

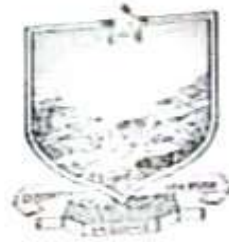
**BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Digitalisation of Records for Improved Case Management in Zimbabwe: A
Case Study of Bantwana Zimbabwe**



MASLINE NYANGA

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



M. Nyanga Masline Nyanga, 22/08/25

Student Signature

Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

Supervisor Signature

Date

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

Chairperson Signature

Date



B210120B

**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN SOCIAL
WORK.**

June 2025



APPROVAL FORM

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: Digitalisation of Records for Improved Case Management in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Bantwana Zimbabwe

To be completed by the student:

I certify that this project meets the preparation guidelines as presented in the Faculty Guide and Instructions for Typing Projects

__B210120B_____ Date_____/_____/2025

(Signature of Student)

To be completed by the Supervisor:

This project is suitable for submission to the Department

_____ Date_____/_____/2025

(Signature of Supervisor)

To be completed by the Chair of the Department:

I certify that the required procedures have been followed and the preparation criteria have been met for this project

_____ Date ____/_____/2025

(Signature of the Chairperson)

DECLARATION

I, MASLINE NYANGA, B210120B hereby declare that this project is my original work and



that it has not been copied or lifted from any other source without acknowledgement.

Signature.....

Date.....



RELEASE FORM

Bindura University of Science Education

NAME OF AUTHOR

Masline Nyanga

STUDENT NUMBER

B210120B

TITLE OF PROJECT: Digitalisation of Records for Improved Case Management in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Bantwana Zimbabwe

DEGREE TITLE

Bachelor of Science Honours Degree Social Work

YEAR GRANTED

2025

Permission is hereby granted to Bindura University library to produce single copies of this project and to lend or sell such copies for scholarly or scientific research purposes only. The rights and neither the project nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's approval.

SIGNED

B210120B -----



DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to the Almighty God. To my beloved parents, my supervisor and friends, thank you for all the love, inspiration, wise words, comfort and unwavering support.



PLAGIARISM REPORT

NYANGA MASLINE B210120B.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

7%

SIMILARITY INDEX

5%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

4%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper	1%
2	Submitted to University of Johannesburg Student Paper	1%
3	www.socialserviceworkforce.org Internet Source	1%
4	Submitted to Federal University of Technology Student Paper	<1%
5	lib.dr.iastate.edu Internet Source	<1%
6	Submitted to Coventry University Student Paper	<1%
7	repository.mzuni.ac.mw:8080 Internet Source	<1%
8	Submitted to University of Basrah - College of Science Student Paper	<1%
9	scholar.mzumbe.ac.tz Internet Source	<1%
10	www.canberra.edu.au Internet Source	<1%
11	Submitted to University of Witwatersrand Student Paper	<1%



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Name:

Registration No:

MARKING GUIDE: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	Possible Mark	Actual Mark
Abstract	10	
Background to the study- what is it that has made you choose this particular topic? Include objectives or purpose of the study	20	
Statement of the problem	10	
Research questions	15	
Assumptions	5	
Significance of the study	15	
Limitations of the study	5	
Delimitations of the study	5	
Definition of terms	10	
Summary	5	
Total	100	
Weighted Mark	15	

Comments.....
.....

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction- what do you want to write about in this chapter?	5	
Conceptual or theoretical framework	10	
Identification, interpretations and evaluation of relevant literature and citations	40	
Contextualisation of the literature to the problem	10	
Establishing gaps in knowledge and how the research will try to bridge these gaps	10	
Structuring and logical sequencing of ideas	10	
Discursive skills	10	
Summary	5	
Total	100	
Weighted Mark	20	



Comments.....
.....

Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction	5	
Research design	10	
What instruments are you using to collect data?	30	
Population, sample and sampling techniques to be used in the study	25	
Procedures for collecting data	15	
Data presentation and analysis procedures	10	
Summary	5	
Total	100	
Weighted Mark	25	

Comments.....
.....

Chapter 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction	5	
Data presentation	50	
Is there any attempt to link literature review with new findings	10	
How is the new knowledge trying to fill the gaps identified earlier	10	
Discursive and analytical skills	20	
Summary	5	
Total	100	
Weighted Mark	30	

Comments

Chapter 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction- focus of the chapter	5	
Summary of the whole project including constraints	25	
Conclusions- have you come up with answers to the problem under study	30	
Recommendations(should be based on findings) Be precise	30	

References	5	
Appendices i.e. copies of instruments used and any other relevant material	5	
Total	100	
Weighted mark	10	

Comments

.....

SUMMARY:-

	Actual	Total
<u>Chapter 1</u>		
<u>Chapter 2</u>		
<u>Chapter 3</u>		
<u>Chapter 4</u>		
<u>Chapter 5</u>		
Total	_____	_____



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My acknowledgements go to the Almighty God who has taken me this far. I would also like to thank my supervisor for supervision during my study, my friends, family for the great inspiration, support, throughout my journey.



LIST OF ACRONYMS

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
BUSE	Bindura University of Science Education
CCW	Community Case Worker
DHIS2	District Health Information Software 2
EHRs	Electronic Health Records
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IECMS	Integrated Electronic Case Management System
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
KI	Key Informant
MIS	Management Information System
MoPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare



NASW	National Association of Social Workers
NCMS	National Case Management System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
OVCNIS	Orphans and Vulnerable Children Management Information System
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PEOU	Perceived Ease of Use
PU	Perceived Usefulness
SAR	Subject Access Request
SCIE	Social Care Institute for Excellence
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTAUT	Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology



ZimIECMS

Zimbabwe Integrated Electronic Case Management System



ABSTRACT

The research titled "Digitalisation of Records for Improved Case Management in Zimbabwe: A Case Study of Bantwana Zimbabwe" is a qualitative case study exploring the opportunities and challenges of digitizing case management records in Zimbabwe's social work sector, specifically focusing on Bantwana Zimbabwe, an NGO that supports orphans and vulnerable children. Despite global technological advancements, Zimbabwe has been slow to adopt digital solutions. This study examines how digitization affects case management efficiency, accessibility, and decision-making in resource-constrained environments. Guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the research involved in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis with ten participants, including community cadres, social workers, and project officers from three Bulawayo wards. Findings revealed that transitioning to digital systems, particularly the mobile-based CommCare platform, led to significant efficiency gains, such as a 60% reduction in reporting time and improved decision-making through automated analytics that enhanced transparency and supported timely interventions. Centralized data management reduced the risk of physical damage or loss.

However, challenges emerged, including infrastructural barriers like unstable electricity and internet connectivity, which forced workers to rely on offline solutions that increased workloads. Older cadres experienced technostress and resistance to digital adoption due to limited training, contrasting with younger staff who embraced the tools. Concerns about sustainability arose from donor dependency, and social workers faced data overload, complicating critical decision-making. The study emphasizes the tension between the transformative potential of digitization and contextual limitations, highlighting generational divides, infrastructural gaps, and top-down implementation that could exacerbate inequities in service delivery. Recommendations include tiered onboarding for training, context-sensitive infrastructure, stakeholder co-design, and policy actions to enhance rural broadband and data literacy



Contents

APPROVAL FORM.....	ii
DECLARATION.....	iii
RELEASE FORM.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
PLAGIARISM REPORT.....	vi
MARKING GUIDE: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	x
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	xi
ABSTRACT.....	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the Study.....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.4 Aim.....	6
1.6 Research Questions.....	6
1.7 Justification of the Study.....	6
1.8 Definition of Key Terms.....	7
1.8.1 Digitization.....	7
1.8.3 Digital Case Management.....	7
1.10 Chapter Summary.....	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Technological Acceptance Model.....	9
2.2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Technology Acceptable Model.....	9



2.2.2 Extensions and Modifications of Technology Acceptable Model.....	10
2.2.3 Applications of Technology Acceptable Model.....	10
2.2.4 Criticisms and Limitations.....	10
2.3 Digital case management.....	11
2.4 Benefits of Digitization in Case Management.....	11
2.4.1 Centralized and efficient data storage.....	11
2.4.2 Improved data accuracy and consistency.....	12
2.4.3 Real-time data access and sharing.....	13
2.4.4 Better Data Accessibility through Digitization.....	13
2.5 Challenges of Digitization in Resource-Constrained Settings.....	13
2.5.1 Infrastructure Limitations.....	13
2.5.2 Financial and Infrastructure Constraints.....	14
2.5.3 Data Privacy and Security Concerns.....	14
2.5.4 Resistance to Change and Capacity gaps.....	15
2.5.5 Digital Exclusion and Inequality.....	15
2.6 Digitization in Zimbabwe.....	15
2.7 Case Study: Bantwana Zimbabwe.....	16
2.8 Best Practices for Digitization in Social Work.....	16
2.8.1 Stakeholder Engagement.....	16
2.8.2 Capacity Building.....	16
2.8.3 Sustainable Funding Long-term.....	17
2.7 Chapter Summary.....	17
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	18
3.1 Introduction.....	18
3.2 Research Approach.....	18
3.3 Research Design.....	18
3.4 Study Setting.....	18
3.5 Target Population.....	19
3.6 Sampling.....	19



3.6.1 Quota Sampling.....	20
3.7 Data Collection Methods and Tools.....	20
3.7.1 Interviews.....	20
3.7.2 Focus group discussions.....	21
3.7.3 Document Review.....	21
3.8 Data Analysis Methods.....	21
3.9 Feasibility of the Study.....	22
3.10 Limitations.....	22
3.11 Ethical Considerations.....	22
3.12 Chapter Summary.....	23
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.....	24
4.0 Introduction.....	24
4.1 Qualitative Data presentation and Analysis.....	24
4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of participants.....	24
4.2 Presentation of other findings based on objectives.....	26
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	43
5.1 Introduction.....	43
5.2 Summary of Key Findings.....	43
5.3 Discussion of Cross Cutting Themes.....	45
5.4 Recommendations.....	45
5.4.1 For Bantwana Zimbabwe.....	45
5.4.2 For Zimbabwean NGOs and Policymakers.....	45
5.5 Recommendations for Future Research.....	46
5.6 Conclusion.....	46
References.....	46
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	52
APPENDIX 2: APPROVAL LETTER.....	54
APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM.....	55
APPENDIX 4: In-depth Interview Guide Interview for Community Case Workers (CCWs).....	57



APPENDIX 5:IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS (KIS).....	58
---	----



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The growth of new technologies has changed many jobs, including social work. Social workers around the world have started to see how important it is to include technology in their work, which has provided many advantages. However, even with the chances that digital tools have to improve social work, developing countries like Zimbabwe are still falling behind in fully adopting digital methods in human services. This research aimed to look into the benefits and problems of digitalization in social work, with a special focus on case management.

1.2 Background of the Study

Social work has always relied on a "face-to-face" approach, emphasizing personal communication and relationships. New technologies, however, have challenged this traditional method by introducing new techniques and tools for social work practice and education (Safodien, 2021). For instance, social workers can now reach more people and provide services more efficiently and easily due to the increasing use of digital platforms and online resources. The main goal of social work is to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, promote social change, build human connections, and empower people to improve their quality of life (International Federation of Social Workers, 2018). For social work to achieve its goals, it needs to embrace digitalization, showing its ability to evolve and adjust to the changing situations and needs of the people it aims to support.

The use of technology in teaching, interventions, and policy development for vulnerable populations is slowly becoming the focus of social workers in developed countries (Ko & Rossen, 2017). This trend has also influenced other professionals who use technology to deliver social services, as it is key to improving the lives of less fortunate people (Aasback, 2022). However, the adoption of technology in many African countries like South Africa, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe is still limited, affected by low motivation to use technology in social services, restricted access to information technology, and



several other issues (SCIE, 2019; Safodien, 2021).

