate Family Dynamics

Participants identified various family-related factors that led them to keep silent about their experiences of child sexual abuse (CSA) or to withdraw previous disclosures. These factors, which include complex family dynamics, emotional bonds, trust, and reactions, significantly influenced their decisions and experiences. According to Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model, these factors are classified as microsystem predictors, highlighting the critical role of immediate family relationships in shaping the outcomes of CSA incidents.

"I just don't feel like disclosing to anyone because of no solid reason" (male participant, 13 years).

"I regularly hear from sexual abuse survivors who tell me the myriad ways their families scold and reject them in the aftermath of disclosure" (female participant. 40 years) .

*"I was afraid to disclose because I didn't want to tear my family apart. I was worried about how they would react and the impact it would have on all of us".
(female survivor, 10 years).*

"It's heart-wrenching to see how family dynamics can prevent victims from coming forward. Many survivors fear the repercussions within their immediate family and feel pressured to keep the abuse hidden to maintain family unity." (female participant, 36 years).

The complex issue of non-disclosure of child sexual abuse, shaped by personal and family dynamics, is a delicate and multifaceted topic that can be examined through various academic lenses, including psychology, sociology, and social work, as noted by Farah (2020). From a psychological perspective, researchers have investigated a range of factors that contribute to the concealment of child sexual abuse within personal and family relationships, seeking to understand the underlying dynamics and mechanisms that influence disclosure and silence. These factors may include fear of retribution or retaliation from the abuser, feelings of shame, guilt, or self-blame experienced by the victim, and concerns about disrupting family relationships or dynamics. Other psychological factors, such as cognitive distortions or dissociation, may also play a role in suppressing or distorting memories of the abuse, making disclosure challenging for the survivor.

Sociologists have examined the influence of social and familial structures on non-disclosure. They highlight the importance of social norms, power dynamics, and cultural beliefs within families and communities. Scholars explore how family dynamics, such as loyalty, protection of the family's reputation, and the desire to maintain social cohesion, can create barriers to disclosure. They also examine the role of societal attitudes toward child sexual abuse, including victim-blaming or disbelief, which can discourage survivors from speaking out.

From a social work perspective, scholars emphasize the significance of understanding the broader context of family dynamics and relationships. They explore the impact of factors such as parental denial or minimization of abuse, lack of support systems, and the potential for secondary victimization within the family or community. Social workers may examine interventions and strategies aimed at empowering survivors, promoting safe disclosure, and creating supportive environments that facilitate disclosure and healing.

4.2.1.3 Age norms

In certain cultures, societal expectations about age can contribute to a reluctance to disclose incidents of child sexual abuse. In these societies, children are often perceived as less capable than adults, leading to a lack of credibility for their voices. Consequently, children may encounter challenges when attempting to report abuse, as they fear not being believed or taken seriously. Additionally, children may not have the language or the understanding to articulate what happened to them. In some cases, children may even be afraid of getting in trouble themselves if they report the abuse. These age norms can have a big impact on whether or not a child comes forward.

“I didn’t want to disclose to anyone except my mother because other people will not believe me or they will just blame me for it” (male survivor, 12years).

"The age of the victim can influence their ability to articulate the abuse, potentially leading to non-disclosure due to communication barriers." (Male participant, 25 years)

"Adolescent victims might fear the social and personal implications of disclosing abuse, such as impact on relationships and self-image." (Female participant, 26 years).

According to Semaan (2020), age norms refer to societal expectations and beliefs about appropriate behaviors and capabilities based on a person's age. These standards can impact the underreporting of child sexual abuse by erecting obstacles to disclosure. The findings suggest that young victims may lack the language, knowledge, or understanding to articulate their experiences and may fear not being believed due to their age. Additionally, societal expectations that children should be obedient and respectful to adults can contribute to feelings of guilt, shame, and confusion, further impeding disclosure. The prevailing age norms dictate how children are expected to behave, comprehend their experiences, and articulate their emotions. Unfortunately, these norms can inadvertently silence victims by casting doubt on their ability to understand, remember, or communicate their abuse effectively. This leads to a culture of disbelief and skepticism, further complicating the already daunting task of disclosing such deeply personal and distressing experiences. Semaan (2020) emphasizes that addressing the influence of age norms on the disclosure of child sexual abuse is a crucial step in creating a more supportive and understanding society for victims. By acknowledging and challenging these norms, communities can work towards breaking down the barriers that prevent victims from

seeking the help and justice they deserve. It is our collective responsibility, as stated by the author, to create a culture of belief, support, and empowerment for survivors of child sexual abuse, and that starts with understanding and addressing the impact of age norms on disclosure.

4.2.1.4 Strict gender roles

In numerous cultures, specific gender expectations govern the behavior of men and women. These societal norms can create obstacles for individuals who have experienced childhood sexual abuse and wish to speak out about their experiences. For instance, in certain societies, it is considered dishonorable for a woman to disclose being sexually abused, as it may be viewed as a breach of her dignity. Similarly, men may be reluctant to come forward due to concerns about appearing weak or unmanly. These gender-related expectations significantly affect survivors, often resulting in emotions of shame, isolation, and self-accountability.

“Female victims do not disclose at all or delay because they feel that they will be furnishing their images if people know that they have been sexually abused. They want to keep it to themselves so that they will not be seen as dirty by other people” (male participant , 25years)

"Boys may feel pressure to conform to traditional masculinity, leading to fear of being perceived as weak if they disclose abuse, which can result in non-disclosure." (male participant , 42 years).

"Girls might internalize societal expectations of purity and modesty, causing them to feel shame and reluctance to disclose abuse, particularly if the perpetrator is known to them." (female participant, 30 years).

According to the findings presented, the influence of strict gender roles is a significant factor that affects the disclosure of child sexual abuse, demanding people's attention and reflection. By examining the impact of these gender roles on victims' experiences and the barriers they face in coming forward, people can begin to unravel the complex dynamics that perpetuate non-disclosure. Factors like traditional gender roles, which prescribe specific expectations and behaviors for males and females, can impact the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse, as noted in the passage. Seto and Francis (2012) also highlight that societal norms emphasizing male dominance and the suppression of emotions may discourage boys and men from disclosing abuse, due to fears of being perceived as weak or unmanly. Similarly, the societal expectations placed on girls and women to maintain purity, modesty, and family honor can create barriers to disclosure, as the abuse may be seen as a violation of these gendered expectations. Therefore, one can say that the findings emphasize that through acknowledgment and challenging of these gender roles, a community can work towards breaking down the barriers that prevent victims from seeking the help and justice they deserve. By addressing the influence of strict gender roles on the disclosure of child sexual abuse, people can work towards creating a more supportive and understanding environment for victims to come forward.

4.2.1.5 Perpetrator was a Family Member

Some individuals conveyed their heightened distress when the offender was a relative, such as an uncle, brother, or stepfather, leading them to feel obligated to stay silent. They acknowledged a sense of being trapped; speaking out would inflict additional pain and disgrace upon their family members, while staying silent could leave them vulnerable to the possibility of being victimized again and enduring additional harm in the future.

According to the findings, the revelation that the perpetrator of child sexual abuse is a family member is a profoundly distressing and complex issue that significantly hinders the disclosure of such abuse. As Farah (2020) highlights, the inherent trust, emotional ties, and fear of familial repercussions create formidable barriers that prevent victims from coming forward, requiring our deep understanding and empathy. Victims may also experience conflicting emotions, such as loyalty, love, and dependence on the perpetrator, which can further complicate their decision to disclose the abuse. These deeply ingrained feelings can deter victims from seeking help and reporting the abuse, perpetuating the silence and allowing the abuse to persist unchecked. The passage emphasizes that by acknowledging and addressing the emotional complexities and fears associated with familial abuse, we can work towards breaking down the barriers that impede victims from seeking the help and justice they deserve. Recognizing the unique challenges faced by victims of abuse within the family unit is a critical step in fostering a more supportive environment for them to come forward.

4.2.1.6 Lack of Family Bonding, Trust, or Parental Unavailability

Participants revealed that their difficulty in forming strong emotional connections or trusting relationships with their parents or caregivers prevented them from sharing their traumatic experiences, due to uncertainty and fear about how their parents would respond or react to the disclosure.

