



FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**ASSESSING THE CAUSES OF CHILD MARRIAGE AND GOVERNMENT
INTERVENTIONS ON CHILD MARRIAGE. A CASE OF CHIPINGE DISTRICT,
ZIMBABWE.**

**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND
ENGINEERING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

BY

BEAULAH MUTURUKWA B212203B

SUPERVISOR: DR BOWORA

17 JUNE 2025

**Bindura University
of Science Education**



FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to the Bindura University of Science education for acceptance of the **DISSERTATION** entitled **ASSESSING THE CAUSES OF CHILD MARRIAGE AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS ON CHILD MARRIAGE IN WARD 26, 27 AND 29 IN CHIPINGE DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE** submitted by **BEAULAH MUTURUKWA 9B212203B**) in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the **BARCHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES (HBSc.DG)**.

Supervisor: Dr. Bowora

Signed: 

Date: 13 June 2025

Department Chairperson: Dr. Bowora

Signed 

Date: 13 June 2025

**Bindura University
of Science Education**



FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

RELEASE FORM

Name of Author: **BEAULAH MUTURUKWA**

Title of Dissertation: **ASSESSING THE CAUSES OF CHILD MARRIAGE AND
INTERVENTIONS ON CHILD MARRIAGE IN CHIPINGE
DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE.**

Programme: **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN
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Year: **2025**

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Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Beulah Muturukwa', written over a horizontal line.

Permanent Address:

10/762 New Stands, Gaza, Chipinge

Date:

June 2025

DECLARATION

I, Beaulah Muturukwa, hereby declare that this dissertation is a result of my research project and findings. All the work that was written by other authors and used in this dissertation is fully acknowledged and a reference list is included. This work has not been previously submitted in part or entirely for any degree purposes to any other university. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education.

Signature:



Date: 13 June 2025

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my parents, siblings, my grandmother and CAMFED organisation and all participants who made it possible to successfully finish it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Lord Almighty for guidance, protection and abundant life through this four year journey at Bindura University of Science Education. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to my academic supervisor, Dr Bowora for his profound guidance and mentorship he gave me throughout this study. The constructive comments he made in each stage of the study, right from the onset enlightened me and shaped the direction of this research. I want to appreciate Mr Gumbo (Chipinge District Social Development Officer) and all the respondents who made this research possible. I also unreservedly express my greatest appreciation and sincere thanks to all my programme lecturers, Mr Gomo, Mr Pedzisai, Dr Manyangadze, Mr Hwata, Dr Mapuva, Mr Muzota and other lecturers for their support through this four year journey. I am also grateful to my classmates (Team Timmy) for their generous support. The discussion sessions and sleepless nights were not in vain. I would also want to extend my sincere gratitude to CAMFED organization for financial support. This degree would have not been possible if it was not for the scholarship I got from the organization.

Many thanks to my parents' and my grandmother's moral support, financial support, motivation and guidance during the days I felt pressured most. They have been of paramount importance during my research course. I also want to appreciate my friend who became a sister, Tafadzwa Mubaira, for her unwavering support and guidance. Lastly, I would like to thank my best friend, Tanaka Moyo, for being my prayer partner from the beginning of this four year journey up to the end.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the causes of child marriages and government interventions on child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. The study employed a case study research design which explores the cases over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection. The sample size was 90 and the participants were recruited using purposive sampling method. This study used mixed-method approach to collect data from the targeted communities. A mixed-method approach was used to support a descriptive survey research design. The study used questionnaires, interviews and key informant guides to gather data from the targeted communities. Quantitative data were organized into MS Excel to make inferences which were presented in the form of charts, tables and graphs while qualitative data were analyzed using presentation in form of verbatim and narratives were made. The study concludes that poverty, financial constraints, lack of access to education, traditional and cultural practices, religious beliefs and the proximity of Chipinge to Mozambique and South Africa are the causes of child marriages in the district of Chipinge. Child marriages also have impacts to its survivors which include health problems, increase in poverty cycle, increase in school dropouts, and psychological stress. The study also presented the efforts that are being implemented by the government of Zimbabwe to reduce child marriage and these efforts are implementation of legal and policy frameworks, partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders, social protection programmes and education support. However, it was noted that the government is facing some challenges, including, cultural and traditional norms, inadequate funding and resources, and corruption. To curb child marriages the study came up with different strategies and these are, education support, conducting awareness campaigns, imposing strict laws and regulations and economic support and income generation to girls and families.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CCWs	Child Care Workers
DSD	Department of Social Development
FACT	Family Aids Care Trust
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HSCT	Harmonised Social Cash Transfer
LCCW	Lead Child Care Worker
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
VFU	Victim Friendly Unit
VHWs	Village Health Care Worker
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Many adolescent girls around this world are impacted by the widespread and complicated problem of child marriage which is most prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa where social, cultural and religious components combine together to support the practice. Health and education statuses of adolescent girls in Zimbabwe are significantly impacted by the high rate of child marriage. This study focuses on Chipinge District, a region that exemplifies the complexities surrounding child marriage, including the socio-cultural norms that sustain it and the governmental interventions aimed at combating this issue. Although the government has implemented various initiatives to tackle this issue, their effectiveness tends to vary. This chapter's primary objective is to introduce the study. The chapter contains the aim, objectives, research questions, assumptions, justification, location, delimitations, constraints and key words in addition to introducing the topic, outlining the study's background and identifying the problem.

1.1 Background of the study

Early marriage has become a significant problem that affects human rights. Even though child marriage is regarded as illegal, the practice is still happening in the whole world. It is recorded that one in five girls worldwide is either legally married or is in an unofficial marriage. In the less economically developed countries, that number nearly doubles 36% of girls that get into marriage before they reach 18 years and 10% of girls are getting into marriage before fifteen years of age. According to UNICEF (2018), an estimation of 12 million adolescent girls are getting married before reaching 18 years in every year.

According to World Bank Group Report (2017), 41 thousand girls are getting married every day, which translate to fifteen million young girls yearly. Vogelstein (2013) also backed up the idea that, according to the estimates, about five million girls get married before turning 15 every year. Wodon et al (2017) also mentioned that child marriage is well-known human right suppression since it violates the agency of girls, exposes them to long-term, intergenerational health, economic and social repercussions. Alongside various government-led initiatives to address the needs by 12

million young women who get into marriage before turning eighteen years, there is a global consensus to minimize child marriage for girls (Plesons et al, 2021).

Child marriage has its roots in gender inequality and is perpetuated by cultural and social conventions, poverty and lack of opportunities in both stable and crisis environments worldwide. UNFPA represents for all government initiatives that are aimed at preventing early marriage. Furthermore, governments around the world have accepted the UN treaty on children's rights, which compels every country to taking relevant and effective initiatives to end customs which may be harmful to children's health (UN, 1989).