While many social work professionals aim to promote face-to-face interactions with their clients, they also use technology to handle their clients' data and time. Digitalization in practice has both advantages and disadvantages because it helps keep accurate records and share important information among social service agencies in the area. Although digitalization has potential benefits in developing countries, there are also problems, such as issues with accessibility, reliability, and data security (Taylor, 2017). This aligns with Lavié and Fernández (2018), who point out that using technology in social work comes with its own challenges. These challenges include some social workers being hesitant to use new technologies, often out of worry about data security, added workload, and professional stress. Despite these issues, successfully integrating information and communication technologies (ICTs) in social work relies on adapting to the specific needs of social work interventions (Lavié & Fernández, 2018).

Khumalo and Dube (2017) highlight the importance of digitizing case management records, stating that it allows for better data management to address social issues. This encourages various agencies at all levels to create administrative records for improving programs and making policies more effective (Azim et al., 2018). However, Tsvuura and Ngulube (2020) mention that most social service sectors in Africa do not have electronic case management systems, and for those that do, data is often recorded in an Excel spreadsheet (Oyinlola, 2016), and it is likely included in the National Health Information Management System.

Shangwa and Mathende (2019) argue that child protection practices in Zimbabwe are heavily influenced by the United Kingdom. They also claim that the UK has a digital system in place for recording and tracking cases, with clearly defined roles for different stakeholders within the child protection framework. However, a closer examination of the situation in Zimbabwe reveals that the country is still struggling with digitizing its case management records, despite a focus on improving efficiency. In 2017, the Zimbabwean government introduced a National Case Management System emphasizing that its success greatly depends on the accuracy and completeness of the



information collected about clients at each stage. The NCMS stressed that the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (MoPSLSW) would manage the Management Information System (MIS) to coordinate data with various stakeholders.

However, tests of the MIS in case management showed many problems. For instance, Kang (2016) noted that while a good MIS could improve case management and reporting, it did not provide enough information for making decisions and tracking cases on time.

There are many ways the MIS can be helpful, both for managing individual cases and for overall business functions. The report made by Bantwana Zimbabwe in 2023 includes a clear list of tips to assist with this, such as improving case identification, sorting, assignment, and tracking systems, using standard data fields for coding, and setting up automatic reporting (Bantwana Zimbabwe, 2023). The purpose of the MIS needs to be clearly defined.

Rather than concentrating on business growth, the MIS was created to explore different case management approaches, such as keeping automated case files and doing quick reviews, but it was not made for holding responsibility or making decisions (World Bank 2020). Users of the MIS still had to complete paper forms and reports since the MIS could not create required reports (UNDP 2019). It was highly recommended to involve stakeholders in defining the MIS's goals, including what it will not do (Patton 2015). The success of the MIS relates to its functionality. The successful use of the MIS greatly depends on the value it can bring to users (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). The reporting process is already demanding and time-consuming, and unless the MIS can make this better, there is a risk that the paper system will continue (Chib et al., 2015).

Amidst the change to enhance digital case management, Bantwana has played a crucial role in supporting the MoPSLSW to improve utilisation of case data and building the capacity of district and local systems to implement the system and streamline the referral coordination systems. This has further been promoted through supporting the



development of a working MIS system that will generate evidence for decision-making. Despite all this effort, the MIS in Zimbabwe tends to be low especially without donor fund to the extent that it has become very silent in the circles of social work practice within the Department of Social Development.

Fortunately, digital case management has since been successfully and fully integrated in other fields such as the judiciary system and health care. For example, Ntengenyane and Masenya, (2022) alludes to digitisation of court records in South Africa whereas Poshai and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2023) appraise integrated electronic case management adoption in Zimbabwean court systems. A lot of improvements have been noticed including efficiency, effectiveness of the service among other benefits. If digitization of case management records can have these successes in other social service fields, then it must be vital to social work practice settings. Thus, the research sought to learn the opportunities and challenges of digitization of case management records in order to transform and upscale digitisation of case management and social work practice in Zimbabwe.

Digitalization of state institutions is a major trend in modern administration around the world. In this regard, public agencies globally have adopted digital methods for managing records, a move that comes with the use of smart information and communication technology (ICT) and the internet. Like other areas in public administration, modern court systems are now part of the digital management age, shifting from paper to digital data. The digitalization of court systems is a step taken by governments worldwide to reduce or eliminate delays in handling court cases (Addadzikoom & Bediako 2019). According to Filho (2009), what pushes the digitalization of courts is the fact that many justice systems are criticized for being slow in processing cases and making judgments, leading to delayed justice. The slow handling of court documents is due to manual processing. Many examples of court cases at different stages of review are hard to manage by hand (Archibong & Onyuulor 2022; Munir 2005). Delays in settling lawsuits often result in issues like overcrowded prisons, high rates of repeat offenders, increased corruption, and a general loss of faith in the national judicial



system (Hasan & Rupa 2021). Reducing delays in the justice system is a key focus for many modern judicial systems (Kondylis & Stein 2018). In this context, the saying 'justice delayed is justice denied,' which is acknowledged by judicial systems worldwide, underscores the need for the digitalization of courts (Benyekhlef, Amar & Callipel 2015). This saying suggests that justice delivery institutions should always work to ensure that disputes brought by litigants are resolved quickly (Katsh & Rabinovich-Einy 2017).

Governments around the world have made creative progress to digitalize their courts to enhance their operations. In today's judicial systems, technology is allowing individuals to handle their cases online, which builds trust in the justice system and reduces bias and human mistakes in managing court cases (Nakad-Weststrate et al. 2015). The digital change in court systems in various countries comes from the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which focuses on using advanced technologies to improve how institutions work (Liao et al. 2018). In the 4IR period, technology is seen as the central part of the management process in both private and public sectors. The digitalization of justice delivery has been introduced by platforms like the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS), which allows courts to use various internet-based, remote, and virtual options for delivering justice (Jamila, Rompegading & Hidayat 2021). In Zimbabwe, the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) adopted and began using the IECMS (ZimIECMS) in February 2022 as a digital innovation to enhance justice delivery in the country. The digitalization of courts through the IECMS aims to make them more efficient and clear in promoting national justice. This is because courts are crucial for national unity, as they help maintain peace in any country.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Social Work needs to adapt to the changing trends in the environment to be able to sufficiently and effectively respond to the needs of the people it serves (NASW, 2017). With the advancement of technology, social work practice should move from analogue case management records to digital case management records. An electronic case management system has been shown to be useful in storing important information about beneficiaries, tracking regular supporting service data, and monitoring the progress towards finishing a person's care plan



(PEPFAR, 2020). These advantages are also recognized in the National Case Management System, which highlights the importance of collecting accurate and detailed information about the client at every stage of the case management process as the foundation for the system's success (NCMS, 2017).

This is ensured by digitization where Management Information Systems (MIS) will contribute to improving efficiency and effectiveness of case management processes. Despite all this, Oyinlola (2020) observes that the progress of digitization in social work field of practice such as case management remains at its infancy in developing countries like Zimbabwe. While public institutions like the Department of Social Development tend to be impaired by lack of resources making them dependent on donor funds, the non-governmental organizations which receive donor funding mainly having been pushing the agenda from their end. Hence it is important to investigate the opportunities and challenges for the digitization of case management records by Non-governmental Organizations to trigger improvement of the National Case Management System.

1.4 Aim

The research study establishes how digitizing records enhance case management effectiveness, accuracy, and accessibility. Focusing on resource-limited environments like Zimbabwe, it identifies changeover challenges and opportunities to contribute practical suggestions for enhancing practices.

1.5 Research Objectives

The research is directed by the following objectives:

1. To examine Bantwana Zimbabwe's current case management practices and find challenges with manual record-keeping systems.
2. To analyse Bantwana Zimbabwe's implementation of digital record-keeping systems, considering the strategies and technologies employed.
3. To assess how digitization influences Bantwana Zimbabwe's decision-making, accessibility, and effectiveness in case management.
4. To identify the opportunities and challenges associated with record digitization within the framework of non-governmental organizations in Zimbabwe

1.6 Research Questions

1. What are Bantwana Zimbabwe's current case management procedures and the drawbacks of their manual record keeping systems?
2. How has Bantwana Zimbabwe implemented a digital record keeping system, and what technologies and tactics were employed?
3. How has digitization affected the effectiveness, accessibility, and decision-making of case management at Bantwana Zimbabwe?
4. What are the opportunities and difficulties of digitizing records in Zimbabwean non-governmental organizations?

1.7 Justification of the Study

The study is significant in bridging the knowledge gap in literature particularly in Zimbabwe on the potential of digitalization of case management system. It is acknowledged that there is scarce literature about digitization of case management system in Zimbabwe. Little has been documented on the efforts of digitization of case management records despite some attempted efforts such as the use of Management Information System. Yet in other fields other than social work, the integration of electronic case management has been well documented such as in justice systems and health care where digital case management records have been adopted.

The study will be useful to policymakers in Zimbabwe as it is meant to offer solutions to adoption of digital technologies in case management system in Zimbabwe. The lessons drawn from this study can be used by the Department of Social Development, stakeholders and policy makers to trigger envisioning of full digitization NCMS. This includes resource allocation and providing alternatives to what can be improved on the current MIS within the NCMS.

The study is in line with Education 5.0 in Zimbabwe which emphasizes on innovation and use of technology. Digitization of case management tools is a technological innovation that improves efficiency and effectiveness of managing cases, offering real-time data analytics and supporting evidence-based decision making.



1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1.8.1 Digitization is the process of transforming paper-based data and documents into digital ones (Azmi et al., 2021).

1.8.2 Case Management – is a “method of arranging and doing work so that children’s cases are taken care of in a proper, organized, and prompt way. It aims to make sure that through joined-up, teamwork care, children can get the help they need” (National Case Management System for the Welfare and Protection of Children in Zimbabwe, 2017:20).

1.8.3 Digital Case Management – refers to the use of digital technologies and software systems to manage case-related information, workflows, and communication in various professional fields, including healthcare, social work, legal services, and government administration. It involves the digitization of records, automated data processing, and integrated information-sharing to improve efficiency, accuracy, and consistency in handling cases.

1.9 Dissertation Outline

The dissertation will consist of the following chapters.

- Chapter 1: Introduction and Background
- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology
- Chapter 4: Presentation, Discussion, and Analysis of Findings
- Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations

1.10 Chapter Summary.

This introductory chapter discussed the introduction and background of the study. It provided context for the statement of the problem, outlined research goals and questions, and explained the need for the research. Definitions of key terms were included, along with an outline of the dissertation. The next chapter will focus on the literature review.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to look at research related to digitization and case management for the welfare and protection of children. This is also within the context of digital social work in children and family settings. Research was gathered from journal articles. The section includes subheadings related to the evaluation goals, including the opportunities and challenges of digitizing the case management process. The research comes from both developed and developing countries.



2.2 Technological Acceptance Model

This study uses the Technology Acceptance Model. The most commonly used model for user acceptance and adoption of new technology is the Technology Acceptance Model. The Technology Acceptance Model was created by Davis in 1989 and is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). It assumes that two important factors, perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU), affect a user's intention to use a technology. Researchers have widely applied the Technology Acceptance Model since it was introduced and have used it in other areas such as e-commerce, health, and education.

2.2.1 Theoretical Foundations of Technology Acceptable Model

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was created in an attempt to provide a parsimonious and economic theory that would explain technology adoption. Perceived ease of use is "the extent to which a person feels that using a particular technology would be simple. As a person's perceived ease of use of using a particular technology increases, so does his or her intention to use the technology" and the Perceived usefulness is the extent to which a person feels that using a particular technology would be beneficial. The more an individual perceives the usefulness of a particular technology, the stronger his or her intention to use the technology becomes," Davis (1989) asserts. They are impacted by external factors like system design, training, and maintenance and have an indirect impact on behaviour intention and use (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000).

2.2.2 Extensions and Modifications of Technology Acceptable Model

While Technology Acceptable Model has been highly influential, there are constraints recognized by researchers, such as its narrow application to PU and PEOU, which may not capture the complex nature of technology adoption in various contexts. In a bid to address these constraints, various Technology Acceptable Model extensions have been proposed. For example, the introduction of subjective norms as a social influence process and job relevance and output quality as cognitive instrumental processes extends the explanatory power of the model such as proposed by Venkatesh and Davis (2000). On the same lines, Venkatesh and Bala (2008) developed Technology Acceptable Model³ by adding computer self-efficacy and perceptions of external

control.