"I could not disclose to anyone else in the home because my mother was away for a week due to work. I had to wait for her because I didn't have anyone else to tell" (female survivor, 12 years).

"I never felt close to my family, so when the abuse happened, I didn't have anyone to turn to. I felt like I had to deal with it on my own." (Female survivor, 10 years).

"My parents never really seemed to understand me or what I was going through. I didn't think they would believe me or know how to help if I told them about the abuse." (female survivor, 17 years).

The findings reveal that the lack of family bonding, trust, or parental unavailability presents a significant barrier to the disclosure of child sexual abuse, creating an environment where victims feel unsupported, unheard, and unable to seek help. There is also the fact that the absence of strong family bonding, trust, or parental availability can hinder disclosure of child sexual abuse. Children may not feel safe or supported within their families, leading to a lack of trust in parental figures or caregivers. The absence of reliable and responsive parental figures, as highlighted by Tener and

Murphy (2015), can limit the child's ability to seek help, receive validation, or understand that disclosure is a viable option. This aspect demands our understanding and proactive efforts to address the impact of familial dynamics on non-disclosure, as emphasized by Corcoran and Pillai (2008). By acknowledging the influence of familial dynamics on the disclosure of child sexual abuse, we can work towards creating a more supportive and understanding environment for victims to come forward and seek the help and justice they deserve.

4.2.1.7 Family Embarrassment

Some participants shared that their family's high social standing and reputation played a significant role in their decision to keep silent, as revealing the truth would have brought shame and disgrace to their family, highlighting the burden of protecting their family's image and reputation.

“My father is a church elder and I wouldn’t want people to talk about him saying his daughter was abused” (female survivor , 12 years).

"I was afraid that if I told my family about the abuse, it would bring shame upon us. I didn't want to be the cause of embarrassment or have our family's reputation tarnished." (female survivor, 13 years).

“There are also some families which people look up to and disclosing the abuse of a family member might cause people to disrespect them” (male participant, 40 years).

The participants' responses indicate that victims of child sexual abuse may refrain from disclosing their experiences due to a fear of causing embarrassment to their families. As highlighted by Alaggia and Millington (2008), this hesitation may stem from concerns about the family's reputation, the fear of disbelief or judgment, or the pressure to maintain a facade of normalcy. These deeply ingrained emotions of guilt, shame, and self-blame can serve as barriers to seeking help and disclosing the abuse, perpetuating the cycle of non-disclosure. Furthermore, Farah (2020) notes that children who experience sexual abuse by a family member or close relative may feel a sense of conflicting loyalty and love for their family. They may fear that disclosing the abuse will disrupt family dynamics or result in the perpetrator's punishment, which can create a sense of guilt or betrayal. As supported by Lemaigre et al. (2017), this loyalty to the family can act as an additional barrier to disclosure. To address this issue, Collin-Vézina et al. (2018) suggest that the community must work towards providing a supportive and understanding environment for victims to disclose their experiences. By addressing the emotional complexities and fears associated with family embarrassment, the community can help to break down the barriers that prevent victims from seeking the help and justice they deserve.

4.2.2 Cultural factors that contribute to the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

4.2.2.1 Feelings of Shame

Participants disclosed that shame was a dominant emotion that influenced their decision to disclose or conceal their experiences. They felt ashamed upon recognizing what had

happened, which led to fear of sharing their secret, worry about others' reactions and judgments, and dread of being stigmatized. Initially, they coped with

shame by remaining silent, especially since they were young and grew up in a culture where discussing sexuality was considered taboo, making it even harder to speak out.

"There are some churches like Ruponeso where girls are ought to go for a virginity test and that only might make a child not to disclose because they will be treated as impure and some other churches will forbid them from wearing girl's uniforms" (male participant , 31years).

"I felt so ashamed and guilty about what happened. I thought it was my fault, so I couldn't bring myself to tell anyone." (Female survivor, 12 years).

"I didn't want to burden anyone with my shame. I felt like I had to carry this heavy secret by myself." (female survivor, 12 years).

Renshaw and Breitman (2016) argue that survivors of child sexual abuse often experience intense feelings of shame and guilt that can prevent them from disclosing the abuse. The researchers assert that child sexual abuse can evoke a profound sense of shame and guilt in victims, leading them to feel responsible for the abuse or fear that they will be blamed or judged if they come forward. Renshaw and Breitman (2016) further note that these feelings of shame and guilt can be especially potent when the abuser is someone the child knows and trusts, such as a family member or close acquaintance. The close relationship between the victim and perpetrator can compound the emotional turmoil, making it even more difficult for the child to disclose the abuse. The scholars emphasize that shame and guilt can create a significant barrier to disclosure, as victims may worry about the social, familial, and

personal consequences of revealing their experiences. The fear of judgment, blame, or the disruption of family dynamics can deter many survivors from seeking help or justice. Overall, Renshaw and Breitman (2016) research highlights the pivotal role that shame and guilt play in inhibiting disclosure of child sexual abuse, underscoring the need for tailored support and interventions to address these deep-seated emotional barriers.

4.2.2.2 Community Disbelief

Participants acknowledged that if the family's friends, relatives, and community members believed and provided support, there was a glimmer of hope. They expressed that in such circumstances, there was at least a place to seek comfort. When participants encountered disbelief and skepticism from their family's social circle, friends, and community, it completely extinguished any hope they had of being believed and supported, making it even more daunting to report the abuse. This response from their support network made silence feel like the only viable option, as speaking out seemed futile and potentially harmful.

"I didn't trust that the community or authorities would support me if I spoke out.

The prevailing disbelief in the community made me feel like there was no point in seeking help." (female survivor, 17 years).

"I was afraid that if I told someone in the community, they would just brush it off or not take me seriously. The fear of not being believed kept me silent." (Female survivor, 10 years).

"I worried that if I disclosed the abuse and no one believed me, it would make things even worse. The fear of facing disbelief from the community made me keep it to myself." (female survivor, 12 years).

Participants' responses highlight how community skepticism and disbelief significantly discourage survivors of child sexual abuse from sharing their experiences. This widespread doubt and lack of support exacerbate survivors' trauma, intensify their emotional burdens, and create a significant barrier to disclosure. Research by Lyon and Ahern (2011) stresses the importance of understanding and addressing community disbelief through a multifaceted approach that includes education, awareness-raising, and systemic change. The findings suggest that tackling the roots of community disbelief is crucial to supporting survivors and creating an environment that encourages disclosure. This may involve educational programs to enhance understanding of child sexual abuse dynamics and broader societal interventions to address the cultural factors that lead to survivors' experiences being dismissed or invalidated.

4.2.2.3 Lack of knowledge

Another participant revealed that she regretted taking a bath, expressing that this could have been prevented if she had received guidance from her parents and older sister. She explained that her family's inexperience and lack of understanding about how to handle the situation meant they didn't know what actions to take, resulting in a delayed reporting of the incident to the authorities. By the time her older sister

accompanied her to the police station, valuable time had passed, and crucial evidence was no longer available, making it impossible to build a case or pursue legal action.

"I did not know what to do and who to report to after something like that happened. I rushed home and took a bath. It was after my sister came when I realised that I have made a mistake since she said that I was supposed to go to the clinic and police station first before bathing"(female survivor, 12 years).

"I didn't know what my rights were or what protections were available to me. The lack of knowledge about my options made me hesitant to disclose the abuse." (female survivor, 10 years).

"I didn't know where to turn for help. I wasn't aware of the support services available for survivors of abuse, so I kept it to myself." (female survivor, 12 years) .

The research highlights that a lack of awareness and understanding about what constitutes child sexual abuse can be a significant barrier to disclosure. Hegerl (2017) notes that children may not have the necessary knowledge to recognize that they are being victimized, especially if the abuse is subtle or disguised as affection or attention. Furthermore, Stamm (2017) argues that many survivors are unaware of the resources available to them or how to access support and assistance. This lack of awareness and knowledge about available resources, such as counseling and support services, can make it even more challenging for survivors to come forward and seek help. The scholars emphasize the crucial need for increased awareness and education about

child sexual abuse to encourage survivors to disclose their experiences. Many survivors may not know how to report the abuse or where to go for help, and societal taboos and limited education about sexual abuse can contribute to this lack of awareness among both children and adults. This lack of understanding and knowledge can make it significantly harder for victims to recognize and disclose their experiences of abuse. Addressing these gaps through comprehensive awareness- raising and educational initiatives is essential to empower survivors to come forward and access the support and resources they need to heal and seek justice.