African continent has the higher rates in child marriage than other continents around the world. According to UNICEF (2017), 125 million (17 per cent) of the 700 million women who are alive today who entered into marriage as minors reside in the African continent. According to the researched data concerning the existing number of early marriage, females marry at the ages of 15 and 18, respectively, at an average rate of 11.6% and 42.8%. Child marriage has become to be the greatest challenge in the whole of Africa.

Zimbabwe, like many other nations in the Eastern part of Africa, recorded the highest number of child marriage (Maswika et al, 2015). Teen-marriages are very rampant in Zimbabwe and their occurrences are being subjected to many different drivers which include economic instability, religious beliefs, abuse and peer pressure. According to UNICEF (2015), statistics from the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey of 2014 indicate that 24 percent of girls between the 15 to 19 years of age are either in marriage or in a union. The involvement of girls who are married before the national maturity age of 18 is a major worry since they still hope to complete their education and obtain jobs to break the cycle of poverty in their families. For a number of years, this has led to high rates of maternal mortality in certain regions of Zimbabwe. Teenage pregnancies have been identified as the primary factor contributing to maternal death in Zimbabwe, as proposed by Morna et al (2015).

Manicaland Province, where this study has been derived, is not exceptional in this tale because child marriages have also been common in some of its districts. According to a number of studies and reports, unintended teenage pregnancies and inability of girl child to recognize the value of

education are among the main issues that adolescent girls and young women in Zimbabwe, including those in Chipinge District, face.

The area of study, Chipinge District, is one of the districts in Zimbabwe that has high cases of early marriage due to its geographical and socio-economic context, particularly its proximity to Mozambique and South Africa. A lot of girls are influenced by those people working outside the country especially South Africa. These people are referred to as “Majonijoni” which means people staying and working in South Africa. In as much as government is trying to reduce child marriages, the existence of “Majonijoni” will remain a hindrance to the effectiveness and success of government interventions.

1.2 Statement of problem

Child marriages have emerged as the primary obstacle impeding Zimbabwe’s national progress. Although every individual who has reached the age of eighteen is allowed to marry as mentioned by the Zimbabwe Constitution under Marriage Rights Section 78 (1), early marriage remains a serious threat to young girls’ lives and roadblock to development.

Although it may appear that the Zimbabwean government possesses the necessary strategies to combat early marriage, a closer examination shows that these strategies are riddled with inconsistencies that eventually render them ineffective (Musiiwa, 2016). Masinire (2015) rightly postulates that child marriages are still on the rise in Zimbabwe in spite of all the initiatives conducted there through many different systems, such as the Girl Child Network (GCN) and many others. Nicholas (2013) states that due to the abundance of money among illegal gold poachers, girls who are getting educational support from the PLAN International Zimbabwe and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) especially those from Kwekwe district, Manicaland Province, they chose to leave school for marriage. It is now evident that female children’s love of money and their belief that marrying a wealthy person will make them wealthy themselves are contributing to the increase in early marriage in the country.

It is evident that some of the unconstitutional laws or Acts that allows children into marriage contributes to the occurrence of child marriage in Zimbabwe. These laws include the Customary Marriage Act (Chapter 5:07) which do not show an age limit restriction of 18 years for marriage,

and Section 22 (1) of the Marriage act (Chapter 5:11) which establishes the minimum age of marriage for girls at 16.

In Africa, there are many different strong legal and policy frameworks that support gender equality and children's rights including, the African Charter on Human Rights, the Maputo Protocol and the African Charter on the rights and welfare of children. These are combined with interventional programs such as the African Common Position and the African Campaign on ending child Marriage, which are specifically stated in Goal 18 of the continent's agenda 2063. Nonetheless, child marriage is still a major issue throughout Africa. UNICEF (2017) estimate that if nothing is done to end child marriage, the number of children who are married before the age of 18 will double by 2050.

Studies have shown that despite various government interventions to prevent early marriage in Zimbabwe, child marriage rates are drastically increasing. This raises questions about the effectiveness of these measures and the need to understand the barriers to their success. In Zimbabwe, cultural, economic, and social elements are contributing much to the increase in child marriage, particularly in the rural areas like Chipinge District. Government interventions, such as legal frameworks, educational initiatives, and community outreach programs, aim to combat this practice. However, the effectiveness of these interventions remains inadequately assessed, necessitating a thorough investigation into their impact within the local context.

1.3 Aim of the study

It aims to analyse causes of child marriages and government interventions on child marriages: A case of Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. This study will be focusing on traditional, religious, social and economic elements that are contributing to child marriage within the selected wards. It also aims to understand the experiences and impacts of child marriage on the affected adolescent girls and boys, and analyze the effectiveness of the existing government interventions in reducing child marriages in the selected wards of Chipinge District. The study also seeks to recommend practical strategies to minimize and curb child marriages in Chipinge District and in Zimbabwe at large.

1.3.1 Research Objectives

1. To analyse the causes of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.
2. To evaluate the impact of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.
3. To examine government interventions and challenges faced in reducing child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.
4. To suggest improved methods that can be employed by the government to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe.

1.3.2 Research Questions of the Study

1. What are the causes of child marriages?
2. What are the impacts of child marriages?
3. What are the government interventions and challenges faced when reducing child marriages?
4. What are the recommended strategies that can be used by the government to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe?

1.4 Assumption of the Study

This study has an assumption that socio-economic factors are the one driving child marriages in Chipinge District or child marriages has nothing to do with the socio-economic factors in Chipinge District.

1.5 Justification of the Study

This research will act as an eye opener not only to the government but to the society, parents, researchers and policy makers to take action in reducing child marriages.

1.5.1. To the Society

It is very crucial to understand the causes of child marriage in Chipinge District as it helps to address the broader societal implications. Child marriage severely restricts girls' access to education, which frequently results in a cycle of poverty. Early marriage increases a girl's likelihood of dropping out of school, which impacts her economic prospects and reinforces gender inequality. This study can contribute to increasing awareness of negative impacts of child marriage on women's empowerment and community development.

1.5.2. Government Relevance

For the government, this study provides essential insights into the socio-economic elements that lead to child marriage. Policy makers can create focused responses that deal with the underlying problems rather than merely the symptoms by determining these causes. It is the duty of the government to safeguard the rights of children, and programs intended to lower the rate of child marriage can be more successful if local dynamics are understood.