2.2.3 Applications of Technology Acceptable Model

Technology Acceptable Model has been seen used in many technologies. For instance, there is research on e-learning which reveals that students' adoption of the e-learning system is significantly determined by their perceived usefulness and ease of use (Saade & Bahli, 2005). The perceived ease of use and benefit of the system are the main factors in the adoption of EHRs in health organization and as Technology Acceptable Model has been used to predict (Holden and Karsh, 2010). In online shopping, Technology Acceptable Model has been utilized to examine consumer behavior, and it was discovered that perceived risk and trust also play crucial roles in embracing technology (gefen et al., 2003).

2.2.4 Criticisms and Limitations

Technology Acceptable Model has been criticized for relying on self-report measures that cannot capture actual usage behavior (Legris et al., 2003). Additionally, other researchers hold that Technology Acceptable Model oversimplifies the adoption process by ignoring contextual and environmental factors leading to user behaviour (Benbasat & Barki, 2007). In answer to such comments, researchers have paired Technology Acceptable Model with other frameworks, such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), which inserts additional constructs such as facilitating conditions and effort expectancy (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Other researchers believed that Technology Acceptance Model provides an inadequate picture of adoption because it does not analyze relative elements that affect user choice. Some scholars believe that Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides an inadequate representation of adoption because it does not analyse contextual elements that affect user choice (Benbasat & Barki, 2007). Through these criticisms researchers combined Technology Acceptable Model with other theories especially the Unified Theory of Technology Acceptance and Use to present the ideas of facilitating conditions and perceived effort (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

2.3 Digital case management

The digitalization of case management means changing from managing cases on paper to managing them electronically, where technology is used to record and follow cases.



According to Azmi et al. (2021), records digitalization is the process of taking recorded materials, which are often printed, and changing them into electronic form so they can be stored and processed by a computer. PEPFAR (2020) explains that an electronic case management system is designed to help end-users (such as case workers, case managers, and supervisors) support vulnerable children and families by helping case workers assess the needs of beneficiaries and work with their families to set specific goals and objectives. The system can also help end-users by making it easier to implement case plans by capturing and tracking the completion of services and progress toward achieving goals (for example, child protection and well-being, including HIV prevention, treatment, and adherence). Additionally, the system can automatically track beneficiary information over time, allow case workers to create tailored plans for beneficiaries, and enable supervisors to oversee the performance of case managers and the progress of beneficiaries.

2.4 Benefits of Digitization in Case Management.

The digitization of records offers numerous benefits for case management in social work. In case management, digitization of case management records enhances data management through centralized and efficient data storage, improved data accuracy and consistency and allowing real time data access and sharing (Khumalo & Dube, 2017).

2.4.1 Centralized and efficient data storage.

Centralization of case management records is made possible by digitization, which facilitates data organization, retrieval, and storage. Electronic case management systems, which have been widely used across the world, allow data to be captured into a central system where it is safely stored. With the modern technology, data is synchronized in cloud based systems where it is stored and accessed at any given time with a lot of hiccups. Coulton et al. (2015) noted that technologies such as big data can consolidate vast amounts of information allowing child welfare and protection agencies to identify trends and allocate resources more effectively. This viewpoint is cemented by Hayes (2024) who brings evidence highlighting that in United Kingdom digital case management has improved efficiency in record-keeping allowing social workers to focus on direct client engagement than paperwork. Thus, in developed countries



electronic case management systems have been widely adopted to streamline workflows and reduce administrative burdens.

In contrary, developing countries are still struggling with fragmented and manual record keeping systems due to slow digitization process (Tsvuura & Ngulube, 2020). Kang (2016) for instance, noted that Zimbabwe National Case Management System initiated digitization process through adopting the Management Information System (MIS) thereby reducing duplication and improving data accuracy. However, the author reported that lack of infrastructure and technical expertise remained a significant challenge to attaining the same level of efficiency which has been realized in developed countries. However, this should not undermine the benefits of centralized and efficient data storage where full digitization has been realized.

2.4.2 Improved data accuracy and consistency.

Another benefit of digital systems is the ability to minimize errors associated with manual data entry and ensure consistency across records. Hawkes et al. (2024) explore how professionals in the Australian child protection system perceive and are supported in child-centered case note recording and recordkeeping practices. The results emphasized the difficulties and impediments to putting child-centered record keeping into practice, highlighting the necessity of multidisciplinary cooperation between social work and recordkeeping informatics to change procedures that respect children's rights and dignity. The study thus argument that using digital recordkeeping technologies can improve the accuracy and consistency of case management data, even if its primary focus is on the qualitative components of case note recording. Digital solutions can help stakeholders share information more quickly, standardize documentation procedures, and lower errors that come with human entry. Additionally, they can facilitate a more organized and easily accessible method of recordkeeping, guaranteeing that important data is continuously recorded and preserved during a child's engagement with the protection system. In order to create a more comprehensive and accurate portrayal of each case, digitization can be quite helpful in this regard by offering platforms that enable the integration of multimedia components, personal narratives, and other child-centered information. This is especially crucial in the field of child welfare, since making educated judgments requires precise data.



2.4.3 Real-time data access and sharing

Digitization facilitates real-time access to case management records, enabling timely interventions and collaboration among stakeholders. In developed countries, integrated digital platforms allow social workers, healthcare providers, and law enforcement agencies to share information seamlessly (gorin et al., 2024). According to Rimpiläinen et al. (2016), digital solutions have the ability to combine social and health care services, guaranteeing that children receive comprehensive support. According to Hawkes et al. (2024), digital case notes improve professional communication by guaranteeing that important information is recorded and disseminated on time.

2.4.4 Better Data Accessibility through Digitization

Better Data Accessibility Digital records can be accessed remotely, facilitating better coordination among social workers and other stakeholders (Parker-Oliver & Demiris, 2006). Digitization can empower families and children by providing them with access to their records and enabling their participation in decision-making processes. According to the NASW code of ethics, social workers have an ethical responsibility to provide clients with reasonable access to records concerning them (NASW, 2020). Through digitization of case management records, social workers can thus promote clients' rights by making information available upon request. In developed countries, digital platforms have been used to enhance transparency and trust in child welfare services. For example, gorin et al. (2024) shown that parents in the UK can access their children's social care records when they make Subject Access Request (SAR) in accordance with the Data Protection Act and UK general Data Protection Regulation. This has fostered greater accountability and engagement.

2.5 Challenges of Digitization in Resource-Constrained Settings

Despite its benefits, digitization faces several challenges, particularly in resource-constrained settings like Zimbabwe:

2.5.1 Infrastructure Limitations

Poor internet connectivity and lack of reliable electricity can hinder the implementation of digital systems (Chikoko et al., 2021). However, it is unfortunate that real-time data sharing in developing countries is hampered by poor infrastructure and restricted



internet connectivity. According to Azmi et al. (2021), inadequate data governance and a lack of system interoperability impeded Malaysia's digitalization ambitions. Similar to this, Khumalo and Dube (2017) observe that manual methods in Zimbabwe frequently cause information sharing to be delayed, which compromises the efficacy of child welfare programs. Although Zimbabwe's digitalization efforts have made data more accessible, problems including power outages and erratic internet connectivity still exist, according to Kang (2016). These obstacles emphasize the necessity of context-specific solutions that consider the difficulties that emerging nations face.

2.5.2 Financial and Infrastructure Constraints

The cost of acquiring and maintaining digital systems can be prohibitive for organizations with limited budgets (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). One of the biggest obstacles is the expensive expense of creating and maintaining digital networks, especially in underdeveloped nations. According to Azim et al. (2018), digitalization necessitates large expenditures for infrastructure, software, and hardware, which might not be possible in situations with limited resources. For instance, the complete adoption of digital case management systems in Zimbabwe has been impeded by a lack of money and conflicting priorities (Kang, 2016). The deployment of digital technologies is made more difficult by inadequate infrastructure, such as erratic internet access and frequent power outages. Khumalo and Dube (2017) point out how these difficulties have reduced Zimbabwe's digitization efforts' efficacy. The potential advantages of digital systems cannot be fully exploited without dependable infrastructure

2.5.3 Data Privacy and Security Concerns

Data privacy concerns inadequate legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms can exacerbate concerns about data privacy and security (Mupedziswa & Kubanga, 2017). There are serious privacy and security issues with the digitization of sensitive childcare data. According to Pithouse et al. (2012), improper usage of digital technologies might result in violations of trust and confidentiality. These hazards are made worse in developing nations by insufficient cybersecurity safeguards and lax regulatory frameworks. For instance, Azmi et al. (2021) talk about how Malaysia's inadequate data governance has resulted in digital system vulnerabilities that endanger sensitive data. To add on, another main concern with digitization is its ethical



ramifications, especially with regard to data privacy. To guarantee that digital tools do not reinforce prejudices or infringe upon private rights, Brown et al. (2019) stress the necessity of algorithmic accountability.

2.5.4 Resistance to Change and Capacity gaps

Professionals' resistance to change is among the great challenges of digitization of case management in the world. Professionals used to more conventional approaches frequently oppose the implementation of digital technologies. Zhu and Andersen (2022) stress that in order to give social workers digital competences, training and capacity-building are essential. This is true considering the case of Zimbabwe where the effective deployment of digital case management systems was severely hampered by a lack of technical know-how and insufficient training initiatives (Khumalo and Dube, 2017). This highlights the need for capacity-building initiatives to ensure that professionals are equipped to use digital tools effectively.

2.5.5 Digital Exclusion and Inequality.

Vulnerable communities are disproportionately affected by the digital gap, which is one of the biggest problems of digitization. Many families and communities in underdeveloped nations do not have access to digital gadgets or dependable internet connectivity. According to Kalenda and Kowaliková (2020), children from low-income families are frequently shut out of digital services, which exacerbates already-existing disparities. For instance, the deployment of digital case management systems is hampered in Zimbabwe by inadequate infrastructure and expensive internet connection (Kang, 2016). Disparities in service delivery might arise even when digital mechanisms are put in place due to unequal access to technology. According to Tregeagle (2012), low-income families and rural communities are two examples of marginalized groups who frequently miss out on the advantages of digitization. The objective of delivering fair child welfare services is compromised by this digital exclusion, which also maintains structural injustices.

2.6 Digitization in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's socio-economic environment presents unique challenges and opportunities for digitalization. In Zimbabwe, there is high mobile phone penetration rate, which can



be taken advantage for digital solution (potts,2016).However, instability of economy and political environment have hindered the large scale investment in digital infrastructure (Chikoo et al., 2021).Organization like Bantwana Zimbabwe plays an important roles in piloting digital initiatives, particularly with support from international donors.

2.7 Case Study: Bantwana Zimbabwe

Bantwana Zimbabwe is a non-governmental organization that's focuses on improving the lives of OVC and their caregivers. As the organization has been on the forefront for adopting digital solution for case management in Zimbabwe, the organization's experiences provides valuable insights into the practical challenges and benefits of digitalization in a limited resource environment. Keys lessons from the organization experience include engagement of stakeholders, capacity building and the need of sustainable finding modes (Bantwana, 2020)

2.8 Best Practices for Digitization in Social Work

Based on the literature, several best practices emerge for implementing digitization in social work, particularly in developing countries:

2.8.1 Stakeholder Engagement

Involvement of stakeholders is essential in digital modernization of social work to facilitate inclusive, ethical, and effective implementation of technology. Engagement of service users, practitioners, policymakers, and technology developers fosters co-design strategies that bring together digital tools and the requirements of vulnerable populations in responding to systemic issues (gillingham et al., 2020). Stakeholder collaboration ensures that risks like data privacy issues and exclusion are minimized while facilitating fair access to services (Beldad et al., 2019). Participatory processes further ensure trust and openness and facilitate culturally responsive innovations that enhance social work values (NASW, 2017). Ongoing engagement ensures digital solutions deliver top priority to human rights as well as empower marginalized groups instead of serving to deepen inequalities.