4.2.2.4 Emotions and the impact of the abuse

In her engagements with the victims, the researcher learned that child sexual abuse can deeply affect a child's emotional health and self-image, resulting in emotions such as shame, embarrassment, guilt, and a diminished sense of self-value. These emotional repercussions can greatly influence a child's choice to reveal the abuse. One child's testimony poignantly captured the complexity of these emotions, as she struggled with the misconception that she was inherently bad and therefore responsible for the abuse, highlighting the devastating impact of abuse on a child's sense of self.

“If I haven’t been friends with him, he wouldn’t have abused me. I should have avoided being in a closed place with him” (female survivor, 13 years).

"The abuse have a profound impact on children's mental health. They struggle with feelings of depression and anxiety, which makes it difficult for them to disclose what had happened." (female participant, 27 years).

"I felt so much shame and guilt about what happened. I thought it was my fault, and the weight of those emotions made it impossible for me to talk about the abuse." (Female survivor 13 years).

The research highlights that the emotional aftermath of child sexual abuse can be overwhelming, leading to a range of complex and debilitating feelings in victims. Patros (2020) notes that victims may experience intense emotions such as shame, guilt, fear, self-blame, confusion, and a profound sense of powerlessness as a result of the trauma inflicted by the abuse. This internal emotional turmoil can perpetuate the silence and make it extremely challenging for victims to articulate their experiences and seek the help they desperately need. The scholars emphasize that these complex emotions can create significant barriers to disclosure, as individuals may fear being judged, not being believed, or facing further trauma or negative consequences if they come forward. Therefore, the research suggests that creating a safe, empathetic, and supportive environment for victims is crucial in facilitating disclosure. By providing a community space where survivors feel empowered to share their experiences without fear of judgment or retribution, the barriers to disclosure can be lowered, allowing victims to access the support and resources they need to heal. The emotional aftermath of child sexual abuse can be overwhelming, leaving victims grappling with a range of debilitating feelings, including shame, guilt, fear, and self-blame. This internal emotional struggle can make it exceedingly difficult for victims to disclose

their experiences and seek help. Addressing these barriers requires the creation of a supportive and validating environment where survivors feel safe and empowered to share their stories without the fear of judgment or negative consequences.

4.2.2.5 Power dynamics

In many societies, there is a class hierarchy that can impact how child sexual abuse is viewed and reported. For example, in some cases, abuse that occurs within lower socioeconomic groups may be seen as less serious than abuse that occurs in higher socioeconomic groups. This can lead to a lack of support and resources for victims from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, which can make it harder for them to come forward. Additionally, people from lower socioeconomic groups may have less access to information about child sexual abuse, and may not know what to do if they suspect abuse is occurring.

"I felt powerless in the face of the abuser's authority. I was afraid of the potential consequences if I spoke out, which made it incredibly difficult to disclose the abuse." (female survivor, 13 years).

"The abuser used their power to manipulate and coerce me into silence. I felt trapped and unable to speak up about what was happening." (female survivor, 17 years).

"Some cases are not disclosed because they have nothing to offer to the police or the court for their cases to be handled fairly. It is believed that nothing is for

free so one has to pay for the case to be handled well” (female participant ,26 years).

The research indicates that power dynamics play a significant role in the nondisclosure of child sexual abuse. When an abuser holds a position of authority or trust, such as a family member, teacher, or religious leader, the imbalance of power can create an environment of fear and intimidation for the victim. This power differential can make it incredibly difficult for the child to speak out against the abuser, as they may fear the consequences of challenging the authority figure. Abusers often leverage various means, including manipulation, coercion, threats, or physical force, to exert control over their victims. This power dynamic between the abuser and the child can instill a profound sense of fear and silence, significantly reducing the likelihood of the victim disclosing their experiences. The participants' views provide evidence that the power imbalance between the abuser and the child victim is a crucial factor contributing to the nondisclosure of child sexual abuse. The child's vulnerability and the abuser's position of authority or trust create an environment that is highly conducive to the perpetuation of abuse and the suppression of the victim's voice. Addressing these power dynamics is essential in creating an environment that encourages and supports child victims to come forward and seek help.

4.2.2.6 Feelings towards the abuser

Children also experienced mixed emotions towards their abuser, which influenced their decision to reveal the abuse. While some children felt fear or terror towards their abuser, leading to a desire to avoid them and potentially prompting others to ask

questions and create an opportunity for disclosure, others had a complex relationship with their abuser that facilitated disclosure. This complex relationship dynamics played a significant role in the children's decision to speak out about the abuse.

“Some cultures teach children to be obedient to elders and not to speak up to them. This will make them not to talk to anyone about the abuse when the perpetrator warns them not to tell anyone” (female participant, 29years).

"I felt ashamed for having any positive feelings towards the abuser. I blamed myself for not hating them, which made it hard to talk about the abuse."
(female survivor, 17 years).

'I felt a sense of betrayal because the abuser was someone I trusted. I struggled with conflicting feelings of loyalty, which made it difficult to disclose the abuse.'
(female survivor, 12 years).

The research highlights that victims of child sexual abuse often have complex and conflicting emotions towards their abusers, particularly when the abuser is a family member or someone the victim trusted. Patros (2020) notes that emotions such as love, loyalty, or dependency can significantly inhibit a victim's willingness to disclose the abuse. Victims may fear the consequences of revealing the abuse, including the potential harm to their relationship with the abuser, the disruption of the family unit, or facing disbelief or blame from others. These emotional complexities surrounding the abuser can have a profound impact on a survivor's decision to disclose or remain silent. The scholars emphasize the need to recognize and address these emotional

barriers to disclosure. This requires a shift in societal attitudes, increased education, and improved access to resources for survivors, ensuring that they are met with compassion and validation rather than judgment and disbelief. By acknowledging the complexity of the emotions victims experience and offering support without pressure or expectations, the community can create an environment that empowers victims to find their voice and seek the help and healing they deserve. Addressing the emotional bonds and fears that can inhibit disclosure is crucial in facilitating the process of disclosure and connecting survivors with the resources and support they need.

4.2.2.7 Lack of education

Another cultural factor that can lead to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse is the lack of education and awareness about the issue. This is due to the fact that people do not have access to information about sexual abuse, or they may not know what to do if they suspect a child is being abused. This can lead to victims feeling like they have nowhere to turn for help.

“When he did that to me , I rushed home to bath and that’s when my sister came back to tell me that I should not have bathed as it was part of the evidence that I was raped” (female survivor, 12 years).

“I did not know that one can report to the police or go to a clinic or call Childline toll free to get assistance after being raped that is why I had to wait

for my mother for over a week to tell her” (female survivor, 12years) .

"I was never taught about consent or healthy relationships." (Female survivor, 17 years).

The research highlights that a lack of education about child sexual abuse, its consequences, and available support systems can contribute to non-disclosure, as indicated by Stamm (2017). Many individuals may not have the knowledge or understanding to recognize the abuse, label it as such, or know how to seek help. Insufficient awareness among caregivers, teachers, and other authority figures can also impede the identification and appropriate response to signs of abuse, further hindering disclosure. Moreover, without proper education on the subject, survivors and those around them may not fully comprehend the long-term impact of child sexual abuse. This lack of understanding can result in minimizing the severity of the abuse, dismissing its effects, or even normalizing the behavior, further hindering the disclosure process. The findings suggest that educating the public, including potential victims, their caregivers, and other authority figures, is crucial in addressing the barriers to disclosure. When individuals have a comprehensive understanding of child sexual abuse, its consequences, and the available support systems, they are better equipped to recognize the signs of abuse, provide appropriate responses, and encourage victims to come forward and seek the help they need. Improving awareness and education on this critical issue can play a significant role in removing the obstacles that prevent survivors from disclosing their experiences and accessing the resources and support they deserve.

4.2.2.8 Cultural and religious beliefs

There are often cultural and religious beliefs about sin and forgiveness that can discourage victims from coming forward. They may be told that they will be forgiven if they keep quiet, or that they should not "rock the boat" by reporting the case to the police.