1.5.3. Parental Awareness

It is vital for parents to have knowledge on the consequences of child marriage. Parents can learn from this study about the long-term effects of marrying off their daughters at young age, including health risks and missed educational opportunities. By highlighting the benefits of delaying marriages, such as improved economic stability and better health outcomes for both mothers and children, the study can persuade parents to reconsider traditional practices.

1.5.4. Policy Makers' Insights

Policy makers rely on research to design policies that are relevant, effective and informed by the real experience of the community. Therefore this study will provide critical data about the causes of child marriage, barriers to intervention and the effectiveness to current policies. In addition, policy makers need regular evaluations to determine whether policies are working as intended. This research can also serve as a baseline for monitoring progress over time and adapting policies as needed.

1.5.5. To the Researchers

For researchers, this study fills a gap in the existing literature regarding child marriage globally, regionally and nationally. It can serve as a reference point for future studies and encourage further exploration into the effectiveness of various interventions.

1.6 Location of the Study

This research was done in Chipinge District, a town located in the Southeastern part of Zimbabwe's Manicaland Province. Chipinge is approximately 120 kilometers south of Mutare, the provincial capital. Additionally, Chipinge lies about 30km from the Mozambican border, making it a strategic location for cross-border trade and regional interactions. As of the most recent estimates, the

approximate population of Chipinge as per 2022 Census record is 375 259 (174 307 males and 200 952 females). About 134 000 are children and 67 000 are female children.

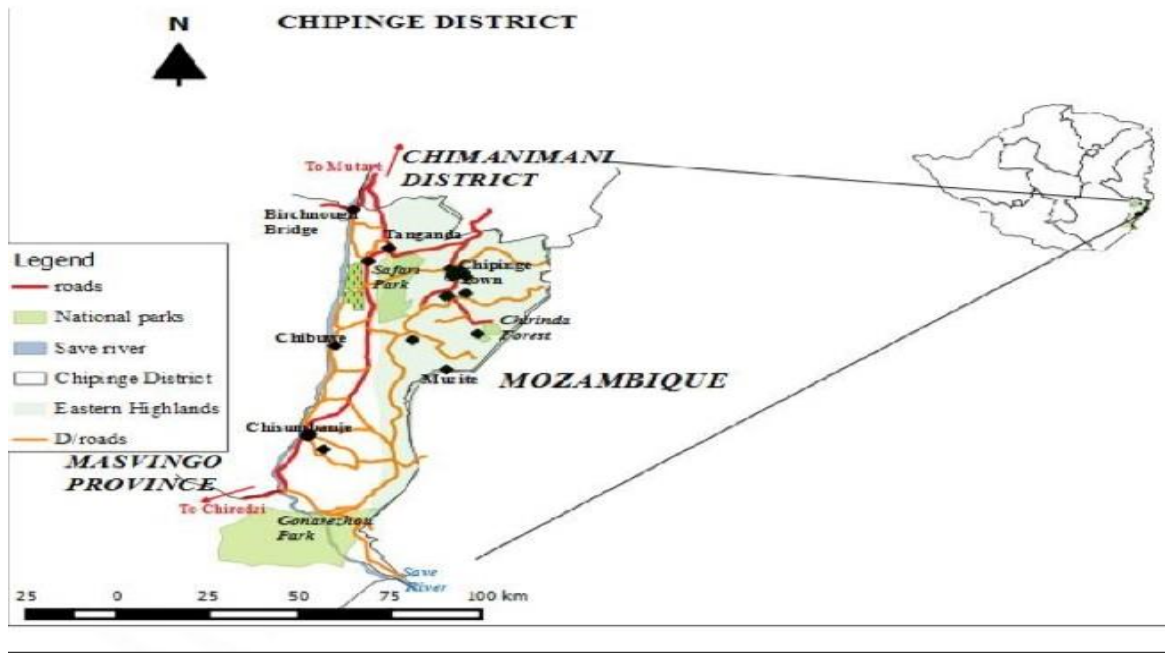


Figure 1. 1 Area of study

Mostly, people in Chipinge District are engaged in subsistence farming, which often fails to generate enough income for their basic needs. This financial strain sometimes leads families to marry off their children as a means of alleviating economic hardship. Additionally, the proximity to the Mozambican Border facilitates trade with Mozambique and some people from Chipinge migrate there in search of better opportunities. This exposure to different cultural practices can influence the mindset of girls in Chipinge, leading them to adopt the idea of early marriage, similar to what they observe in Mozambique. Furthermore, young men who travel to Mozambique in search of better prospects may return with increased financial resources, giving them more power to marry, often targeting young teenagers due to the prevailing poverty in Chipinge.

Therefore, due to the increased early marriages in the district of Chipinge, the researcher was left with no choice than to target the district on her research.

1.6.2 Delimitation of the Study

The study is specifically targeting Chipinge District in Zimbabwe, only focusing on Ward 26, 27 and 30. These wards are selected due to their unique social, economic and cultural contexts, which influence the prevalence of child marriages. The research will explore the causes of child marriages and evaluate the effectiveness of government interventions. This study will also involve interviews with children (4-17 years), families, community leaders and local authorities, concentrating on the period between 2015 to date.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Limitations are influences that are beyond the researcher's control. These are the flaws, circumstances or influences that the researcher could not control and that places limitations on the methodology and findings.

1.7.1 Financial constraints

The researcher faced challenges in funds for transport as she traveled from place to place and conducting interviews to gather information for research and this made it difficult for the study to proceed smoothly. However, to overcome this challenge, I made use of information I obtained from the secondary data. This information was collected from different departments which focus on child protection issues such as Department of Social Development and Non-Governmental Organizations.

1.7.2 Limited time

The researcher faced significant constraints due to a limited timeframe which hindered the effectiveness of the research process. As a result, some community households were inadvertently omitted from the study and key departments were not visited leading to potential gaps in data collection. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher had to depend more on secondary data sources which provided valuable information to supplement the primary data that could not be collected within the time constraints. Despite these limitations, the researcher made a concerted effort to gather as much relevant information as possible, ensuring that the study still yielded useful insights.

1.7.3 Access to sensitive information

Child marriage is a sensitive issue, and obtaining honest and detailed responses from participants, especially those directly affected, was very difficult due to social stigma, fear of retribution, or a

reluctance to disclose personal experiences. This limited the depth and accuracy of data collected. However, the researcher ensured the confidentiality and created a safe environment for the participants. Interviews were conducted in private settings, that is, one on one interviews.

1.8 Key Words of the Study

According to my study, the following words means:

1.8.1 Child

Any person under the age of 18 years is regarded as a child. This means that every person between the age range of 0 to 17 is a child.

1.8.2 Child marriage

It is a formal or informal union where one or both parties are under the age of 18. It usually involves a child being married to an adult or another child, usually with no or little choice in the matter.