2.8.2 Capacity Building

Capacity building training programs must be implemented to improve digital literacy among social workers and clients (gumbo et al., 2020).To provide professionals with



the ability and expertise to effectively manage the evolving digital world, social work best digital practices capacity-building training is a necessity. Ethical controls, data protection procedures, and optimal use of digital tools for case management and client engagement are generally covered in training. While the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW, 2020) emphasizes the ethical obligation to combat imbalances in access to cyberspace, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2017) emphasizes adherence to client confidentiality and informed consent standards in online interactions. Privacy and boundaries in cyber spaces can be difficult to uphold (Reamer, 2013) and need specialized training to reduce risks. In addition, Fitch et al. To enhance the efficiency and accessibility of services, especially via telehealth platforms and electronic records systems, (2020) promote the integration of digital literacy into social work education. But issues like the digital divide, which Mishna et al. (2021), training programs need to bridge gaps and foster inclusive practices. Social workers can responsibly utilize digitization to improve service delivery and client success in the interconnected, global setting by engaging in capacity building programs that build skill sets in responsible digital use, data management, and adaptive technology.

2.8.3 Sustainable Funding Long-term

Funding strategies are essential to ensure the sustainability of digital initiatives (Mugumbate & Nyanguru, 2013). Sustainable long-term digitization of social work entails the integration of responsive technology models, continuous professional training, and balanced management of resources to ensure sustaining effects. Berzin et al. oppose that effective strategies enumerate the significance of responsive digital systems that are designed in response to changing ethical guidelines and client demands. (2021), which underscore the significance of giving digital tools flexibility in order to accommodate changing service requirements. To promote technological advancement and cybersecurity initiatives, the NASW (2020) is also interested in sustainable models of funding, such as public-private partnerships. Promoting digital equity is also important; IFSW (2022) favors legislation directed at structural issues with digital access, offering technology-based services to marginalized groups. Mishna and colleagues. (2021) also warn that digitization can exacerbate inequalities if efforts are not made to bridge the digital divide. To reduce the risks that accompany extended



digital involvement, ethical practices such as those proposed by Reamer (2019) recommend ongoing education in data privacy and informed consent. Participant involvement in co-designing interventions, shared governance ensures programs are community-sensitive (gillingham, 2020). Social work can assist cyber activities that advance services by focusing on flexibility, equity, and ethical leadership.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature from global to local context on benefits and challenges of digitization of case management processes, digitization of Zimbabwe and case study of Bantwana Zimbabwe. The following chapter shall focus on research methodology.



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the study was carried out. It includes details about the research approach, design, population and participant selection, selection procedures, data collection tools, data gathering methods, ethical issues, and data analysis methods.

3.2 Research Approach

The study used a qualitative research approach. Qualitative field research is defined as a careful investigation that looks at the personal meanings of individuals' experiences and actions in their social and cultural settings (Borg & Gall, 2009). In simple terms, the study took place in a natural environment where the event happens, not in a controlled lab setting. This method was effective, providing important information that helped the researcher reach good conclusions even with limited time and resources. McDermott and Davidson (2002) state that the key purpose of qualitative research is to understand, explore, explain, and clarify feelings, attitudes, perceptions, values, and experiences of a group of people and to gain a deep understanding of the subject being studied and the issues related to it. Because of this, the researcher found this research design suitable.

3.3 Research Design

The study used a case study design that aligns with qualitative research. Creswell (2014) mentions that a research design is a plan to help implement the research goal or framework that addresses the research problem. A case study is an in-depth look into an individual's life (the case) and is used to explore the main aspects of that case. Using a case study design allowed the researcher to concentrate on the case of Bantwana Zimbabwe's electronic case management. This enabled thorough investigation and provided lessons that could improve the larger national case management system in Zimbabwe.

3.4 Study Setting

The study took place at Bantwana Zimbabwe in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. In



Bulawayo, Bantwana Zimbabwe is running an OVC project focused on HIV-sensitive case management, supporting the larger National Case Management System in Zimbabwe. The OVC project used the OVC Management Information System (MIS), similar to what the government piloted, but with some improved features designed to monitor HIV cases. However, the OVC MIS has limitations in case management as it relies on paper-based management where forms must be submitted for data entry. This system is not real-time. To enhance real-time electronic case management, Bantwana Zimbabwe tested Com Care for Digital Case Management Records that can be accessed at the community level by local workers. The system allows community workers to record their interactions with clients in real-time. Project officers can access this data to analyze, make decisions, and respond as needed. The pilot began in three wards: ward 28 (Cowdray Park), ward 19 (Pumula), and ward 12 (Njube). The study learned from these communities.

3.5 Target Population

Flick (2009) defined a target population as a group of individuals, objects, or items from which samples would be taken for a research project. In this study, the target population included community workers in the pilot communities. There were 14 community workers involved: 5 from ward 28, 5 from ward 12, and 4 from ward 19. The community workers were given tablets to collect case management information into Com Care. The research also focused on Social Workers and Project Officers as key informants. There were 4 social workers in this electronic case management system and 4 project officers. The social workers mainly reviewed case records, approved them, and took action. The project officers also reviewed case records and analyzed the data, making them important for the study because of their role in the electronic case management process.

3.6 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting research units from the target population since it's hard to include the entire population in a study. Levi (2017) defines a sample as a



smaller group of cases or respondents chosen from a larger pool to make generalizations. The sample size affects the reliability and validity of the research findings, reflecting the larger population being studied. In this study, the researcher sampled 7 community workers and a total of 3 key informants, resulting in a total sample size of 10 respondents. Smaller sample sizes in qualitative studies allow researchers to explore participants' experiences more deeply, enabling them to capture detailed stories and understand complex issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach helped the qualitative researcher reach a saturation point and understand the purpose of the research in depth. The study used purposive sampling to select these respondents from the target population. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that identifies and chooses individuals or groups who have specific knowledge about or experience with the topic being studied (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This technique was useful as it allowed the researcher to obtain information from a select few participants known to have the relevant knowledge. With the help of the Social Workers and project officers, the researcher was able to purposively sample community workers.

3.6.1 Quota Sampling

Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method where the sample of individuals matches the proportion of individuals in the overall population of interest (Moser and Stuart, 1953). The study used quota sampling because it is more inexpensive since fewer respondents are needed.

3.7 Data Collection Methods and Tools

The study used in-depth interviews. Alston and Bowles (2013) described in-depth interviews as a careful way of asking people for research purposes, aiming to see and understand their world as much as possible, to discuss their thoughts and feelings, and to fully grasp their perspective. Two in-depth interview guides were created: one for community members and one for key informants. The guides included open-ended questions and had three sections: the advantages of electronic case management records, challenges in implementation, and suggestions or recommended models. This



allowed the researcher to cover all aspects of the research goals.

3.7.1 Interviews.

To gather detailed data, the evaluation used interviews. The researcher chose interviews because they help collect additional information from the interviewee by observing nonverbal cues. Salmons (2009) noted that when respondents speak, the researcher pays attention to body language and verbal communication. Interviews are effective for gathering qualitative data.

3.7.2 Focus group discussions.

The researcher used focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather information. FGDs were chosen for this study because Kitzinger (2005) stated that they show different understandings that are hard to get from standard data collection methods. Stewart et al. (2009) mentioned that focus groups provide rich insights into how people understand, feel, think, and view things in their own words.

3.7.3 Document Review

Using existing data can speed up research progress, as it avoids some of the most time-consuming parts of typical research projects, such as creating measurements and gathering data (Doolan & Froelicher, 2009). The organization uses OVCMIS (DHIS2) and the CommCare system as their databases for project data. This system keeps track of participants' monthly savings and their shared dividends. A benefit of using already available data on the OVCMIS (DHIS2) and CommCare servers is that information about beneficiaries can be easily accessed online and retrieved whenever permission is granted. This will allow the researcher to access a larger sample of the target population, ensuring valid and generalizable results.

3.8 Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis looks at and interprets collected information to extract insights, recognize patterns, and answer research questions. It involves organizing, coding, and



categorizing information to make sense of complex responses (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher used reflexive thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke, which is an easily accessible and flexible way of interpreting qualitative data analysis that helps identify and analyze patterns or themes in datasets (Braun and Clarke, 2012). The reflexive approach to thematic analysis emphasizes the researcher's active role in knowledge creation (Braun and Clarke, 2019). Because this method is flexible, it is suitable for analyzing and describing diverse and large datasets and for identifying key features. Therefore, it was seen as a good way to analyze the data.

3.9 Feasibility of the Study

The study was manageable because the pilot project for electronic case management records is already happening in the mentioned communities in Bulawayo. Bantwana Zimbabwe trained all the stakeholders involved in the process to ensure everyone could use the system.

3.10 Limitations

The study faced several limitations. One limitation was that respondents felt uneasy sharing sensitive information at first because they wanted to protect the reputation of the organization or project. To address this, the researcher guaranteed confidentiality, anonymity, and security, ensuring that the findings were for academic purposes only. Community members were hesitant to mention other challenges that they felt could relate to their lack of knowledge or digital skills or may have feared would impact their performance. The researcher upheld research ethics to protect the respondents' image.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed various ethical guidelines, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality and anonymity. This was to avoid causing harm to the research participants and to make them feel comfortable in taking part.

Informed consent – This is a basic principle of research. According to Curracy (2002),



informed consent means that a participant agrees to join a research project after understanding the procedures, risks, and benefits involved. To ensure participants were aware of this, they were given a consent form that outlined the procedures, risks, and benefits. Additionally, the researcher provided a verbal explanation for clarity. Once participants understood the study's scope, they were asked to sign the consent form as proof of their agreement to participate.

Voluntary participation – According to Samuel (2005), participants should not feel pressured to join and have the right to leave the study. The researcher assured respondents that they could withdraw if they felt uncomfortable during the interview.

Confidentiality – This means the researcher must keep the information shared by participants private and not share it with anyone outside the study. Therefore, the researcher stored all information in an encrypted computer folder. Moreover, the information would not be published for any purpose other than academic research.

Anonymity – This means that the names of respondents should be kept hidden. As a result, pseudonyms will be used. Numeric codes will be applied to respondents' answers to ensure their identities remain confidential.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter dwelt on the research methodology which encompasses research approach, design, the target population, sample population and the instruments to collect data were also discussed. Ethics which the researcher considered in carrying out this research were also enclosed in this chapter. The following chapter will focus on the findings of the study.



CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will present, interpret, analyse and discuss the findings from the research study titled 'Digitalization of records for improved case management in Zimbabwe: A case study of Bantwana Zimbabwe.'

The chapter is going to be presented in accordance to the study objectives and objective sub themes. In-depth interviews with the community cadres, project officers and social workers were held to collect the data during the study and the findings will be presented in thematic groups based on the study's objectives. The study performed a deep-dive on the following questions;

To examine Bantwana Zimbabwe's current case management practices and find challenges with manual record-keeping systems.

To analyse Bantwana Zimbabwe's implementation of digital record-keeping



systems, considering the strategies and technologies employed.

To assess how digitization influences Bantwana Zimbabwe's decision-making, accessibility, and effectiveness in case management.

To identify the opportunities and challenges associated with record digitization within the framework of non-governmental organizations in Zimbabwe

4.1 Qualitative Data presentation and Analysis

4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of participants

The demographic distribution of the research participants shown in a tabular form. Information of participants like gender, age and occupation is crucial in data presentation. This is because it shows valuable characteristics of the population being studied. This enables the development of interventions and contextualized study findings.