"Christianity says that we should forgive those who wrong us for us to be forgiven that is why many children tend to keep quiet after abuse as the abuser might have reminded them of this" (female participant, 27years).

"I was taught that suffering in silence is a virtue, and that speaking out would be seen as weak or selfish." (male participant, 29 years).

"Religious teachings emphasized forgiveness and mercy, but didn't address accountability for perpetrators." (Male participant, 25 years).

The participants' responses indicates that cultural and religious beliefs play a significant role in shaping individuals' attitudes towards disclosing child sexual abuse, as outlined by Seto and Francis (2012). Cultural and religious norms can significantly shape attitudes and behaviors related to the disclosure of child sexual abuse. Some cultural or religious contexts may discourage open discussions about sexuality, create taboos around discussing abuse, or prioritize family reputation and harmony over the well-being of the victim. As a result, victims may fear stigmatization, rejection, or blame from their communities, or face pressure to remain silent due to cultural or

religious expectations. The scholars emphasize the need to recognize the influence of cultural and religious beliefs on the nondisclosure of child sexual abuse. By acknowledging these complex societal and cultural factors, communities can work towards cultivating a culture of accountability, empathy, and protection for all children, regardless of their cultural or religious background. Addressing the impact of cultural and religious beliefs on disclosure is crucial in creating an environment where victims feel safe, supported, and empowered to come forward and seek the help and resources they need. This recognition can inform educational efforts, policy changes, and community-based initiatives to challenge harmful norms and foster a more inclusive, compassionate, and responsive approach to addressing child sexual abuse.

4.2.2.9 Stigma

In many cultures, there is a strong stigma attached to sexual abuse. This can lead victims to feel ashamed or embarrassed about what happened, and they may fear that others will judge or reject them if they speak out.

“Some pupils at school are now asking if what they heard is true and they are making fun of me because I was abused” (female survivor, 13 years).

"I felt like I had to protect my family's reputation and avoid bringing shame to them." (female survivor, 12 years).

"I did not want to be seen as a victim or defined by what happened to me." (Female survivor, 17 years).

The participants' responses highlight the crucial role of stigma in the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse. The stigma surrounding this issue often leads to feelings of shame, guilt, and fear of not being believed, which can prevent children from coming forward. It is essential for communities to recognize and address this stigma, and to provide safe spaces where survivors feel empowered to speak out without fear of judgment or retribution. As True (2020) points out, the stigma surrounding child sexual abuse can be pervasive in many societies. Victims may fear being stigmatized or blamed for the abuse, leading them to remain silent. Moreover, the stigma can extend to the victim's family, causing them to hesitate in disclosing the abuse due to concerns about the potential impact on their social standing, reputation, or family honor. This can contribute to a culture of silence and concealment around the issue. The findings emphasize the importance of providing a supportive environment for survivors to come forward and seek help. By addressing the stigma and creating safe, non-judgmental spaces, communities can empower survivors to share their experiences and access the resources and support they need for healing and recovery. Addressing the pervasive stigma surrounding child sexual abuse is a critical step in facilitating disclosure and ensuring that survivors receive the compassion and validation they deserve.

4.2.2.10 Sexual abuse is a private matter

In certain cultural contexts, there is a prevailing belief that sexual abuse is a private or personal issue, rather than a public concern, leading to a cultural norm of silence and secrecy. This belief can create significant barriers for victims seeking help, support, and justice, perpetuating the cycle of abuse and further traumatizing survivors.

"Families are now taking the law into their own hands as they are being paid by the perpetrator to solve the case as a family and not involving the police. This is done especially when the accused person is a friend or family member" (female participant, 30years).

"They said it was a 'family problem' and that we had to handle it internally, without outside help." (Female survivor, 10 years).

"I felt like I was being told to keep it hidden, like it was something to be ashamed of." (female survivor, 12 years).

The responses above indicate that child sexual abuse is often viewed as a private matter, deeply rooted in societal beliefs, which can contribute to the silence and non-disclosure of such incidents. As Semaan (2020) suggests, religious and cultural beliefs can heavily influence attitudes toward sexuality, modesty, and the role of women and children. These beliefs may discourage open discussions about sexual abuse or create taboos around the topic. Victims may internalize these societal norms, making it challenging for them to recognize the abuse or feel comfortable disclosing it within their religious or cultural communities. The findings highlight the need to challenge this misconception and emphasize that sexual abuse is not a private, individual matter, but rather a serious societal issue that requires collective action and support. Treating child sexual abuse as a private concern can perpetuate the silence and inaction that allows the abuse to continue. It is crucial to recognize that sexual abuse is a widespread problem that affects entire communities and requires a comprehensive,

community-based response. By addressing the deep-rooted societal beliefs and norms that contribute to the non-disclosure of abuse, communities can create an environment where survivors feel empowered to come forward, access support, and break the cycle of silence. This shift in perspective is essential for ensuring that child sexual abuse is recognized as a public issue that demands urgent attention and a coordinated, compassionate approach to prevention, intervention, and healing.

4.2.2.11 Family honour and reputation

Another factor is the importance of family honor and reputation. This is seen as more important than the well-being of individual family members. This can lead victims to keep quiet about the abuse out of fear that they will bring shame on their families. Some victims may also fear that disclosing the abuse will tear the family apart, or that they will be blamed for what happened.

“There are also some families which people look up to and disclosing the abuse of a family member might cause people to disrespect them” (male participant, 42 years).

"I felt like I was the one who had done something wrong, not the person who hurt me. Like I was the one bringing shame to the family." (Female survivor , 12 years).

"Some families tell their children that they can't let this get out, it would damage their reputation in the community.” (Male participant, 29 years).

The participants' views highlight how the concept of family honor is highly valued in certain cultures, and this can create a significant barrier to the disclosure of child sexual abuse. As Farah (2020) notes, the notion of family honor, which is deeply ingrained in many cultural contexts, can lead to the perception that revealing child sexual abuse is a source of shame and disgrace, not only for the individual but for the entire family. This cultural imperative to protect the family's honor and reputation can result in a strong pressure on victims to keep the abuse a secret, even at the expense of their own well-being. Victims may feel compelled to prioritize the family's reputation over their own need for support and healing. The findings emphasize the profound impact that cultural norms and societal expectations can have on an individual's willingness to disclose abuse. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach that involves challenging harmful norms, providing culturally sensitive support, and fostering open dialogue within communities. It is crucial to recognize the ways in which the concept of family honor can create significant barriers to disclosure and create an environment where victims feel trapped, unable to seek help or justice. By addressing these deep-rooted cultural beliefs and creating a more supportive, empathetic, and accountable community response, survivors can be empowered to come forward and access the resources and support they need.

4.2.3 Effects of non-disclosure of child sexual abuse on victims.

The repercussions of child sexual abuse can profoundly affect different facets of a victim's life, resulting in a variety of adverse outcomes. These could encompass a sense of diminished control, self-condemnation, self-judgment, and internalization of

the trauma, as well as unhealthy coping strategies such as smoking and excessive alcohol use. Moreover, victims may encounter physical health challenges such as chronic inflammation and dental issues, mental health difficulties, sexually transmitted infections, turbulent relationships, antisocial conduct, and the weight of stigma and shame. These outcomes determine the likelihood of future victimization, as they shape the victim's approach to seeking help, thought patterns, survival instincts, lifestyle, and potential health risk behaviors.

4.2.3.1 Depression

Depression is a common effect of child sexual abuse, and can manifest in a variety of ways, such as feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and a loss of interest in activities that were once enjoyed. Victims may also have difficulty concentrating or making decisions. They may feel anxious and fearful, have trouble sleeping, or have nightmares. They may also experience feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blame.

“You can clearly see that this child had been abused because of withdrawal from other children who will be playing. They will be in their corner by themselves” (female participant, 26years).

"The silence surrounding the abuse I endured as a child had a profound impact on my mental health. It created a sense of emptiness and deep emotional pain that eventually developed into depression. The weight of carrying this secret for so long without being able to seek help contributed to my ongoing struggle with depressive symptoms.” (female participant , 30 years).