1.8.3 Government interventions

Government interventions refer to the measures taken by the government to influence the market and regulate economic activity.

1.9 Project Layout

Chapter 1

It is an opening chapter which constitute of the background of the study, problem statement, significance, aim and, objectives. Conclusion is also given at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 2

In this chapter, the literature review is based on the opinions of other scholars regarding the subject being studied. Various concepts and ideas from these academics contributed to the development of this study and their applicability will also be evaluated. The causes, effects and national, regional and international government actions are also the main topics of this section.

Chapter 3

This chapter focused on the methods that the researcher used to collect data. It concentrated on the study's design, methodology, target population, study environment, sample techniques, data

collection instruments, data display, ethical considerations and limitations. This helped to support the researcher's approach to achieving the goals outlined in the first chapter. Focus was much placed on guaranteeing the validity, reliability and efficacy of the research findings in order to address the research questions.

Chapter 4

In this chapter, the researcher focused on the presentation and analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected from wards 26, 27 and 29 in Chipinge district, Manicaland Province. Themes that are in sync with the main objectives were used not only to present but also to analyze the acquired data for the purposes of drawing relevant conclusions. Findings of the study were also done and presented in themes for the qualitative data and the quantitative data was presented in charts, tables and graphs.

Chapter 5

This chapter concentrated on the summary in relation to data which was presented in the previous chapter and the objectives of the study. Additionally, it highlighted the research findings' conclusions and suggestions for enhancing Zimbabwe's delivery of child welfare services by addressing social, economic, cultural and religious aspects.

1.9 Chapter Summary

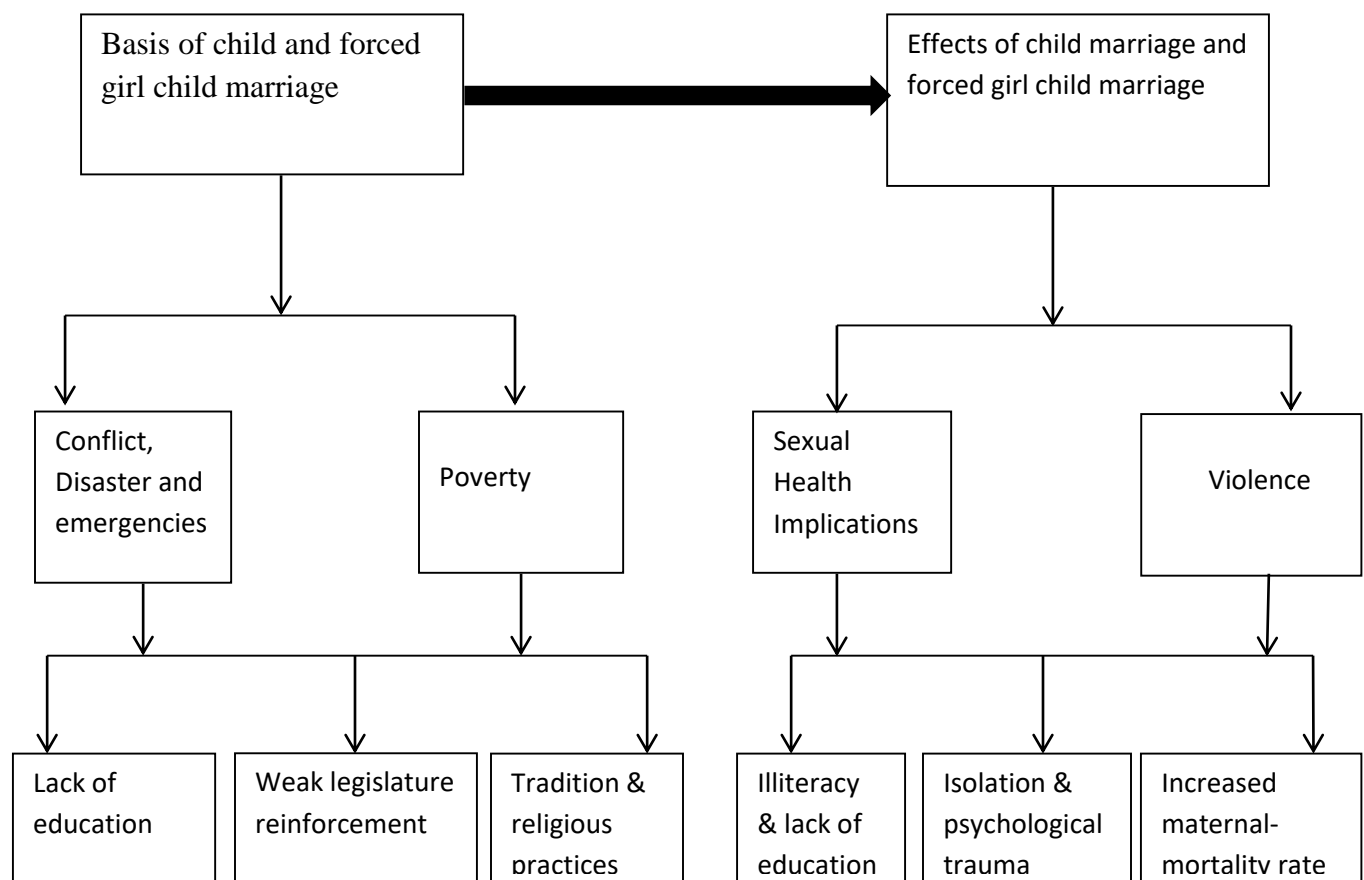
The study's introduction was the main aim of the chapter. It primarily concentrated on the study's background, problem statement, purpose, aim and significance of the study. This chapter serves as an introduction to the study and lays the groundwork for the facts that will be established in the next chapter. The next chapter will be focusing on the literature based review of the cause and effects of child marriage and the measure being taken by the government of Zimbabwe to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Early marriage is a serious problem which exists in the whole world. The main objective of the literature review is to assess the causes of early marriage, evaluate the impact, examine government interventions and suggest improved methods to reduce the number of child marriages in Chipinge District in Zimbabwe. A suitable theoretical and conceptual framework for defining the research problem and identifying any gaps or inconsistencies in the body of research will be found through the literature review.

2.1 Conceptual framework



Source: author

Early marriage was recognized as a global human-child rights concern. According to Raj et al (2018), child marriage is regarded as a practice that discriminates all efforts leading to the impeding of the uplifting of many adolescent girls worldwide. Arthur et al (2018) state that early marriage is a long-standing, global practice that impacts millions of individuals and can be formal or informal customary union that involves a child under the age of 18 years.