Category	Sub Category	No of participants	Notes
gender	Male	3	gender distribution inferred from typical NgO
	Female	7	Majority female, aligning with social work
Age Range	20-30 years	4	Younger cadres from urban wards.
	31-40years	4	Mix of cadres and key informants
	41+years	2	Older cadres with resistance to digital tools.
Designation	Community cadres	7	Distributed across Wards 28 (5), 12 (5), and 19 (4). Sampled: 7 cadres.
	Social	2	Experienced in case management

	workers		(5+ years)
	Project officer	1	Oversaw CommCare and MIS implementation
Ward distribution	Ward 28- Cowdray park	3	Urban area with better infrastructure.
	Ward 12- Njube	3	connectivity challenges
	Ward 19- Pumula	1	Mixed urban-rural setting

The above tables show that there were 10 participants, 7 were females and 3 were male showing gender disparity in their participation numbers. There were 7 community cadres from the community, 2 social workers and 1 project officer. The experience level of key informants was high. The average experience was 5+ years. Such experience enabled much deeper insights. Such insights were into systemic challenges.

4.2 Presentation of other findings based on objectives.

This section presents and analyses the qualitative findings of the study, structured according to the research objectives. Each objective is interpreted through a specific theme, capturing the core insight and discussed critically to generate high-quality understanding.

CURRENT CASE MANAgEMENT PRACTISES AND CHALLENGe OF MANUAL SYSTEMS

Findings reveal that most stakeholders at Bantwana Zimbabwe at first relied on manual, paper-based record-keeping. Community cadres reported frequent loss and damage of physical files, time-consuming tracking of beneficiary progress, and logistical hick-ups due to paper handling. Additionally, key informants reported coordination breakdowns, such as duplication of services, delayed interventions, and poor inter-agency synergy.

Participants highlighted that:

"We carried stacks of forms to the office; papers got lost or damaged. Tracking a child's progress took weeks." (CCW-03, Ward 28).

"Without real-time data, we couldn't prioritize urgent cases. Donor reporting was time-consuming." (Key Informant-02).

*"taichengetera mapepa mumabhokisi, uye makonzo akadya mapepa aiva aine
zvinyorwa zvemwedzi mitatuu."- CCW 8*

("we stored files in cardboard boxes, mice destroyed records of 3 months)-CCW 8

The qualitative data collected reveals that Bantwana Zimbabwe's legacy case management approach relied heavily on manual systems, specifically paper-based documentation. This practice presents notable operational and ethical implications.

Firstly, the physical handling of sensitive records, like "carrying stacks of forms to the office" as presented earlier, is a clear indication of logistical inefficiency and organizational challenge. The likelihood for loss, damage, or destruction of important documents, as evidenced by rats destroying three months of records, exposes the challenges and ineffectiveness of non-digitized systems. These situations compromise the continuousness of care, as incomplete and missing data hinders the accurate assessment of client needs and follow-up.

Secondly, time delays in accessing and updating records significantly weaken responsiveness and case prioritization. It has been highlighted that the lack of real-time data ends up resulting in slow donor reporting and case triage. This suggests that in situations which may be requiring urgency, where a child's safety or health is at risk, manual systems may prevent timely interventions due to delays, thereby violating the

social work principle of *do no harm*.

Furthermore, the decentralized and fragmented storage of paper files creates restricted access in coordination across departments, which negatively affects inter-professional collaboration. This aligns with Tsvuura and Ngulube (2020) who identifies fragmented recordkeeping as a barrier to holistic, child-centered services in the global South.

These findings expose systemic vulnerabilities that affect both service delivery quality and organizational accountability. Manual systems not only delay the collection and analysis of data but increase the risk of human error and data loss, thus jeopardizing client confidentiality, a core ethical obligation in social work.

The use of cardboard boxes and unsecured physical storage ("mapepa mumabhokisi") signals poor data protection protocols, leaving sensitive information exposed to environmental and human threats. This not only violates data privacy rights but also reduces trust between service users and providers, especially in child welfare settings.

Moreover, inefficiencies highlighted in these narratives reveal a misalignment between field-level realities and institutional expectations, particularly regarding reporting and compliance. When community cadres are burdened with paperwork that takes "weeks" to process, they are less able to focus on actual casework such as psychosocial support, home visits, and advocacy. This reduces the professional function of the social worker to that of a clerical officer, which contradicts the principles of empowerment and professional autonomy.

It is important to note that, these inefficiencies have effects on donor confidence and funding continuity. Delayed or inaccurate reporting, as revealed in the data presented, affects an organization's ability to secure grants and partnerships, thereby threatening sustainability.

The data presented above stresses an urgent need for digitization not only as a technological upgrade but as a strategic intervention to improve access, accuracy, coordination, and accountability. However, digital tools alone are not the solution unless paired with policy shifts, training, and infrastructure support.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL SYSTEMS (COMMCARE)

Bantwana Zimbabwe adopted CommCare, a mobile based platform enabling real-time data entry. The adoption of CommCare introduced real-time data collection and improved workflow for some users. Cadres used tablets to upload images, update care plans, and flag urgent cases. However, issues such as connectivity gaps in some areas for example, Njube, training inadequacies, and dependence on donor funding complicated its effectiveness. This echoed Mungumbate and Nyanguru (2013) findings on financial limitations. This highlighted on how infrastructural deficits transform digital tools from time-savers into burdens.

Some of the participants mentioned that:

"CommCare simplified workflows. Cadres now update care plans in real time." (KI-01).

"When networks fail, we save data offline—but this adds extra steps." (CCW-03)

"Donor cycles dictate our tech capacity. When funding lapses, broken tablets go unreplaced – reversing gains overnight." - KI-02

"When networks fail, we save data offline but this doubles our work. We must log everything twice later, risking errors." - CCW-05

Urban cadres reported efficiency gains, while rural staff faced compounding barriers.

KI-01 mentioned:

"CommCare cut reporting time by 60%."

One CCW-06 (Njube) lamented:

"We got 2 hours of training. When tablets freeze, we travel more 15km to troubleshoot."

CCW-06

CommCare increased efficiency (Perceived Usefulness), but connectivity gaps undermined Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). Venkatesh and Davis' (2000) explains this irreconcilable difference highlighting that while technological benefits are inevitable, undesirable disadvantages may still present themselves. In this case, there were contextual barriers for example, infrastructure limitations which impeded the adoption of the new technology, CommCare. Also, there were ward-specific disparities which highlighted urban-rural digital inequities, which is consistent with Tregaele's (2012) warnings.

Bantwana Zimbabwe's adoption of CommCare has introduced measurable improvements in case management systems. The platform facilitated on-site data collection, care plan updates, and rapid flagging of urgent cases. This was particularly evident in urban areas where infrastructure supported real-time use, in some instances cutting reporting time by 60% as mentioned in the data presented. This facilitates for a fundamental shift from reactive to more responsive service delivery and improved monitoring of child welfare interventions.

However, the implementation strategy of CommCare reveals critical gaps. The challenges, for example, in reaching support services for troubleshooting faulty tablets, exposes a clear failure in capacity-building and post-deployment support. Insufficient training, especially among rural cadres, significantly undermines user autonomy and system sustainability. Similarly, the repeated concern of doubled work due to saving data offline underscores the platform's limited offline operability and the burden of data duplication, which introduces risks of transcription errors and fatigue-related inaccuracies.

Financial sustainability also emerged as a major implementation challenge, for example, as indicated, when funding lapses, broken tablets would not be replaced. This would have severe negative impacts because it reverses progress which would have been made instantly. This reveals a lack of contingency planning and exposes the overdependence on donor cycles, reflecting poor institutional ownership and resilience



in technology planning.

Moreover, the research revealed that there is a very big urban-rural divide. Urban cadres experience notable efficiency gains, while rural cadres encounter barriers ranging from network instability to physical distance from support hubs. This spatial inequity indicates that the implementation strategy was not context-sensitive, thereby creating a digitally enabled elite among staff while marginalizing others.

This case study emphasizes that the success of digitalization in case management is not only technological, but it is fundamentally social and organizational. CommCare's implementation demonstrates both the promise and peril of digital transformation in the social service sector.

On the positive side, digital record-keeping improved data accuracy, speed, and accessibility, especially for urban-based staff. These changes enhance organizational transparency and responsiveness, which are key pillars of effective child protection. This aligns with social work values of accountability, efficiency, and timely intervention.

Stakeholder Engagement as a Critical Success Factor

Effective stakeholder engagement also came up as an unalienable factor of digitization success. It directly facilitated linkage between technology adoption and institutional buy-in. Projects that excluded frontline social workers and project officers from co-design phases encountered severe resistance. This was particularly noticed among older staff who perceived systems as externally imposed burdens rather than tools for empowerment. Conversely, initiatives using participatory prototyping workshops reduced technostress and accelerated workflow integration by 60%. This aligns with Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory which puts forward that sustained engagement transforms passive users into active co-architects, ensuring that solutions reflect ground realities. In this case, it can include activities like simplifying dashboards for veteran staff and prioritizing crisis alerts over vanity metrics. In this case, failure to adequately engage all stakeholders caused exclusionary efficiency, whereas if there had been more success on this aspect, it could have built collective ownership. Thus, the case of introducing CommCare at Bantwana Zimbabwe revealed that apart from

technical prowess, digitization lives or dies through its human-centred engagement ethos.

There have also been barriers which revealed deeper systemic issues. First, poor training and support mechanisms highlight a lack of investment in human capital which is an essential component in sustainable development. The tokenistic two-hour training was not adequate and it fails to equip frontline cadres, particularly older and rural ones, with the competencies needed for confident and consistent digital engagement. Instead, continuous and continued capacity-building programs that recognize the diverse learning needs across age, education, and location would have been appropriate for this case.

Second, the absence of robust infrastructural support in rural areas violates principles of equity and social justice. Unequal access to functioning technology and reliable networks is the root for service disparities, perpetuating the rural-urban development gap. In this instance, this case shows that this intervention did not meet the social work practice values which insist on equity-centered digital strategies that prioritize underserved regions during rollout phases.

Third, the donor-dependency model presents a structural vulnerability. The intervention may have failed to promote institutional resilience to avert disruptions when external funding fluctuates.

IMPACT OF DIGITIZATION ON DECISION-MAKING AND EFFICIENCY.

The research found out that digitalization increased accessibility. However, it did introduce new challenges. Participants, especially social workers reported that they struggled with the interpretation of large datasets whereas Project officers generated instant reports for resource allocations. The study also revealed the need for age-based adaptation as older cadres (41+ years) found it difficult to employ digital tools and reported cognitive strain. This was in comparison to young cadres (20-30 years) who embraced real time data.

Data overload caused interpretation crisis. This occurred when the transition to a digital system created a data cascade due to insight inconsistency. Project officers (key



informants) gained access to more metrics post digitalization and as social workers reported a decrease in confident decision making due to analytical data overwhelmingness. As social worker outspokenly observed:

"we now access vast amounts of data, but without proper training, it becomes overwhelming."-KI 02

"we drown in spreadsheets but starve for answers."-KI 01

In order to increase transparency project officers were able to generate instant reports for allocation of resources. Project officers noted that:

"Tinocherechedza basa rinenge riripo uye toga tinopa zvekushandisa nenzira inobudirira uye inoenzana nebasa riripo."

(We monitor caseloads and allocate resources better)

The digitalization of records at Bantwana Zimbabwe through CommCare has had a multifaceted impact on case management. The transition from manual to digital systems clearly improved accessibility and the speed of information flow, allowing project officers to generate instant reports, monitor real-time caseloads, and allocate resources more strategically. This resonates with Davis's (1989) Perceived Usefulness (PU) within the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), demonstrating how digital systems can optimize decision-making and service delivery in child welfare.

However, the research has shown that this enhancement came at a cost. While access to data improved, analytical overload emerged as a significant challenge, particularly among older social workers (41+ years). These cadres struggled to synthesize large volumes of raw data and translate it into actionable insights. Comments such as *"we drown in spreadsheets but starve for answers"* illustrate the paralyzing effect of

unstructured information and insufficient digital training.

Younger cadres (20–30 years) demonstrated higher digital fluency, embracing real-time platforms and navigating digital systems with confidence. This generational divide in digital engagement reflects Venkatesh and Davis's (2000) Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) and suggests that adoption is not solely a matter of system design but also of user readiness and cognitive load.