"The burden of keeping the abuse a secret for so long took a toll on my mental health. It led to feelings of isolation, hopelessness, and deep sadness. The weight of carrying such a traumatic experience without being able to share it with anyone contributed to my struggle with depression." (female survivor, 17 years).

The perspectives shared by the individuals highlight the significant impact that the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse can have on the mental well-being of survivors, particularly in relation to the emergence of depression. The accounts provided serve as a powerful illustration of the enduring effects that keeping such traumatic experiences a secret can have. It becomes clear that the failure to disclose sexual abuse not only robs survivors of their sense of safety and trust, but also inflicts long-term emotional scars. The findings also reveal that the burden of secrecy and the lack of validation can contribute significantly to the onset and exacerbation of depression in survivors, as described by Kennedy and Prock (2016). The inability to speak openly about the abuse and receive the necessary support can have detrimental consequences for the mental health and overall well-being of those affected. This underscores the essential need to listen to survivors, advocate for trauma-informed care, and work towards dismantling the barriers that hinder disclosure. By creating an environment where survivors feel empowered to share their experiences and access the resources they need, we can begin to address the profound impact of non-disclosure and support the healing and recovery process. Addressing the link between non-disclosure and the development of mental health issues, such as depression, is crucial in providing comprehensive and compassionate support to survivors of child

sexual abuse. It is a call to action for communities, healthcare providers, and policymakers to prioritize the creation of safe, supportive, and inclusive spaces where survivors can feel heard, believed, and empowered to seek the help and justice they deserve.

4.2.3.2 Low self esteem

Low self-esteem is also common among victims of child sexual abuse, and can lead to feelings of worthlessness, guilt, and shame. At times, survivors of child sexual abuse might partake in self-harming actions, such as substance misuse, risky sexual behavior, or self-injury. It's crucial to recognize that the impact of child sexual abuse can vary between boys and girls, and some victims may not manifest any noticeable effects until well into adulthood.

“Victims of child sexual abuse may be drug abusers since they will be looking for something to boost their confidence when they are around other. This is because they will be feeling like they lost their dignity when the abuse took place” (male participant, 29 years).

"The trauma of the abuse and the burden of keeping it a secret deeply affected my sense of self-worth. The fear and shame associated with the abuse made me believe that I was somehow at fault, leading to a pervasive sense of low self-esteem. The inability to confide in anyone only reinforced these negative beliefs about myself." (Female survivor, 13 years).

"It made me believe that I was unworthy of love and respect, contributing to a lasting struggle with low self-esteem." (Female survivor, 12 years)

The perspectives shared by the individuals underscore the profound impact that the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse can have on the self-esteem and self-worth of survivors. The narratives provide a poignant reminder of the lasting repercussions of remaining silent about such traumatic experiences. It becomes clear from the accounts that the internalization of shame, guilt, and a lack of validation can significantly contribute to the erosion of self-esteem in survivors, as described by Kennedy and Prock (2016). The inability to speak openly about the abuse and have their experiences acknowledged and validated can lead to a deep-seated sense of worthlessness and a damaged sense of self. The findings emphasize the critical need to address the detrimental impact of non-disclosure on the survivor's self-perception and self-worth. The burden of secrecy and the lack of support can profoundly shape the way survivors view themselves, leading to long-term psychological consequences. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive approach that prioritizes the creation of safe, empathetic, and supportive environments where survivors can feel empowered to share their experiences and receive the validation and care they deserve. By challenging the societal stigma and providing trauma-informed support, we can help survivors reclaim their sense of self-worth and rebuild their self-esteem, ultimately supporting their healing and recovery journey.

4.2.3.3 Victims turning into drug and alcohol addicts

Victims may also turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with the effects of the abuse, which can lead to substance abuse and addiction. A significant number of individuals who have experienced child sexual abuse resort to drugs or alcohol as a means of managing the distress and trauma they have endured. This pattern can evolve into a cycle of addiction and misuse that is challenging to overcome. Substance abuse can have severe repercussions on both physical and mental well-being, and can give rise to additional challenges in their lives.

“Victims of child sexual abuse can end up being drunkards or drug abusers because they will be trying to run away from the pain as they will not be thinking about it when they are drunk” (female participant, 30years).

"The burden of not disclosing the abuse is so heavy, and they turn to drugs in an attempt to find relief from the constant psychological distress they experience." (Female participant, 26 years).

"I remember feeling like I had to deny what happened to me, and I turned to drugs as a way to numb the pain and confusion I was experiencing." (female survivor, 17 years).

The personal accounts of survivors reveal the devastating effects of child sexual abuse and the consequences of not disclosing their experiences, including the risk of turning to drug and alcohol addiction as a coping mechanism. The stories highlight the

destructive ways trauma can manifest in survivors' lives, underscoring the need for

validation, support, and a safe space to break the silence. The participants emphasize the importance of creating a culture of belief, understanding, and support in communities, where survivors feel empowered to share their experiences without fear of judgment. By fostering such an environment, we can reduce the likelihood of survivors turning to substance abuse as a maladaptive coping mechanism. This is crucial, as research by Collin-Vezina (2013) suggests that survivors of child sexual abuse often experience long-lasting emotional and lifestyle changes, including secrecy and silence, which can increase their vulnerability to further harm and abuse, leading to feelings of hopelessness and despair.

4.2.3.4 Victims facing problems at school or work

Another challenge faced by child sexual abuse victims is problems at work or school. Many victims of child sexual abuse have difficulty functioning in school or at work. This can be due to problems with concentration, difficulty focusing, and problems with memory. In some cases, victims may have to drop out of school or leave their jobs due to the effects of the abuse. Even if they are able to stay in school or hold down a job, they may not be able to perform at their full potential. This can result in emotions of disappointment and a perception of inadequacy.

“One can see that a child was abused through many encounters with them not in school when it’s time for school. If you ask the child, she will not reply as they will be a lot on her mind or they will just find a reason to lie about not being in school” (female participant , 27years).

"I feel like I'm carrying a heavy burden alone, and it's affecting my focus and productivity at school." (female survivor, 13 years).

"The emotional pain and anxiety often distract me, making it hard to concentrate on tasks and meet deadlines." (female survivor, 17 years).

The perspectives shared by the individuals shed light on the significant impact that the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse can have on survivors, particularly the challenges they face in educational or work settings. The narratives provide a poignant reminder of the pervasive and lasting repercussions of remaining silent about such traumatic experiences. It becomes clear that the impact of child sexual abuse trauma, coupled with the burden of keeping it secret and the lack of validation, can significantly impair survivors' capacity to pursue education or sustain employment, as described by Kennedy and Prock (2016). The findings underscore the profound ways in which the non-disclosure of abuse can limit survivors' opportunities and hinder their ability to thrive in academic or professional environments. The psychological and emotional consequences of the abuse, combined with the weight of secrecy, can create significant barriers to their academic and career aspirations. This highlights the critical need to address the systemic challenges faced by survivors and to create more supportive, trauma-informed, and inclusive spaces within educational and workplace settings. By prioritizing the implementation of policies, resources, and training that acknowledge and respond to the unique needs of survivors, we can empower them to overcome these barriers and unlock their full potential. The perspectives shared serve as a powerful call to action for all stakeholders, including educators, employers, and policymakers, to re-examine the ways in which institutions can better support and

accommodate survivors of child sexual abuse, Tener and Murphy (2015). Addressing this issue is crucial for ensuring that survivors have the opportunity to heal, grow, and reach their full potential, without their past traumas continuing to hinder their educational and professional pursuits.

4.2.3.5 Survivors being suicidal

Survivors had a greater likelihood of having made suicide attempts, with the greatest risk observed among those who endured more severe abuse. This is often due to the intense emotional pain they are experiencing, and their inability to cope with the trauma they have experienced. Even if they do not attempt suicide, many victims of child sexual abuse engage in self-harm behaviors such as cutting or burning themselves. These behaviors can be a way of trying to numb the emotional pain they are experiencing. They can also be a cry for help, or a way of feeling some sense of control over their lives.

"I almost committed suicide because many people at school and at home kept on asking me about the abuse and it was hard for me to heal as they would remind me everytime. The last option was to kill myself but I got counselling from Childline and it made me change my mind" (female survivor, 12 years).