Despite the abundance of literature on the subject, little is known about the causes of child marriage and how it affects teenage girls. The rate of child marriage varies and many nations' statistics are not easily accessible since such nations are unwilling to provide statistical data and information (Raj: 2010). This has mostly impacted how the issue is portrayed around the world. According to WHO (2016), the UNDESAPD, UNICEF, UNIFPA together with other international organizations have been working nonstop to produce verified data on child marriages in every country. WHO (2016) indicates that although data is not easily accessible in some countries, this does not imply that child marriages do not occur. The absence of child marriage records has little bearing on the nation but it may hinder regional and global development. For example, no attention will be aid to any attempts to curtail the practice as required by SDG5 or Target 3 which supports the abolition of all detrimental practices such as adolescent, early and forced marriage.

The negative effects of child marriage have drawn more attention from the world community. The United Nations implemented SDGs to eradicate early marriage throughout the world by 2030, but only a few countries have adopted effective measures to combat the practice. Countries have made significant investments in regulations and programs aimed at stopping and preventing the detrimental behaviour, but these efforts have not been very successful. Many countries across the world are implementing interventions to empower women and girls, including assistance from governments, the World Bank, UNFPA and UNICEF. To address the problem of child marriages globally, considerably more work must be done.

2.3 Objective 1: Factors That Contribute To Child Marriage

2.3.1 Global Context

The Centre for Human Rights and African Commission Special rapporteur on rights of Women (2018) and the organization Girls Not Brides (2017) backed the idea that poverty, limited access to education, concerns about the safety of daughters, stigma, cultural values and religious beliefs are some of the common causes of child marriage in Africa. On lack of education, Goli (2017) indicated that most of the parents in India who have little or no education are unable to comprehend the impacts of early unions on their young daughters and have little power to oppose and defend their own choices.

Some cultures, traditions, and religious beliefs, according to Psaki et al (2021), violate the rights of women and girls while also continuing the practice of child marriage. To support this, Le Roux and Palm (2018) provide evidence for this by pointing out that some church teachings encourage adherents to enter into early marriages and Religious sects that support early marriage as a means of preserving virginity for future husbands include Moslem, Zionist, Islamic and White garment churches. In order to preserve family honor and stop premarital sex, girls in these congregations are then compelled to be married young.

According to MehChu (2020), state laws and regulations are the main causes of child marriages in the United States. Louisiana's laws, for example, require judicial approval for children under the age of 16, with no upper age limit, and permit either parental consent or judicial approval for children aged 16 to 17 years. According to Girls Not Brides (2017), more than 605 of uneducated women who are in the 20 to 24 age range were married before turning 18 years. Children from disadvantaged households and societies, those whose families cannot provide for their children especially girls, are more likely to marry young, according to the organization Girls Not Brides (2017). Parsons et al (2015) asserts that in India, where dowries are customary (the bride's family contribute assets to the groom's family), a younger and less educated bride might need a smaller dowry. This would encourage parents to marry daughters at a younger age in order to swiftly make up for their financial difficulties.

2.3.2 African Context

Montazeri et al (2016) rightly postulate that child marriages have a long history in Africa and are ingrained in traditional, cultural and religious ideas. According to CHR and ACSRRW (2018), many rituals, traditions, cultures and religious beliefs place women and girls in a difficult position since they contain ideas about sexuality, gender roles and women's subjugation. There is a misconception that a girl's likelihood of being virgin increases with her age. According to a 2015 Guardian Newspaper article in Chitemba (2017) about Malawi's laws to outlaw child marriage, a customary ritual in the country's south is one of the main reasons why child marriage occurs. When a girl reaches adolescence, she is compelled to take part in a custom known as "Kusasa Fumbi" in Malawi, which involves cleansing her childhood. Following instruction and preparation on how to be a good wife, they are compelled to engage in sexual activity with older guys known as "Hyena".

Because a girl child would desire to engage in sexual activity every day, this could occasionally result in an early marriage.

Although not exclusive to any one religion, Ayiga and Rampagane (2013) postulate that the evidence suggests that child marriage is more common among Muslim communities in Nigeria. Braimah (2014) mentioned that child marriage is related to the conservative Muslim belief that the Quran permits a girl to marry at any age and that Prophet Muhammad's wife was nine years old when they got married. In the Northern State of Nigeria, the Muslims are opposing the domestication of the country's Child Right Act and are acting to defend their ethno-religious views on child marriage.

In contrary, Hodgkinson (2016) argues that poverty and contextual economics are the the root causes of child marriage which is thought to be a copying tactic employed by families experiencing financial instability or poverty and may even become a means of their survival. The bride's family views marrying a female child as a way to generate revenues, thus they think about giving a young girl so they can continue to get support from the husband and maintain themselves through the paid bride price (Girls Not Brides, 2019). The organization Girls Not Brides provides a view that Niger is the lowest-ranked nation on the Human Development Index and has more than 80% of its inhabitants living below the poverty line, making it one of the world's poorest nations. Due to the recurrent food shortages and droughts in Niger, many families marry their girls off to older men in order to receive dowry money which is commonly used to pay off debts or for financial benefit (UN Women, 2018). According to Domfe and Oduro (2018), research conducted in Ghana indicates that some parents marry off their daughters in order to shield them from poverty and lessen the financial strain of raising them.

2.3.3 Zimbabwean Context

Due to poverty, many people especially those living in rural areas, are engaging into different illegal practices in order to earn a living and in those practices child marriage is not an exceptional. To support this view, World Food Programme (2022) rightly postulates that the worsening impacts of climate change make many Zimbabwean areas to suffer especially Chiredzi District which was identified as one of the nation's most persistently food insecure district. Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (2021) recorded that the Chiredzi District's rural food insecurity prevalence is expected to be 57% during the lean season that runs from February to April 2021.

Religion has also been connected to Zimbabwe's high rate of child marriage. Chamisa et al (2019) observe that although the practice is not unique to any one religious group, it is more common among followers of apostolic religions, particularly the Johane Marange and Johane Masowe groups. Through their behaviours and doctrines, these religious groups take advantage of young girls. For example, adolescent girls are frequently coerced into marrying older men on the grounds that the "Holy Spirit" has instructed church officials to do so (Hallfors et al, 2016). In Manicaland province where Johane Marange is dominant, many girls are forced to marry as soon as they reach adolescence. According to a study by Tag a Life International (2016) in Mashonaland West Province, some apostolic sects and churches' policies are allowing older men to take as many wives as they want and this was shown to be a significant cause of child marriages.