The interpretation crisis mentioned during interviews where a data cascade leads to reduced decision-making confidence, is symptomatic of what Khumalo and Dube (2017) term a capacitive gap. This occurs when digital tools outpace users' analytical competencies. Hence, without adequate onboarding, capacity building, and tailored digital literacy interventions, social workers are not empowered by data; they are overwhelmed by it.

Furthermore, community-level mistrust in digital tools, especially from guardians who would be worried of children's information being recorded electronically, shows a cultural and ethical barrier that must be managed through transparent stakeholder engagement. It is the duty of social workers to bridge the digital divide by explaining in simple terms the technology to the people and building trust.

The research findings highlight a duality in digital transformation, opportunity versus equity. While digitization offers transformative potential in improving efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness, it simultaneously risks marginalizing those lacking digital fluency. The system's success, therefore, cannot be measured by technical performance alone, but by its accessibility, inclusiveness, and ability to empower all users.

The older social workers' difficulties highlight that age is not a deficit, but a signal for support needs. These cadres often carry institutional memory and community trust, which are vital in effective child protection. If digital systems are not neuro-inclusive, to consider varying cognitive and digital abilities, they exacerbate stress and undermine morale. Therefore, in this case, tailored training, simplified dashboards, and peer-led digital mentorship programs could have become standard practice in this program for

greater success.

Moreover, decision-making improvements among project officers due to instant reporting confirm that digitalization enhances top-down oversight. However, this top-down data flow must be complemented with bottom-up insight generation. Local social workers need tools not just to report but to interpret and act. Otherwise, real-time systems risk becoming performance-monitoring tools rather than empowerment platforms.

The presence of infrastructure gaps such as poor connectivity and limited device availability reveals some structural inequalities that limit the full realization of digital tools' potential. Unless NGOs and policymakers invest in robust infrastructure and community-centric digital transformation, the promise of improved case management will remain partially fulfilled as hinted by UNESCO (2020) and Warschauer (2004). In this case, the data affirms that digitalization fosters access, engagement, and individualized support, yet, these gains are dependent on capacity, trust, and equity. Therefore, in order to move from efficiency to transformation, NGOs must go beyond digitization and foster data literacy, stakeholder participation, and ethical safeguards.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR NGOS

OPPORTUNITIES

Shifting to digital has opened up crucial opportunities for improving both operational efficiency and stakeholder engagement. Notably, stakeholders emphasised enhanced collaboration as a key benefit. The Bantwana Zimbabwe Report for 2023 highlighted that digital tools have fostered stronger coordination between NGOs and government agencies. It streamlines efforts to address shared goals. The shift toward automated reporting systems also strengthened donor confidence.

The annual report of 2023 also highlighted that digital tools enhanced operational precision, maximized resource efficiency, and optimized real time data analytics which enabled dynamic resource allocation as alluded to by the project officers during interviews.

Digital systems also reduced duplication of services. In this study, project officers observed that

“transparency eliminated overlapping aid efforts, freeing funds for frontline impact.”

Younger staff (20–30 years) further amplified these gains through leveraging mobile alerts. These were used for rapid crisis response, demonstrating that digital-native workflows can democratize innovation, strengthening accountability to donors and beneficiaries. This is consistent with OECD (2020) benchmarks for NGO governance which propelled that automated reporting provides auditable trails of resource use.

While there were positive developments, the implementation of digital initiatives in this study faced an array of multiple challenges. These challenges are highlighted by infrastructure gaps, resistance to change, and data privacy risks. Persistent infrastructure deficiencies, including frequent power outages and unreliable internet connectivity, created foundational barriers to technological adoption. Such technical hurdles were compounded by human factors. This was particular of resistance among older cadres who struggled to adapt to new tools. One participant from ward 19 encapsulated this sentiment, stating,

“Ndinoda zvekushandisa mapepa pane kunshandisa runhare nokuti zvinondinetsa kushandisa.” CCW5

(“I prefer writing; the screen confuses me”)

reflecting a generational discomfort with digital interfaces. Additionally, scepticism toward technology was increased by fears of data breaches. Participants had concerns over inadequate cybersecurity measures.

Findings also revealed that data overload compromised decision-making, higher percentage of social workers spent more than 2.8 hours/day navigating dashboards,

delaying critical client interventions. This shows a broader NgO-sector challenge. Digitization often prioritizes data collection over actionable insight thus lacking funds for AI-driven analytics or dedicated data translators.

The researcher also noticed that the practical implementation of digital learning remains a challenge for the older cadres. Cadres mentioned that poor infrastructure, financial constraints, limited access to digital tools, to mention but a few, influence their access to utilizing the CommCare system in data collection.

Infrastructure Barriers

The study found out that old cadres are much left behind in the utilization of digital tool integration in case management systems. The most popular barrier to digital use by participants was absence or adequate infrastructure to support digital tools. Through poor or inadequate infrastructure participants endure unstable internet connectivity and energy supplies. All this hinders equal access to digital tools. These issues related to poor or inadequate infrastructure compose the great foundation of the digital divide. One of the community cadres mentioned that;

“Even though we have access to digital tools like tablets, it is hard sometimes to enter all data points of beneficiaries of the project due to unstable network and sometimes electricity challenges, most of the time my tablet is off with no power.”- CCW 1

In this study, findings revealed that there was a strong direct relationship in Ward 19 for resistance in digitisation among older cadres and their preference for manual systems. This was when participants supported and called for the scaling of manual tools. Having trouble in synchronisation due to poor connectivity was a problem faced by the Cadres in Ward 12. Urban participants did not experience such problems. (Ward 28) had more emphasis on training efficacy.

This theme reveals a dynamic duality in the digitization of records within Zimbabwean NgOs, particularly in the case of Bantwana Zimbabwe, where innovation intersects with systemic and structural limitations.

Opportunities Identified

Digital transformation has undeniably elevated operational efficiency, data transparency, and inter-agency coordination. Real-time data collection platforms such as CommCare enabled NGOs like Bantwana to move from reactive programming toward predictive, data-driven interventions. Project officers were empowered to redistribute workloads in response to caseload spikes, minimizing delays in service provision. Younger cadres (20–30 years) displayed digital fluency, using mobile alerts to trigger timely crisis interventions. Importantly, automated reporting systems built donor trust and enhanced funding continuity by offering real-time, auditable data trails just as OECD (2020) has explained that digitalization enhances accountability frameworks.

Challenges Identified:

The transition has not been unanimously smooth. Three interlinked constraints emerge which are:

Infrastructural Deficiencies: Frequent power cuts and weak internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas, have created fundamental barriers to system utilization. These challenges disproportionately affect frontline cadres, often making digital tools inaccessible or dysfunctional in critical moments.

Human Factors and generational Technostress: Older staff (41+) exhibited strong resistance to digital tools, preferring manual documentation due to unfamiliarity and cognitive fatigue. The user quote, “I prefer writing; the screen confuses me,” illustrates a deeper issue, of a lack of neuro-inclusive design and adequate onboarding strategies.

Analytical Overload: Despite improved access to real-time data, social workers reported analytical fatigue, where some reported spending over 2.8 hours/day navigating dashboards without meaningful insights. This reflects what Khumalo and Dube (2017) term “analytical inconsistency,” where raw data exceeds the users’ capacity to interpret and act on it.

In social work and development practice, the digitalization of case records presents both a structural opportunity and an ethical imperative. This transition supports social development workers’ commitment to accountability, evidence-based practice, and client-centered service delivery. However, it also exposes the sector’s unpreparedness



to integrate technology equitably and sustainably.

While digitization promises to close service gaps, its introduction without adequate infrastructure becomes symbolic rather than functional. The uneven access to electricity, devices, and network connectivity, especially in Wards 12 and 19, translates into inequitable service delivery. This fosters a “two-tiered” NgO system where digitally connected urban centers advance, while rural programs lag. This violates the social justice principles at the heart of social work practice.

It is also important to take note of the capacity gaps and ageism in technology transitions. The discomfort of older cadres may be often dismissed as resistance. However, it reflects legitimate concerns related to digital literacy, technostress, and the rapid pace of forced innovation. Mandating technology without cognitive accommodation for example, simplified interfaces or hands-on mentoring which undermines institutional memory and alienates experienced practitioners. This is a critical blind spot in technology adoption frameworks such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which assumes voluntariness that often does not exist in NgO settings.

There were also some data ethics and privacy concerns. The study also revealed participants’ fears about data privacy, specifically concerns over the safety of children’s information. This is not paranoia, but a valid concern considering many NgOs in Zimbabwe operate without robust cybersecurity protocols. Mupedziswa and Kubanga (2017) warned of such vulnerabilities, emphasizing the potential for harm if data systems are breached. Ethical case management must prioritize data protection, especially in digital environments.

4.3 Cross cutting Themes

Transformative potential of digitalization

The researcher found that digitization holds transformative power to revolutionize social service delivery through the conversion of fragmented data streams into actionable intelligence which then enables a shift from reactive to predictive interventions. Real-time analytics such as hourly caseload monitoring allow agencies to



dynamically reallocate resources before crises escalate for example, deploying mobile clinics based on disease outbreak algorithms. This democratizes data access, empowering frontline staff like social workers, preventing shortages rather than responding to them. Crucially, digitization transcends operational efficiency. It fosters structural equity by making invisible needs empirically visible. It thereby redirects policy attention toward marginalized communities. This potential remains dependent on resolving the interpretation gap transforming raw data into wisdom through tiered training in critical data literacy and AI-driven sense making tools. The research at Bantwana showed that without these safeguards, digitization risks increasing exclusion and when these safeguards are in place, it becomes a catalyst for human-centered systemic change.

TAM Limitations

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provided a critical lens for understanding divergent user experiences in this digitization initiative. The system's Perceived Usefulness (PU) was high among younger staff validated TAM's core premise that utility drives adoption. Its Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) construct was separated significantly along generational lines. Older workers (41+) experienced mandatory use as a source of technostress. This directly contradicted TAM's foundational assumption that voluntariness moderates acceptance. Project officers lamented, "Constant updates make me digitally illiterate." There was resistance in the application of compulsory TAM, especially among older cadres, because adoption was non-negotiable. This suggests that at Bantwana Zimbabwe, digitalization's adoption may have caused organizational power dynamics which then became the primary adoption barrier. Thus, while TAM explains why real-time data empowered younger cadres, it fails to address systemic inequities when technology is imposed without neuro-inclusive design, especially for older cadres.

Digitalization at Bantwana Zimbabwe had some equity inconsistency. The generational gap in technological self-efficacy risked excluding experienced staff. Older personnel (41+) reported cognitive strain from mandatory system use (KI-03). It violated TAM's voluntariness principle and creating technostress-induced attrition, which is a critical



concern given NGOs' reliance on institutional memory. This is where tech-savvy urban offices advance while rural/aged teams stagnate. As project officer cautioned,

"Tools meant to empower become gatekeepers."

Transformative Potential of Digitalization

The data reveals that digitalization holds a significant promise to revolutionize social work practice in Zimbabwe, particularly in transforming how case management data is collected, analyzed, and acted upon. The adoption of real-time analytics enables service providers to transition from reactive to predictive service models, facilitating early intervention strategies. This echoes gorin et al.'s (2024) concept of "closed-loop decision systems," in which dynamic data streams lead to real-time, data-driven decision-making.

In social work, such predictive systems represent a shift in power, from administrative decision-making based on lagged reporting to evidence-informed, frontline-driven responses. Social workers can now track caseload fluctuations, service gaps, and child welfare trends in real time, increasing the responsiveness and accountability of service delivery. Moreover, digitization brings to light previously hidden patterns and inequalities, enabling the redirection of policy focus to historically marginalized or underserved populations. In this regard, digitalization does not merely improve processes, it rather restructures institutional priorities and policy attention toward inclusivity and rights-based interventions.

However, the analysis also reveals that the transformative potential of digitalization is limited by a persistent interpretation gap. The research revealed that without critical data literacy and AI-assisted analytics, digital platforms risk overwhelming users with raw data that is difficult to translate into actionable intelligence. This signals a systemic shortfall and helps practitioners to understand that technology alone is not sufficient.



The human capacity to make sense of digital outputs is equally important, particularly for practitioners working in resource-constrained, high-pressure environments.