"I thought that ending my life would be the only way to end the suffering and pain." (female survivor, 13 years).

"The guilt and shame I carried made me feel like I didn't deserve to live."

(female survivor, 10 years).

The perspectives shared by the participants reveal the profound impact of being silenced and forced to hide their trauma, which has led many survivors to consider suicide as a tragic outcome. The narratives underscore the ways in which society's failure to protect and support these individuals has compounded their suffering. Notably, the lack of an empowering environment where survivors feel comfortable and safe to share their stories and seek help, without fear of judgment or rejection, has been a significant contributing factor. As Naidoo (2013) argues, the feeling of hopelessness and the belief that there is nothing that can be done to address their plight has led some survivors to resort to the most devastating of actions, as they believe it is the best option for them. This underscores the critical need for a comprehensive, compassionate, and trauma-informed approach that prioritizes the creation of safe spaces where survivors can feel empowered to share their stories and access the resources they need for healing and recovery. By addressing the systemic failures that have perpetuated this crisis, the community can work to prevent further tragedies and empower survivors to reclaim their lives and sense of self-worth.

4.2.3.6 Difficulty forming healthy relationships

Many victims of child sexual abuse have difficulty forming healthy and trusting relationships as adults. They may have trouble trusting others and may fear being hurt again. They may also have difficulty expressing their feelings and communicating openly. This can lead to problems in intimate relationships, such as difficulty trusting a partner, fear of physical intimacy, and difficulty expressing their needs.

"I have seen many victims of child sexual abuse struggling with relationships as they will be needing a lot of reassurance since they have lost their trust especially when they have been abused by their parents, friend or partner"
(female participant , 26 years).

"I struggle with intimacy because I feel like I have been lied to my whole life. How can I trust someone else when my own family didn't protect me?"
(female survivor, 17 years).

"I feel like I'm constantly trying to prove myself worthy of love and attention. It's exhausting." (female survivor, 13 years).

The perspectives shared by the individuals offer a poignant glimpse into the profound impact of the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse on survivors, particularly the challenges they face in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. The narratives provided serve as a stark reminder of the complex and lasting repercussions that come with remaining silent about such traumatic experiences. As research by Kennedy and Prock (2016) has shown, the trauma of child sexual abuse, combined with the weight of keeping it hidden and the absence of validation, can significantly hinder survivors' ability to develop and sustain healthy interpersonal relationships. The findings underscore how the lack of disclosure can profoundly shape a survivor's ability to trust, connect, and form meaningful connections with others. The psychological and emotional scars of the abuse, coupled with the burden of secrecy, can create substantial barriers to their relational capacities and overall well-being.

This highlights the critical need to address the systemic challenges faced by survivors and to create more supportive, trauma-informed, and inclusive environments that foster healing and relationship-building. By prioritizing the implementation of policies, resources, and training that acknowledge and respond to the unique needs of survivors, we can empower them to overcome these relational obstacles and cultivate the healthy connections they deserve.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the outcomes related to the factors affecting the concealment of information about child sexual abuse within the Budiriro community. The results were based on data gathered at Childline Zimbabwe, and the analysis was in line with the research's goals and objectives.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter offers a summary of the research's discoveries regarding the factors influencing the concealment of child sexual abuse among community members, along with the resulting conclusions. Furthermore, it will provide suggestions based on the study's outcomes.

5.1 Summary of Findings:

In the assessment, the ecological systems theory was utilized to explore the interconnected elements that affect the withholding of information about child sexual abuse. This theory offered a comprehensive structure for comprehending the complex nature of non-disclosure, encompassing individual, interpersonal, community, and societal influences. At the microsystem level, the research delved into the immediate environments in which children operate, considering factors such as family dynamics, caregiver responses, and the child's relationship with peers and educators. This microsystem analysis allowed for an in-depth exploration of how these proximal influences impact a child's decision to disclose or withhold information about sexual abuse.

Moving beyond the microsystem, the researcher examined the interconnectedness of

various systems within the child's environment. This involved evaluating the interactions between family, school, community organizations, and social services,

and how these interactions either facilitated or hindered the disclosure process. Furthermore, the researcher considered the impact of broader societal factors, such as cultural norms, legal systems, and social attitudes towards abuse, as part of the exosystem analysis. The macrosystem lens allowed for an exploration of the broader cultural, societal, and institutional influences that shape attitudes and responses to child sexual abuse. This encompassed an examination of power dynamics, social norms, and systemic barriers that may contribute to the underreporting of abuse.

Furthermore, the research findings have offered valuable insights into the intricate dynamics related to the withholding of information about child sexual abuse, in line with the following objectives:

5.1.1 Examination of Social Factors Contributing to Non-disclosure:

The examination uncovered that the fear of social stigma, distrust in community support, and power imbalances within social frameworks are substantial factors in the withholding of information about child sexual abuse. Additionally, the research emphasized the impact of societal attitudes and the fear of retaliation as pervasive obstacles to reporting such incidents.

5.1.2 Examination of Cultural Factors Contributing to Non-disclosure:

The findings highlighted the considerable impact of cultural norms, traditions, and taboos on the hiding of child sexual abuse. The research emphasized how deeply rooted cultural beliefs and societal norms can create substantial barriers for victims and witnesses, sustaining a culture of silence and confidentiality.

5.1.3 Investigation of the Effects of Non-disclosure on Victims:

In exploring the effects of non-disclosure, the research uncovered the severe psychological and emotional toll borne by victims of child sexual abuse. The findings emphasized the long-term repercussions of non-disclosure, including heightened trauma, compromised mental health, and challenges in seeking support and recovery.

In line with these objectives, the research has revealed the complex interaction of social, cultural, and psychological elements that form the basis of the withholding of information about child sexual abuse. This provides a basis for specific interventions, awareness campaigns, and community-led efforts focused on promoting an environment of empathy, support, and empowerment for victims.

5.2 Conclusions

The study underscores the complex interplay of social and cultural factors that contribute to the suppression of information about child sexual abuse. The findings highlight the necessity for a holistic approach to tackle these influences and assist victims in disclosing their experiences. This includes community-based education and awareness programs, culturally sensitive support services, and alternative reporting mechanisms. By tackling the underlying reasons for withholding information and offering suitable support, we can strive to build a society that prioritizes the safety and welfare of children.

The fear of retaliation, doubt, and family upheaval are significant social barriers that prevent victims from disclosing child sexual abuse. These fears can lead to significant underreporting of cases, as victims may remain silent due to concerns about not being believed, facing reprisal, or causing family disruption, creating a culture of silence and enabling further abuse. Additionally, societal norms that prioritize family privacy and reputation over victim support contribute to nondisclosure. However, the research has underscored the pervasive influence of social factors such as fear of stigmatization, power differentials, and the lack of robust community support structures in perpetuating the silence surrounding child sexual abuse. Societal norms that stigmatize victims of sexual abuse and perpetuate victim-blaming attitudes discourage victims from disclosing their experiences. Social isolation and lack of support networks among victims and their families contribute to nondisclosure, as they may feel they have no one to turn to or fear being ostracized.

Cultural beliefs and values that emphasize family honor, shame, and silence contribute to nondisclosure. Furthermore, cultural norms that prioritize respect for authority figures and elders can prevent victims from speaking out against abuse. Moreover, the profound impact of cultural norms, taboos, and deeply ingrained beliefs has been illuminated, highlighting the formidable barriers that victims and witnesses face in disclosing such traumatic experiences. Religious or spiritual beliefs that emphasize forgiveness and reconciliation can sometimes be used to silence victims and perpetuate abuse. Cultural practices that prioritize family harmony and avoidance of conflict can lead to nondisclosure, as victims may be encouraged to keep quiet to maintain family unity.

Furthermore, the investigation into the effects of non-disclosure has revealed the devastating toll on the victims, with the prolonged silence exacerbating trauma, compromising mental well-being, and hindering the path to recovery and support. Victims who choose not to speak out about their abuse may experience heightened emotional distress, including increased feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blame, which can exacerbate their trauma and perpetuate a cycle of suffering. This can make it even more difficult for them to seek help and reveal the abuse. Keeping the abuse secret can lead to feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, and despair, increasing the risk of self-harm and suicide among victims. Those who do not disclose may encounter challenges in forming healthy relationships and may be more prone to engaging in risky behaviors or developing mental health issues.