In Zimbabwe, child marriage was also thought to be caused by the child's security. Due to prostitution, STIs, HIV and AIDS have become more prevalent in Manicaland since the diamond mining emergency in the Marange area. Muchadenyika (2015) reports that the majority of men who were abandoning their wives at home turned to prostitution in the nearby shopping malls such as Marange, Mukwada and Bombazonke. He points out that many girls between the ages of 12 and 16 were the most affected by prostitution which led to an increase in adolescent pregnancies in the region. To avoid these scenarios, teenage girls were now forced to marry early as it was believed that getting married is the best way to keep a woman away from prostitution.

2.4 Objective 2: Impacts of Child Marriages

2.4.1 Global Context

The United Nations and other international organizations have deemed child marriage to be a violation of children's and human rights (Bengesai et al, 2021). In the world's context, Nguyen and Wodon (2017) found out that each year of marriage before the age of 18 lowers the probability that girls will complete secondary school by four to six percentage points with the effects being more pronounced in area with higher completion rates. In the United States, girls' future educational performance is severely hampered by early marriage. Wand and Wang (2017) state that in the United States females who marry before turning 19 are four times less likely to finish college and 50% more likely to drop out of high school than unmarried girls.

It was also noted that most girls who marry early have high chances of experiencing domestic violence. Many researchers have reviewed that reproduction coercion, sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and financial abuse is common within child marriages. Wahi et al (2019) mention that 18 out of 20 women in the United States who took part in a 2019 study on child marriage said that their husbands had abused them physically, sexually or emotionally during their marriage. The author also explained that eleven people reported experiencing financial abuse from their spouse which included being compelled to give up their earning or having limited access to their household's financial resources.

2.4.2 African Context

Although the world has promised to curb child marriages, a lot of children are still getting married before turning 18 years, endangering their lives and health and compromising their childhood (Motala et al, 2015). UNICEF (2015) reports that young girls who are frequently unable to get or use contraception which leads to early pregnancy and in Mozambique, girls who are married by the age of 15 are seven times more likely to have three or more children.

The majority of adolescent women in 29 countries, including Ghana, were shown to be more susceptible to HIV infection than older women. Clark et al (2016) postulate that girls who marry young are more likely to have considerably older husbands, become junior wives and be in polygamous marriages all of which raise their risk of contracting STIs and HIV.

According to Parsons et al (2015), girls who marry young have less control over productive household assets, are more likely to drop out of school and become illiterate, have less decision-making and power in the married home and participation in the labour force to earn money. Early marriage often leads to the end of education. The majority of girls often stop attending school after getting married and they are not permitted to go back while they are married.

2.4.3 Zimbabwean Context

Luseno et al (2017) mentioned that in Zimbabwe, child marriage increases the risk of STDs, early childbirth and other related health problems. Additionally, there is proof that child brides are more likely to experience domestic abuse and feel powerless as they grow up (Kidman: 2017). Domestic violence affects the psychological health of young girls who got into early marriage.

According to a study by Magwa and Ngara (2015) on the causes of school dropout among girls in Zimbabwe, early marriage, poverty and adolescent pregnancy were some of the main causes. Child marriage contributes to school dropout due to some different reasons which constitute psychological trauma to the victim due to pregnancy or early marriage may cause her not to return to school again. Also stigmatization by other learners, lack of support either by school or family, lack of enough resources to take care of the unborn baby, new family and school at the same time.

2.5 Objective 3: Government Interventions and Challenges Faced In Reducing Child Marriages.

2.5.1 Global Context

In addition to supporting global development priorities through 2030, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals call for the abolition of child marriages. The goal to eradicate child marriage by 2030 is part of the SDG5 which is centered on gender equality. According to UN Women (2022), addressing child marriage and expanding women's and girls' access to productive resources can help improve the nutrition and food security of adolescent girls and their offspring. Therefore, by achieving SDG 2 (Zero hunger) will help in reducing child marriages by 2030.

According to Banerjee et al (2015), the Economic Incentives Treatment Programme was put in place in Ethiopia to offer a mix of immediate advantages such as school supplies for girls and longer-term, possibly more sustainable advantages, such as revolving loan fund access and financial literacy training for the parents. This revolving loan fund's primary goal was to promote income-generating endeavors that would enable families to keep their children in school and postpone marriage.

2.5.2 African Context

The Republic of Zambia implemented a National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage in Zambia 2016-2021. The aim of the strategy was to reduce child marriage rates by 40% by 2021 with a target of building, "a Zambia free from child marriage by 2030", and address the harmful practices and societal challenges associated with child marriage through multi-sectoral approaches and resource mobilization. The same strategy identified that teenage pregnancy was a significant social and health issue with implications for the adolescent mother and the child (Zambia, 2015, 6).

Working together, people and groups have helped bring attention to gender inequalities and education of young women in Africa. In November 2021, the African Union Commission held the third Summit for girls in Niger. The event included people from thirty-five African countries, such as leaders from international groups, traditional and religious leaders, civil society and young people, not excluding young girls. They asked African leaders to make sure that pregnant girls can still go to school and that their rights are protected. This summit showed how teamwork and activism can encourage leaders to take action to support education for the adolescent girls and reduce gender inequalities (HRW, 2021).

Raj et al (2019) found that helping girls to stay in school can reduce child marriage. When girls get support through education, they are more likely to stay in school and complete it. Luseno et al (2017) cite that programmes like giving money to families or offering scholarships can help girls stay in school, hence delay marriage and pregnancy. These programmes work by raising awareness and giving girls better access to education and health care.

2.5.3 Zimbabwean Context

The Zimbabwean Constitutional Court ruled on 24 May 2022, that some provision of the Marriage Act that permitted 16-year-old girls to marry were unconstitutional (Zimbabwe Legal Information Institute, 2022). This can be seen as a more significant move by the Zimbabwean government to combat underage marriage. Additionally, Zimbabwe has rules that promote education by permitting pregnant learners to finish their studies. The 2030 Education Amendment Act permits pregnant school girls to continue their education while also prohibiting corporal punishment. However, it has been observed that not all pregnant girls are able to continue their education for a variety of reasons including stigmatization from other students and the community as well as a lack of appropriate support services for expectant mother at school (Government of Zimbabwe, 2020).

Zimbabwe implemented policies and laws that protect the rights of children. According to Section 81 of the Zimbabwe Constitution which is a Bill of Rights children must be defended from sexual and economic exploitation, child labour, neglect and abuse in any way (Government of Zimbabwe,

2013). This protects children to end up into early marriages as they are well protected by the policies and laws.