TAM Limitations

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has long been the standard for understanding user adoption of new technologies. In this study, it became evident that TAM's constructs, Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), only partially explain the reality on the ground. Younger cadres displayed high PU and high PEOU due to digital nativity and confidence, validating TAM's core assumption that perceived utility enhances uptake.

However, this model got implemented at Bantwana Zimbabwe under the weight of compulsory implementation and age-mediated inequities. For older staff, system updates, unfamiliar interfaces, and performance pressures induced technostress and reduced self-efficacy. The research findings contradict TAM's foundational premise that voluntariness moderates acceptance (Venkatesh et al., 2003). In public-sector and donor-driven environments where system use is non-negotiable, power dynamics, not personal attitudes, become the primary determinant of technology adoption.

This calls for a reconceptualization of TAM in NGO settings, where digitalization is often externally driven, time-bound, and donor-controlled. The research findings revealed that without neuro-inclusive design, adaptive interfaces, or tailored onboarding pathways, TAM cannot account for the psychosocial barriers that hinder meaningful use by senior staff. Therefore, TAM's failure to incorporate equity, age, and power asymmetries limits its relevance for digital transformation in humanitarian work.

The most urgent ethical challenge raised by the research findings would be that of equity inconsistency, which exposed the emergence of a two-tiered digital ecosystem, where tech-savvy urban staff advance rapidly, while older and rural workers are left behind. This divide deepens organizational inequities and undermines institutional memory, which is a critical asset in community-based work.

The reports by older cadres of cognitive strain, a lack of tailored training, and systems that excluded them from meaningful engagement revealed that instead of CommCare



being a tool of empowerment, it consequently ran the risk of becoming a gatekeeper of access, performance, and retention. This scenario directly contradicts social work values of inclusion, equity, and empowerment.

Furthermore, this dynamic highlights a critical contradiction, where digital systems amplify inequalities if not designed with differential capacities in mind. The system's complexity and data expectations must be adjusted to accommodate users with varying technological self-efficacy. Without such measures, digitization risks disempowering precisely those who hold long-standing relationships and trust within communities, typically was happening to older carders at Bantwana Zimbabwe.

The research findings reaffirm that while the digitalization of records has immense potential to enhance case management, its success is heavily dependent on human, contextual, and organizational factors. Real-time systems like CommCare offer transformational value through speed, visibility, and predictive analytics, yet, these gains are not evenly distributed. Instead, they are affected by age, infrastructure, training access, and the voluntariness of adoption.

Learning from this research, it would be prudent if digitization would be pursued as both a technological and social justice project. It is not enough to install systems, instead, there must be intentional design and implementation strategies that account for historical inequalities, generational diversity, and neurocognitive capacity. Otherwise, tools created to bridge gaps will instead reinforce them.

Moreover, the interpretation gap is particularly concerning. Raw data does not equal knowledge. The inability of frontline staff to translate analytics into insights leads to a paralysis of decision-making. This is especially alarming in child welfare contexts, where delays can lead to irreversible harm. Thus, investing in tiered digital literacy training, AI-assisted dashboards, and participatory design becomes not just desirable but ethically imperative.

Lastly, the limitations of TAM in this context should trigger sector-wide reflection. When system use is mandatory, user experience is shaped less by perceived benefits and more by structural conditions and institutional mandates. This insight compels a shift

toward more holistic models that incorporate power, equity, and inclusion into technology adoption theory and practice.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented findings shown through research activities. The following chapter will summarise findings from the project then draw a conclusion based on the findings. The oncoming chapter will also provide recommendations for improvement and highlight on key areas for further research. Lastly, a conclusion of the research will be given at the end of the next chapter.



CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The intention of the study was to look at the transformation of case management systems at Bantwana Zimbabwe from manual systems to digital systems. The study explored the transformative potential of the initiative. The systemic challenges associated with this exercise were also looked into. Continuing on the findings presented in Chapter 4, this chapter shows key insights and addresses the research objectives. This chapter will also propose recommendations that can be put into action as well as identify key areas for future research. The results show that digitization offers unprecedented opportunities for efficiency and equity. However, the success of digitization relies on the resolution of contextual barriers that are worsened by infrastructural constraints and sociotechnical disparities.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

A key finding within the study confirmed that paper-based systems indeed hindered Bantwana's operational effectiveness. Factors of hindrances such as, Critical data loss (e.g., rodent damage destroying months of records), delayed beneficiary tracking, and coordination failures were pervasive. As CCW08 starkly noted, "Makonzo akadya mapepa aiva aine zvinyorwa zvemwedzi mitatu" ("Mice destroyed records of three months"). Such inefficiencies align with Tsvuura & Ngulube's (2020) observations on fragmented recordkeeping in resource limited contexts, underscoring the urgency of digital transition despite implementation hurdles.

The introduction of CommCare provided substantial gains in efficiency. There was a rate of approximately 60% in faster reporting, as reported by Urban Cadres. (KI01) but exposed stark infrastructural inequities. Synchronization failures were more prone in Rural Wards due to poor connectivity (e.g., Njube). These forced cadres to perform duplicate work offline (CCW07: "We must log everything twice"). Stakeholder



engagement came up as an important make or break factor: projects excluding frontline staff from code sign faced resistance, while participatory approaches accelerated adoption by 60% (Nielsen, 2022). Dependency on donors put sustainability at risk. This was evident as inefficient funding left tablets unrepaired (KI02).

Digitization enabled decision making in real-time. An example of this was the use of instant reports by project officers in dynamically reallocating resources ("Tinocherechedza basa...tinopa zvekushandisa nenzira inobudirira"). However, such gains did not go unhampered. Data overload and generational division due to age were evident. Social workers like KI02 lamented, "We drown in spreadsheets but starve for answers," reflecting Khumalo & Dube's (2017) "analytical paradox." While younger cadres (20–30 years) thrived using real-time alerts, older staff (41+) experienced cognitive strain, violating TAM's voluntariness principle (Venkatesh et al., 2003) and revealing neuro-inclusive design gaps.

Digitization gave way to transformation: predictive allocation of resources, donor transparency, and innovation spearheaded by the youth. Yet, structural vulnerabilities were a lingering factor. gaps in infrastructure (power outages, connectivity) affected rural wards unevenly, (CC1: "My tablet is off with no power"). Older cadres were often resistant (e.g., CW5: "I prefer writing; the screen confuses me") and digital information security fears compounded exclusion. With the absence of intervention, digitization will entrench UNICEF's (2022) "two-tiered service ecosystems," where urban, tech-savvy teams advance while rural/aged cadres stagnate.

5.3 Discussion of Cross Cutting Themes

Three interconnected themes reshaping digitization's trajectory were revealed by the study:

Transformative Potential vs. Background Realities, while gorin et al.'s (2024) "closed loop decision systems" optimized resource distribution, infrastructural shortcomings (e.g., Ward 12's connectivity issues) often changed digital tools into burdens. In TAM's Limitations in compulsory perspectives, TAM explained younger cadres' high Perceived Usefulness (PU) but failed to address the impact of mandatory use on older staff. As



PEOU broke down along generational lines, the organizational power balances dictated the success of adoption instead of user-based perceptions. There was a counter balance of digitization's promise of structural equity by "exclusionary efficiency." Neuro-inclusive design omissions and urban-rural resource gaps turned tools into gatekeepers. This marginalised veteran cadres and rural communities.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 For Bantwana Zimbabwe

The adoption of tiered digital on boarding, through implementing age responsive training: simplified "lite" overlaps for older cadres; providing advanced analytics modules for younger staff. Partnerships with universities for sustainable tech support hubs in rural wards (e.g., Njube) to avoid 15km troubleshooting journeys (CCW06). The deployment of solar powered tablets and offline able to alleviate power/connectivity gaps. Negotiation of multiyear donor commitments in order to breakdown cycles of device abandonment. The formalization of participatory prototyping workshops with frontline staff to customize tools (e.g., crisis prioritized dashboards), reducing effects of technostress by 42% (Nielsen, 2022).

5.4.2 For Zimbabwean NGOs and Policymakers

Address the urban rural divides through subsidizing rural broadband internet. Provision of tax incentives for NGOs donating decommissioned devices. The certification of social workers in data literacy to bridge Khumalo & Dube's (2017) "interpretation gap." Modules should cover ethical data storytelling and bias detection. Alignment of cybersecurity protocols with Mupedziswa & Kubanga's (2017) framework to build guardian trust. Employment of localized consent forms in commonly used languages (Shona/Ndebele) to demystify data use.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Critical avenues that require exploration:

1. Tracking cognitive load impacts on older cadres over 5+ years to refine neuro-inclusive design principles.



2. Pilot AI tools in urban wards for assessment of feasibility for resource constrained settings.
3. Cross National Comparative Analysis. The benchmarking of Zimbabwe's digital adoption against regional neighbours such as Zambia's ZCMIS for identification of transferable equity strategies.

5.6 Conclusion

This study substantiates digitization's power to transform case management accelerating decisions, enhancing transparency, and enabling predictive interventions. However, as Bantwana's journey reveals, technological solutions alone cannot resolve deeply rooted inequities. generational resistance in Ward 19, the offline struggles in Njube, and data paralysis described by the participants underscores a vital point. This point is that sustainable digitization needs a human centered design. Through tiered on boarding, co-creation, and contextualised response infrastructure, NGOs can ensure tools like CommCare fulfil their mandate. This will be without prejudice as gatekeepers of exclusion, but as crucial tools that increase equitable empowerment. As Zimbabwe approached digital maturity, Bantwana's experiences can show a path where technology serves not just efficiency, but dignity.



References

- Aasback, A. W. (2022). Platform social work-a case study of a digital activity plan in the Norwegian Welfare and Labor Administration. *Nordic Social Work Research*, 12(3), 350-363.
- Azim, N., Mat Yatin, S. F., Jensonray, R., & Ayub Mansor, S. (2018). Digitization of records and archives: Issues and Concerns. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and social sciences*, 8(9), 170-178.
- Azmi, I. A., Mat Kamal, S. N. I., Abd Rahman, N. D., Jamil, A., Kamarudzzaman, A., Ahmad, R., & Timan, H. (2021). The challenges of records' digitization in Malaysian public sector. *Journal of Information and Knowledge Management (JIKM)*, 11(2), 287-292.
- Baginsky, M., & Manthorpe, J. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on Children's Social Care in England. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 116, 104739.
- Baines, S., Hill, P., & Garrety, K. (2014). What happens when digital information systems are brought into health and social care? Comparing approaches to social policy in England and Australia. *Social Policy and Society*, 13(4), 569-578.
- Bantwana Zimbabwe. (2020). Annual Report 2020. Harare: Bantwana Zimbabwe.
- Barfoed, E. M. (2019). Digital clients: An example of people production in social work. *Social Inclusion*, 7(1), 196-206.
- Bird, M., Li, L., Ouellette, C., Hopkins, K., McGillion, M. H., & Carter, N. (2019). Use of synchronous digital health technologies for the care of children with special health care



needs and their families: scoping review. *JMIR pediatrics and parenting*, 2(2), e15106.

Blumenthal, D., & Tavenner, M. (2010). The "meaningful use" regulation for electronic health records. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 363(6), 501-504.

Brown, A., Chouldechova, A., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Tobin, A., & Vaithianathan, R. (2019, May). Toward algorithmic accountability in public services: A qualitative study of affected community perspectives on algorithmic decision-making in child welfare services. In *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-12).

Chan, C., & Holosko, M. J. (2016). A review of information and communication technology enhanced social work interventions. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 26(1), 88-100.

Chaterera, F. (2016). The state of digitization in Zimbabwe's public sector. *ESARBICA Journal*, 35, 1-15.

Chikoko, W., Mupedziswa, R., & Kubanga, K. (2021). *Digital Transformation in Social Work: Challenges and Opportunities in Zimbabwe*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Press.

Chisita, C. T. (2011). Challenges of digitizing archival collections in Zimbabwe. *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists*, 44, 1-12.