It is essential to create and execute specific interventions, educational initiatives, and community-based programs to tackle the intricate issues related to the concealment of child sexual abuse. By promoting a culture of transparency, empathy, and empowerment, we can break down the barriers posed by social and cultural influences, prioritizing the well-being, recovery, and support of survivors. This will contribute to establishing a safer and more supportive environment for them to disclose their experiences and seek assistance.

In conclusion, the research serves as a clarion call for concerted efforts to reshape societal attitudes, challenge cultural taboos, and provide unwavering support for victims, ultimately paving the way for a more compassionate and protective environment within our communities.

5:3 Recommendations:

5.3.1 Community Education and Awareness Programs:

Develop and implement community-based programs and awareness campaigns tailored to address the social and cultural factors that perpetuate the silence around child sexual abuse, aiming to educate and empower individuals, families, and communities to break down the barriers to disclosure and support survivors in speaking out and seeking help. These initiatives should aim to challenge stigmatizing attitudes, dismantle cultural taboos, and foster open dialogue to create a supportive environment for victims and witnesses. This is to encourage victims to disclose their experiences and seek help through public awareness campaigns and community outreach.

5.3.2. Culturally Sensitive Support Services:

Set up support services that are culturally sensitive and responsive, acknowledging and respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds, values, and beliefs within the community, to provide a safe and inclusive environment for individuals from all cultural backgrounds to seek help and support. These services should be designed to provide a safe and understanding space for victims to disclose and seek assistance without fear of judgment or reprisal. There should also establishment of support networks and hotlines for victims and their families to provide a safe and confidential reporting mechanism.

5.3.3. Capacity Building for Community Support Structures:

Provide training and capacity building for community support structures, including religious leaders, community elders, and social workers, to effectively respond to disclosures of child sexual abuse. This would involve equipping these stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to offer empathetic support and guidance to victims. Engage with community leaders and religious authorities to promote a culture of support and disclosure.

5.3.4. Legal and Institutional Reforms:

Advocate for legal and institutional reforms aimed at providing greater protection and support for victims of child sexual abuse. This could entail reinforcing legal structures, guaranteeing access to justice, and enacting policies that prioritize the welfare and rights of the victims. Professionals can also introduce hotlines and support networks for victims and their families to provide a safe and confidential reporting system.

5.3.5. Mental Health and Trauma Support:

Enhance access to mental health and trauma support services acknowledging the significant impact of not disclosing the abuse on the well-being of survivors of childhood sexual abuse. These services should be customized to meet the unique requirements of survivors and offer sustained assistance for their healing and rehabilitation. This can be done through development of support groups and peer support programs for victims to share their experiences and receive support.

5.3.6. Collaborative Community Engagement:

Foster collaborative community engagement through partnerships with local organizations, educational institutions, and healthcare providers to create a network of support for victims and survivors. This collaborative approach can help address the interplay of social, cultural, and psychological factors contributing to non-disclosure. Professionals should collaborate with community leaders and religious figures to foster an environment that encourages support and openness.

By putting these suggestions into action, we can strive to establish a more empathetic, empathetic, and encouraging atmosphere that empowers survivors of child sexual abuse to step forward, seek assistance, and commence their journey towards healing and recovery.

5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave an overview of the discoveries, presented conclusions, and detailed suggestions to fill the identified gaps in the study. The recommendations concentrated on ways to improve the reporting of child sexual abuse in the Budiro community of Harare, Zimbabwe.

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APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEW

My name is Tariro Gondo and I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education, studying studying towards the degree of Social Work. As part of completing the degree program, each student is required to conduct individual research on a topic of their choice. Therefore, I am conducting a research on the topic **‘Factors influencing the Non-Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse amongst community members: A Case of Budiro, Harare, Zimbabwe.** This questionnaire aims to gather valuable insights into the social, cultural, and victim- related factors influencing the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse within the community of Budiro, Harare, Zimbabwe. You are kindly requested to be one of the key informants in this research study. Be reminded that your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and will be used strictly for academic purposes. Also, your participation in this study is voluntary. I am going to engage you in an interview which will not last for more than 30 minutes as part of data collection. You may choose to excuse yourself at any part during the interview.

Start Time:

Date:

QUESTIONS

Demographics:

1. Gender:

- Male

- Female

- Other (please specify)

2. Age:

- 18-25

- 26-35

- 36-45

- 46-55

- 56 and above

3. Marital Status:

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed

4. Number of Children (if applicable):

- None
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5 or more

5. Level of Education:

- No formal education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Vocational/technical training
- College/University

Section B: To examine the social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Social factors

1. In your opinion, how comfortable is your community discussing issues related to child sexual abuse openly?
2. Do you believe there is a stigma attached to families who disclose incidents of child sexual abuse in your community?
3. To what extent do you think social norms and expectations influence the reluctance to report child sexual abuse cases?

Section C : To examine cultural factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

1. How does your cultural background shape the perception of child sexual abuse within your community?

2. Are there traditional beliefs or practices in your culture that discourage the disclosure of child sexual abuse incidents?

3. Do you think cultural norms contribute to a hesitancy to report child sexual abuse cases in your community?

Section D : To investigate the effects of non-disclosure on the victims.

1. Have you observed any long-term emotional or psychological effects on individuals who have experienced child sexual abuse but did not disclose it?

2. How do you think non-disclosure impacts the ability of victims to seek appropriate support or intervention?

3. In your opinion, what are the potential consequences for a victim's overall well-being when incidents of child sexual abuse remain undisclosed?

Section E: Justice System and Child Abuse

1. In your opinion, how effective do you believe the justice system in Zimbabwe is in addressing and resolving cases of child sexual abuse?
2. Have you or anyone you know ever reported a case of child sexual abuse to law enforcement or legal authorities in Zimbabwe?
3. If yes, please share your or their experience in dealing with the justice system.
(Open-ended response)
4. To what extent do you think the legal processes and procedures in Zimbabwe support and assist victims of child sexual abuse in their journey towards justice and recovery?

Section F

1. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding the issue of child sexual abuse or its non-disclosure in your community? (Open-ended response)

APPENDIX 2: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

My name is Tariro Gondo and I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education, studying towards the degree of Social Work. As part of completing the degree program, each student is required to conduct individual research on a topic of their choice. Therefore, I am conducting a research on the topic **‘Factors influencing the Non-Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse amongst community members: A Case of Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe.** This questionnaire aims to gather valuable insights into the social, cultural, and victim-related factors influencing the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse within the community of Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe. You are kindly requested to be one of the key informants in this research study. Be reminded that your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and will be used strictly for academic purposes. Also, your participation in this study is voluntary. I am going to engage you in an interview which will not last for more than 30 minutes as part of data collection. You may choose to excuse yourself at any part during the interview.

Start Time:

Date:

QUESTIONS

Demographics:

1. Gender:

- Male

- Female

- Other (please specify)

2. Age:

- 18-25

- 26-35

- 36-45

- 46-55

- 56 and above

3. Marital Status:

- Single

- Married

- Divorced

- Widowed

4. Number of Children (if applicable):

- None

- 1-2

- 3-4

- 5 or more

5. Level of Education:

- No formal education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Vocational/technical training
- College/University

Section B: To examine the social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Social factors

1. In your opinion, how comfortable is your community discussing issues related to

child sexual abuse openly?

2. Do you believe there is a stigma attached to families who disclose incidents of child sexual abuse in your community?

3. To what extent do you think social norms and expectations influence the reluctance to report child sexual abuse cases?

Section C : To examine cultural factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

1. How does your cultural background shape the perception of child sexual abuse within your community?

2. Are there traditional beliefs or practices in your culture that discourage the disclosure of child sexual abuse incidents?

3. Do you think cultural norms contribute to a hesitancy to report child sexual abuse cases in your community?

Section D : To investigate the effects of non-disclosure on the victims.

1. Have you observed any long-term emotional or psychological effects on individuals

who have experienced child sexual abuse but did not disclose it?

2. How do you think non-disclosure impacts the ability of victims to seek appropriate support or intervention?

3. In your opinion, what are the potential consequences for a victim's overall well-being when incidents of child sexual abuse remain undisclosed?