However, there are challenges to the policy implementation in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, religious beliefs that contradict with the national laws and regulations still exist. This is evidenced by the existence of Johane Marange Church that restricts its believers to seek for medical assistance from hospitals and clinics. They believe in “*mvura yemuteuro*”, that it contains the power of God that heals the sick. For instance, the Sunday Mail (2021) mentioned that the death of Memory Machaya, a 14 year old girl during child delivery at a shrine in the eastern Region of Marange brought shock waves to the nation of Zimbabwe. This was reported to have happened on 15 July 2021 and the issue raised eyebrows of different child rights practitioners and human rights organization.

Programmes to reduce food insecurity and household poverty were put into place by the Zimbabwean government through the Department of Social Development (DSD). The DSD offers cash transfers to food-poor households through the Harmonised Social Cash Transfer Programme (HSCT). According to Dewbre et al (2015), the HSCT programme is a livelihood support strategy and as such it underscores the developmental function of social protection. This leads to the reduction of child marriage in different communities due to reduced poverty and hunger. According to Pan International Policy Report of (2016), the government of Zimbabwe in collaboration with Plan International has launched awareness campaigns in Mutasa District that are against child marriage and also addressed the issue of domestic violence that are caused by child marriages.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) of the Zimbabwean government implemented programs aimed at lowering household poverty and food insecurity. Through the Harmonized Social Cash Transfer Programme (HSCT), the DSD provides cash transfers to households that are food insecure. The HSCT program emphasizes the developmental role of social protection because it is a livelihood support strategy (Dewbre et al, 2015). As a result of less poverty and hunger, child marriage declines in various cultures. According to Pan International Policy Report (2016), the Zimbabwean government , along with Plan International, has started anti-child marriage awareness efforts in Mutasa District and tackled the problem of domestic violence brought on by child marriage. However, the government is facing challenges in making this programme to proceed due to inadequate funding.

2.7 Chapter Summary

Child marriage is still a global challenge with widespread social, economic, and health consequences. Despite the efforts made by different countries, cultural, economic and legal challenges continue to undermine efforts to end the practice. The government must continue working towards strengthening legal frameworks, educate communities, and empower girls to end the cycle of child marriage. The next chapter is going to focus on the research methodology, that is, the different methods that were used in doing the research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter concentrated on providing an overview of the study techniques used to determine the reasons behind child marriage and the effectiveness of government initiatives aimed at reducing the number of child marriages in Chipinge District. In order to provide a comprehensive picture of

the reasons, effects and government interventions to prevent child marriage, the research uses both qualitative and quantitative methodologies for data collection. Research design, philosophy, data collection methods, sample strategies and data analysis were the main topics of this chapter. The validity and reliability of the instruments as well as ethical considerations were also covered.

3.1 Research Philosophy

In this study, the researcher used a pragmatic research philosophy which focuses on using a practical approach to solving problems, drawing from a mixed-method design as appropriate. The researcher employed a pragmatic research philosophy in this research which emphasizes using a practical approach to problem-solving while utilizing a mixed-method design when necessary. This method gives the Chipinge District the freedom to handle the complex issue of child marriages because it involves a number of socio-economic, cultural and religious elements that require varied evaluations. Both quantitative and qualitative data can be collected using pragmatic perspective. It honors people's opinions and life experiences and encourages the blending of research methodologies to have a comprehensive grasp of the research topic and its solution (Kaushik and Wash, 2019).

A research philosophy is a set of basic beliefs that guide the design and execution of a research study (Tamminen and Poucher, 2020). According to Kirongo and Odoyo (2020), research philosophy can be defined as the beliefs about the nature of reality being studied and the selection of a particular research philosophy depends on the type of knowledge the researcher aims to explore.

3.2 Philosophy Assumptions

In this chapter, the researcher brought to enquiry some philosophical presumptions. These are actions made by the researcher that give the study direction such as the method utilized for the study (methodology), the researcher's perspective on reality (ontology), and the researcher's epistemological approach to reality. However, the researcher found the methodological assumption to be the best fit for the research since it combines both qualitative and quantitative methods, hence, suitable for a mixed method approach.

3.2.1 Methodological assumption

This assumption is based on how research should be conducted. The assumption also entails on the process and language of research to be followed. The ideas that direct the collection of data and decide the appropriate methods are the subject of methodology. Yilmaz (2013) states that using quantifiable instruments, the researcher in a quantitative study aims to provide a generalizable explanation for the subject under investigation; their methodology is frequently referred to as experimental. This assumption is the best fit for my research since it combines both quantitative methods (surveys, statistics) and qualitative methods (interviews, focus group discussions) that provide a comprehensive understanding of both scale and underlying causes of child marriages and government interventions on child marriage.

3.3 Research Design

A two-stage equal-status concurrent sequential mixed-method design was employed in the research. A mixed-method design is a kind of research in which a researcher mixes both qualitative and quantitative methodologies for a broad and deep knowledge and corroboration, according to Johnson et al., referenced in Scoonenboom & Johnson (2017). According to Creswell (2014), using both quantitative and qualitative methods enables a more thorough comprehension of a research subject than using only one method. In order to answer the research questions and obtain additional information and validity, the researcher decided to employ a mixed-method research approach, which strengthened and broadened the study's conclusions.

To enable the investigation of trends and patterns, the quantitative approach used structured questions to gather numerical data. However, in order to better understand the participant's experiences and opinions surrounding child marriages in Chipinge District, qualitative data was collected using focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires.

3.4 Target Population of the Study

According to Burns et al. (2015), the people who will be the subject of a research study are referred to as the target or study population. Examining the social, economic, cultural, and religious elements that contribute to child marriage, the effects of child marriage, and the government's tactics to prevent child weddings in Chipinge District were the goals of this study. Hence, the most suitable people to participate in the study were the survivors of child marriages, parents or caregivers, local leaders, religious leaders, community health workers, and government officials that deal with child protection issues such as DSD and VFU. 3 out of 30 rural wards in Chipinge

District were the targeted population. In those 3 wards, a total of 133 out of 36 408 population were targeted by the research.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

For the quantitative approach, the researcher picked respondents using purposive and random sample techniques, giving every individual from the targeted population the same chance of being chosen. By doing this, bias was reduced and the sample was guaranteed to be representative of the larger population in the selected wards of Chipinge District.

Purposive sampling was employed for the qualitative method. This made it easier for the researcher to choose volunteers with specialized knowledge or experience with child marriage difficulties. To offer in-depth insights into the issue, key participants were chosen, including government representatives, community health workers (CCWs and VHWs), local traditional and religious leaders, and survivors of child marriage.