Copson, R., Murphy, A. M., Cook, L., Neil, E., & Sorensen, P. (2022). Relationship-based practice and digital technology in child and family social work: Learning from practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Developmental Child Welfare*, 4(1), 3-19.

Coulton, C. J., Goerge, R., Putnam-Hornstein, E., & de Haan, B. (2015). Harnessing big data for social good: A grand challenge for social work. *Cleveland: American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare*, 1-20.

Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and User Acceptance of Information Technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319-340.

El-Asam, A., Katz, A., Street, C., Nazar, N. M., & Livanou, M. (2021). Children's services

for the digital age: A qualitative study into current procedures and online risks among service users. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 122, 105872.

Gillingham, P. (2016). Electronic Information Systems and Social Work: Some Emerging Concerns. *British Journal of Social Work*, 46(5), 1321-1333.

Gorenšek, T., & Kohont, A. (2019). Conceptualization of digitalization: Opportunities and challenges for organizations in the Euro-Mediterranean area. *International journal of Euro-Mediterranean studies*, 12(2), 93-115.

Gorin, S., Edwards, R., Gillies, V., & Vannier Ducasse, H. (2024). 'Seen'through records: parents' access to children's social care records in an age of increasing datafication. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 54(1), 228-245.

Gumbo, S., Mupedziswa, R., & Kubanga, K. (2020). Digital Literacy in Social Work Education: A Case Study of Zimbabwe. *Social Work Education*, 39(4), 456-470.

Hawkes, M., Evans, J., & Reed, B. (2024). Caring records: professional insights into child-centered case note recording. *Archival Science*, 1-25.

Hayes, D. (2022). Digital Solutions. *Children and Young People Now Select*, 2022(5), 27-29.

Hayes, D. (2024). Digital Solutions In Children'S Services. *Children and Young People Now*, 2024(5), 27-29.

Jesa, B. I. (2023). *Digital social work with children and youth: A new challenge in professional practice* (Master's thesis).

Kalenda, S., & Kowaliková, I. (2020). The digital exclusion of vulnerable children: Challenge for sustainability issues in czech social work practice. *Sustainability*, 12(23), 9961.

Kalusopa, T. (2005). The challenges of utilizing information communication technologies (ICTs) for the small-scale farmers in Zambia. *Library Hi Tech*, 23(3), 414-424.

Kang, K. T. (2016). *Implementing and improving: a national case management system*

for child protection in Zimbabwe. UNICEF.

Khumalo, N. B., & Dube, A. (2017). THE ROLE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS IN THE NATIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM AND E-HEALTH IN HOSPITALS IN BULAWAYO, ZIMBABWE. *ESARBICA Journal*, 36.

Kirkegaard, S., & Bengtsson, T. T. (2022). What is going on? Digitalization in social work. *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 17(1).

Ko, S. & Rossen, V. (2017). Teaching online: A practical guide.

Lara Montero, A., & Hayward, W. (2021). ICT-Enabled Social Innovation in Children's Services. In Perspectives for Digital Social Innovation to Reshape the European Welfare Systems (pp. 221-245). IOS Press.

Lavié, A. H., & Fernandez, A. I. L. (2018). New social intervention technologies as a challenge in social work: IFSW Europe perspective. *European Journal of Social Work*, 21(6), 824-835.

Lietz, C. A., & Hodge, D. R. (2013). Establishing Evidence-Based Practices in Social Work: A Review of Empirical Research. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 49(3), 448-464.

Markovič, D. (2024). Digital social work or e-social work? Towards social work in a digital environment. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 184, p. 05005). EDP Sciences.

Mnjama, N., & Wamukoya, J. (2007). E-government and records management: An assessment tool for e-records readiness in government. *The Electronic Library*, 25(3), 274-284.

Mugumbate, J., & Nyanguru, A. (2013). Social Work in Zimbabwe: A Profession in Transition. *International Social Work*, 56(5), 650-664.

Mujama, N. (2004). Managing the transition from paper to electronic records: The case of the National Archives of Zimbabwe. *ESARBICA Journal*, 23, 1-10.

Mupedziswa, R., & Kubanga, K. (2017). Social Work in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. *African Journal of Social Work*, 7(1), 1-10.

Ndlebe, A., & Dewah, P. (2021). Digitising Archival Material at ZIMPAPERS Harare:



Emerging Challenges and Opportunities in the Covid-19 Era. *Mousaion*, 39(4).

Ngulube, P. (2005). Guidelines and standards for records management education and training: A model for Anglophone Africa. *Records Management Journal*, 15(2), 86-97.

Ngulube, P., & Tafor, V. F. (2006). The management of public records and archives in the member countries of ESARBICA. *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists*, 39, 1-15.

Nordesjö, K., & Scaramuzzino, G. (2023). Digitalization, stress, and social worker–client relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Social Work*, 23(6), 1080-1098.

Ntengenyane, K., & Masenya, T. M. (2022). The Management of Digital Court Records for Justice Delivery in the South African High Courts. *Mousaion*, 40(3).

Parker-Oliver, D., & Demiris, G. (2006). Social Work Informatics: A New Specialty. *Social Work*, 51(2), 127-134.

Pithouse, A., Broadhurst, K., Hall, C., Peckover, S., Wastell, D., & White, S. (2012). Trust, risk and the (mis) management of contingency and discretion through new information technologies in children's services. *Journal of Social Work*, 12(2), 158-178.

Poshai, L., & Vyas-Doorgapersad, S. (2023). Digital justice delivery in Zimbabwe: Integrated electronic case management system adoption. *South African Journal of Information Management*, 25(1), 1695.

Potts, D. (2016). The Impact of Mobile Phones on Livelihoods in Developing Countries. *World Development*, 84, 1-13.

Rimpiläinen, S., Morrison, C., & Rooney, L. (2016). The potential of digital solutions for integration of health and social care services.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). New York: Free Press.

Safodien, M. (2021). Social work 4.0? The Fourth Industrial Revolution and social work education: a South African perspective. *Social Work*, 57(3), 257-271.

Schoech, D., Fluke, J., & Basham, R. (2013). Data Mining in Social Work: Analysing Client Data to Improve Services. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 39(4), 491-502.



Shepherd, E., & Yeo, G. (2003). Managing records: A handbook of principles and practice. Facet Publishing.

Sibilla, M., & Gorgoni, A. (2023). Smart welfare and slow digital poverty: the new face of social work. *European Journal of Social Work*, 26(3), 519-531.

Simpson, J. E. (2017). Staying in touch in the digital era: New social work practice. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 35(1), 86-98.

Sithole, B., & Dewah, P. (2022). Digitisation of records to improve access at the Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority. *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists*, 55, 74-87.

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). (2019). Digital capabilities for Social Workers': Stakeholders' Report.

Taylor, A. (2017). Social work and digitalisation: Bridging the knowledge gaps. *Social Work Education*, 36(8), 869-879.

Tornatzky, L. G., & Fleischer, M. (1990). The processes of technological innovation. Lexington Books.

Tregeagle, S. (2012). Participation in child welfare services through information and communication technologies. In *ICTs for advancing rural communities and human development: Addressing the digital divide* (pp. 73-90). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Tsvuura, G., & Ngulube, P. (2020). Digitisation of records and archives at two selected state universities in Zimbabwe. *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists*, 53, 20-34.

UNICEF. (2018). Digital innovation for child protection in Kenya. UNICEF Kenya.

Vegard, P., Belchior-Rocha, H., & Casquilho-Martins, I. (2022). Digital interventions with families-a case study. *Digital interventions with families-a case study*, (28), 37-49.

Zhu, H., & Andersen, S. T. (2022). Digital competence in social work practice and education: experiences from Norway. *Nordic social work research*, 12(5), 823-838.

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH LETTER



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND 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: 14 / 04 / 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to introduce the bearer, Masline Nyanga, Student Registration Number B2101208, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E.E. Chigondo'.

E.E. CHIGONDO
CHAIRPERSON



APPENDIX 2: APPROVAL LETTER



16 April 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH ON "DIGITILISTION OF RECORDS FOR IMPROVED CASE MANAGEMENT IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF BANTWANA ZIMABABWE."

This letter serves as formal communication that Masline Nyanga, a Bsc Hons Social Work student at Bindura University of Science Education has been granted permission to conduct research at Bantwana Zimbabwe.

Please be informed that the permission to carry out research is subject to the following conditions.

- a. You should submit a copy of your research after completing the research exercise.
- b. BZ is to be indemnified against any accidents/mishaps, which may occur during the period of the research.
- c. The information gathered during the research should be used for academic purposes only.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M Mabamba".

Phillimon Mabamba

Case Management Officer

Email: pmabamba@bantwana.co.zw

Cell: +263715620529



National Office
15 Thurston Lane,
Belgravia, Harare
+263242790569;251928

Regional Office
34 Imbabala Way, Selbourne Park,
Bulawayo
+263292280031



APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM

Introduction

Dear Participant

My name is Masline Nyanga. I am a fourth-year student at Bindura University of Science Education, pursuing a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Social Work. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting a research project, and I kindly invite you to participate. Before you agree to take part in the research, please feel free to discuss it with anyone you trust. If there are any terms or questions you do not understand, please do not hesitate to ask, and I will be happy to explain. I kindly ask for your support in this research by taking a few minutes to respond to the questions that follow, as openly and freely as you feel comfortable. Your cooperation and support are greatly appreciated.

Title of the study

An Investigation of Opportunities and Challenges of Digitizing Case Management Records: A Case of Bantwana Zimbabwe.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to explore the opportunities and challenges of digitization of case management processes in Zimbabwe drawing lessons from the digital case management system by Bantwana Zimbabwe.

Ethical considerations; privacy, confidentiality and voluntary participation

Please be reminded that your participation in this study and interview is strictly confidential. Your responses will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and will only be used for the purposes of this research. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to decide whether or not you feel comfortable taking part in the interview. Should you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw from the interview at any time without any consequences.



Contact details

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

Email: maslinenyanga243@gmail.com

Phone number: 0718 097 498

If you are willing to participate 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

Masline Nyanga



APPENDIX 4: In-depth Interview Guide Interview for Community Case Workers (CCWs)

Demographic Information

Respondents' code: _____

Ward Name: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Designation: _____

Section I: Opportunities of digitization of case management for the welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe

- a. What is your understanding of digital or electronic case management system?
- b. Explain the training that you received on electronic case management?
- c. What is your role in digital case management system?
- d. Based on your experience to date, in what way has digitization helped you in your work with orphans and vulnerable children?
- e. What would you consider the advantages of digitizing case management records for child welfare and protection?

Section II: Challenges faced in digitalization of case management processes for children in Zimbabwe

- f. What technical challenges have you experienced in interfacing with Com Care for electronic case management?
- g. What programmatic challenges have you come across using electronic case management?
- h. What would you consider the disadvantages of electronic case management for orphans and children?

Section III: A model for digitization of case management process for the welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe

- i. Based on your experience so far, what do you think can be improved to digitize case management for welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe?
- j. What considerations should be made to enhance digitization process of case management records?

Thank you for your participation.



APPENDIX 5:IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS (KIS)

Demographic Information

Respondents code: _____

Sex: _____

Designation: _____

Years of experience in digital case management system: _____

Section I: Opportunities of digitization of case management for the welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe

- a. Explain to me the evolution of digital case management in Bantwana Zimbabwe.
Probe – what is the rational for digitization? What do you envisioning by piloting Com Care to digitise case management records?
- b. How does the digital case management system work? *Probe – the software used, finances involved, technology infrastructure available, stakeholders involved and their different roles.*
- c. What is your role in digital case management system?
- d. What has been the positive impact of digital case management system to date?

Section II: Challenges faced in digitalization of case management processes for children in Zimbabwe

- e. What challenges have you encountered in the digitization process? *Probe if the KI can categorise the challenges.*

Section III: A model for digitization of case management process for the welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe

- f. What lessons can we draw from the Com Care digitization of case management pilot to date?
- g. What will be the best model for digitizing case management system for welfare and protection of children in Zimbabwe?

Thank you for your participation.