Section E: Justice System and Child Abuse

1. In your opinion, how effective do you believe the justice system in Zimbabwe is in addressing and resolving cases of child sexual abuse?

2. Have you or anyone you know ever reported a case of child sexual abuse to law enforcement or legal authorities in Zimbabwe?

3. If yes, please share your or their experience in dealing with the justice system.
(Open-ended response)

4. To what extent do you think the legal processes and procedures in Zimbabwe support and assist victims of child sexual abuse in their journey towards justice and recovery?

Section F

1. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding the issue of child sexual abuse or its non-disclosure in your community? (Open-ended response)

Interview questions

1. How does the fear of judgment from the community impact an individual's decision to disclose incidents of child sexual abuse?
2. In what ways do community attitudes and beliefs about privacy influence the willingness of individuals to report cases of child sexual abuse?
3. To what extent does the lack of awareness about available support services contribute to the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse in the community?
4. How does the community's perception of gender roles impact the reporting of child sexual abuse cases?

5. How do traditional cultural beliefs regarding family honor affect the likelihood of disclosing child sexual abuse within the community?
6. To what extent do cultural norms around hierarchical structures within the community impact the reporting of child sexual abuse cases
7. How do cultural expectations of maintaining harmony within the community contribute to the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse?
8. In what ways do cultural taboos surrounding discussions of sexuality hinder open conversations about child sexual abuse?
9. How does the lack of immediate support for victims impact their psychological well-being when incidents of child sexual abuse remain undisclosed?
10. In what ways does the delayed disclosure of child sexual abuse affect the ability of victims to access appropriate medical and therapeutic interventions?
11. How do societal reactions to disclosed cases of child sexual abuse compare to those cases that remained undisclosed in terms of the support offered to victims?
12. To what extent does the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse contribute to a perpetuation of abuse within families or the community?

APPENDIX 3: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDES

My name is Tariro Gondo and I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education, studying towards the degree of Social Work. As part of completing the degree program, each student is required to conduct individual research on a topic of their choice. Therefore, I am conducting a research on the topic **‘Factors influencing the Non-Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse amongst community members: A Case of Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe.** This questionnaire aims to gather valuable insights into the social, cultural, and victim-related factors influencing the non-disclosure of child sexual abuse within the community of Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe. You are kindly requested to be one of the key informants in this research study. Be reminded that your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous and will be used strictly for academic purposes. Also, your participation in this study is voluntary. I am going to engage you in an interview which will not last for more than 30 minutes as part of data collection. You may choose to excuse yourself at any part during the interview.

Start Time:

Date:

QUESTIONS

Demographics:

6. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other (please specify)

7. Age:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45

- 46-55

- 56 and above

8. Marital Status:

- Single

- Married

- Divorced

- Widowed

9. Number of Children (if applicable):

- None
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5 or more

10. Level of Education:

- No formal education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Vocational/technical training
- College/University

Section B: To examine the social factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

Social factors

4. In your opinion, how comfortable is your community discussing issues related to child sexual abuse openly?

5. Do you believe there is a stigma attached to families who disclose incidents of child sexual abuse in your community?

6. To what extent do you think social norms and expectations influence the reluctance to report child sexual abuse cases?

Section C : To examine cultural factors that contribute to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse.

4. How does your cultural background shape the perception of child sexual abuse within your community?

5. Are there traditional beliefs or practices in your culture that discourage the disclosure of child sexual abuse incidents?
6. Do you think cultural norms contribute to a hesitancy to report child sexual abuse cases in your community?

Section D : To investigate the effects of non-disclosure on the victims.

4. Have you observed any long-term emotional or psychological effects on individuals who have experienced child sexual abuse but did not disclose it?
5. How do you think non-disclosure impacts the ability of victims to seek appropriate support or intervention?
6. In your opinion, what are the potential consequences for a victim's overall well-being when incidents of child sexual abuse remain undisclosed?

Section E: Justice System and Child Abuse

5. In your opinion, how effective do you believe the justice system in Zimbabwe is in addressing and resolving cases of child sexual abuse?

6. Have you or anyone you know ever reported a case of child sexual abuse to law enforcement or legal authorities in Zimbabwe?

7. If yes, please share your or their experience in dealing with the justice system.
(Open-ended response)

8. To what extent do you think the legal processes and procedures in Zimbabwe support and assist victims of child sexual abuse in their journey towards justice and recovery?

Section F

1. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding the issue of child sexual abuse or its non-disclosure in your community? (Open-ended response)

APPENDIX 4: CONSENT FORM



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Introduction

Dear Participant,

My name is Tariro Gondo. I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education pursuing a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. As part of the requirements of the degree, the student is required to carry out a research project, which I kindly invite you to participate in. Before you decide to participate in the research, you are free to talk to anyone you feel comfortable about the research. If there may be some words, you do not understand you are free to ask, and I will explain. I am therefore kindly asking you to help me in carrying out my research by taking a few minutes of your time to respond to the following questions as openly and freely as you

can. Your cooperation and support are greatly appreciated.

Title of the study

Factors influencing the Non-Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse amongst community members: A Case of Budiro, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Purpose of the study

To investigate the prevalence and factors influencing non-disclosure of child sexual abuse in the Budiro community of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Ethical considerations; privacy, confidentiality and voluntary participation

Be reminded that your participation in this study and in this interview is confidential. Your responses will be treated with confidentiality and will **ONLY** be used for the purposes of this research. Your participation is based on voluntary basis. Therefore, you have the power to decide whether you feel comfortable or not to be interviewed. You may decide to withdraw from the interview at any moment.

Contact details

If you have any other questions you can contact me on the following details

Email; tariropgondo@gmail.com

Phone number; +263712501979

If you are willing to partake and contribute to and in the study, you can kindly fill your details in the spaces below.

Participant signature (pseudonym)

Signature of researcher.....

Date.....


With thanks

Tariro Gondo

APPENDIX 5: APPROVAL LETTER 1 FOR DATA COLLECTION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

P. Bag 1020
BINDURA, Zimbabwe
Tel: 263 - 71 7531-6, 7621-4
Fax: 263 71 7534



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: 17/02/24

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to introduce the bearer, TARIRO GONDO, Student Registration Number B2008908, who is a BSc SOCIAL WORK student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area/institution.

May you please assist the student to access data relevant to the study, and where possible, conduct interviews as part of a data collection process.

Yours faithfully,

MR L.C. Nyamaka
Acting Chairperson - Social Work

22 NOV 2023

CHILDLINE ZIMBABWE
31 FRANK JOHNSON AVENUE
FASTLEA, HARARE
TEL: 0242 796741 / 0242 252000
P.O. 7, 2001

APPENDIX 6: APPROVAL LETTER 2 FOR DATA COLLECTION

5544 Platinum Road
Zimre Park

Childline Zimbabwe
31 Frank Johnson Avenue
Eastlea

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Permission to Conduct Research on Factors Leading to Non-disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse.

My name is Tariro Gondo. I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education. I am pursuing a bachelor's degree in Social Work. My student identification number is B200890B. I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your organization on the factors leading to non-disclosure of child sexual abuse among community members, with a case study focused on Budiriro, Harare, Zimbabwe. As a researcher committed to understanding and addressing the challenges faced by children in our community, I believe that this study has the potential to contribute valuable insights that can inform interventions and support services for survivors of child sexual abuse.

The purpose of this research is to explore the underlying reasons why incidents of child sexual abuse often go unreported or undisclosed in the community of Budiriro. By conducting interviews and surveys with community members, as well as engaging with relevant stakeholders, I aim to identify the barriers, stigmas, and other factors that prevent individuals from speaking out about these critical issues. Furthermore, I hope to shed light on the impact of non-disclosure on the well-being of the affected children and the community as a whole. I understand the sensitive nature of this research, and I am committed to upholding the highest ethical standards throughout the study. All data collected will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and respect for the participants involved. Additionally, I am willing to collaborate with Childline Zimbabwe to ensure that the research process aligns with your organization's mission and values.

Thank you for considering my request. I look forward to the possibility of working together to contribute to the well-being and protection of children in the Budiriro community.

Sincerely,

Tariro Gondo

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