3.5.1 Sample Size Requirements

The small group that a researcher chooses to gather information from the target population is known as the sample size. A sample, according to Vaus (2011), is a subset of the population that is representative of the full population. Because it is inherently challenging to conduct research on every single component of the population, Tinarwo (2013) asserts that the sample selected should accurately reflect the population. The formula used for calculating the sample size is,

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

- n=sample size
- N=population size (133) which is the targeted population
- e=margin of error (0.05)
- $n = \frac{133}{1 + 133(0.05^2)} = \frac{133}{1 + 0.33} = \frac{133}{1.33} = 100$

Table 3. 1 Sample size requirements

Participant group	Selection criteria	Estimated Sample size	Justification
Children below 18 years of age	Random sampling criteria used to select children to participate in the research.	60	Ensures an unbiased selection of children in the communities to improve the reliability of findings.
Parents/ guardians	Snowball sampling Parents/guardians of the children who got married before they reach 18 years	15	Parents influence marriage decisions and it is important to understand their motives.
Community leaders	Traditional and religious leaders in the selected wards. Purposive sampling method was used.	12	They play a crucial role in shaping the community norms, values and interventions
Community health workers	Purposive sampling to select Village Health Workers (VHWs) and Child Care Workers (CCWs)	9	They ensure safety, security and justice to children in the communities. These helped in providing effects of child marriages especially on health.
Government officials	Purposive sampling tool was applied to pick sectors that	2-4	To explore policy implementation,

	mostly deal with child protection and supporting the survivors of child marriages.		challenges, and effectiveness of interventions.
Total		100	

3.6 Research Instruments

The tools that the researcher uses to collect data are called research instruments. The instruments differ due to the structure, format, purpose, nature and availability.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Throughout the data collection process, the researcher employed the questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to 56 children who were below the age of 18 years. A questionnaire, which consists of questions and room for responses, is a tool used to gather and document data regarding a specific topic or issue of interest. Closed-ended and open-ended questions were included in the survey to encourage a thorough comprehension of the phenomenon. The research questions helped for the researcher to quickly gather more data from different sources. The research questionnaires are found on the appendix 3 at the end of this study.

3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews

One qualitative research technique that aims to characterize and interpret key themes in the subject's information universe is the interview. The key informant interviews were used to 31 participants including 13 parents, 8 community leaders and 10 VHWs/CCWs. Interviews are interactive discussions in which the researcher will be asking questions intending to get responses in relation to what is being asked and provide answers on their own thinking (Taylor and Bogdan, quote from Kumar: 2011). The researcher was able to interpret nonverbal cues, contextualize the information, and comprehend the meaning that the participants assigned to specific terms thanks to our in-person interactions (Pluye et al., 2018). The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews, asking questions in a confidential manner to protect the respondent's privacy. The key informant interviews are found on the appendix 4, 5 and 6.

3.6.3 Key Informant Guide

The key informant guide was also applied since the researcher interviewed 3 respondents (2 from the Department of Social Development and 1 from Victim friendly Unit). Key informants are the people who are equipped with specialized knowledge, insights or experience about a particular topic, community or any issue and they are able to provide valuable information to researchers, policymakers or organizations. As a result, they are considered to be especially valuable sources of information for a researcher. Three government officials from DSD and VFU Chipinge District participated in the researcher's key informant guide. The departments' primary focus is on child safety, and child marriages are one of their main concerns. In order to ensure that child marriages are decreased, the researcher had to collect data regarding the socio-economic difficulties they are facing.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Instead of using a single research instrument, three instruments were used in order to reduce bias (triangulation method). Before using the research instruments, the researcher used a pilot study to test the validity and reliability of the instruments to see whether the respondents can understand the questions.

The process that yields outcomes that can be obtained in different situations is known as reliability. Bulmer and Warwick (1983) assert that procedures are considered reliable if they produce consistent results when repeated by multiple individuals simultaneously. According to McMillian and Schumacher (1993), study designs and data collection techniques are how reliability in qualitative research is addressed. Reliability includes the researcher's consistent interactive style, data recording, data analysis, and interpretation of participant responses from the data. According to De Vos (1998), reliability is identical with dependability, stability, consistency, predictability, and generalization. It also refers to the degree to which separate administrations of the same instrument produce the same outcomes under similar circumstances. The accuracy or reliability of a researcher's account, explanation, or interpretation is known as validity. Bell (2010) cites that validity refers to whether the study's design yields a compelling conclusion. The integrity of the conclusions drawn from the investigation was another aspect of validity. Combining qualitative and quantitative procedures through triangulation, which is defined by the use of different sampling techniques, research instruments, and statistical analysis, is a crucial tool to increase the

validity and dependability of the study design. Consequently, the study will provide answers to all of the research questions and support the study's goals.

3.8. Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis' main aim is to establish and investigate new facts using field data. The data was gathered, and themes were used for analysis. Marxwell (2013) mentioned that thematic analysis is the most suitable technique for both qualitative and quantitative research. The data collected during the interviews was evaluated and presented using sub themes that the researcher derived from the participant data.

The information was examined and presented thematically. Given that the researcher employed theme data analysis, thematic data presentation was the best for the study. The researcher had to apply the theme approach to convey the findings of the study, which examined cultural, economic, and social variables preventing the implementation of case management intervention services to address sexual abuse of teenage girls in Zimbabwe.

The information was examined and presented with the use of themes and excel. Given that the researcher employed theme data analysis, thematic data presentations was the best for qualitative data and excel for quantitative data. The researcher had to employ the themes, charts and tables to convey the findings of the study, which examined cultural, economic, and social variables causing the increase in child marriage prevalence, and the effectiveness of government interventions in curbing child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher evaluated the research methods before starting the fieldwork to ensure that none of the respondents would suffer any harm. This was accomplished by reexamining the semi-structured topics, study objectives, and questions to ensure that they would not offend, embarrass, or cause the respondents to feel resentful or uneasy. The researcher then went to Chipinge District to familiarize herself with the local community and lifestyle. The researcher then asked the Department of Social Development and the District Development Coordinator to allow her to do the study in Chipinge District. Additionally, before beginning the study, the researcher had to obtain the young mother's permission.

3.9.1 Informed consent

Informed is a scheme of allowing the participants to get to know what the research is all about and its significance and when that is being done, the participants can decide a way they would want to participate. Informed consent is one of the fundamental principles when carrying out research because the participants will undertake the research questions knowing what the whole study is all about. It is complemented by signing a mutual consent from the participants.

3.9.2. Voluntary Participation

The researcher did not force participants to participate in the research. The research was entirely based on the readiness of people to participate. When carrying out the research, the researcher did not deceive or compel people to participate. Every respondent had the right to volunteer to participate in the research. Respondents that were asked for their participation had the right to accept or deny.

3.9.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is crucial when carrying out research in order to maintain that the information provided by the respondents will be treated as confidential and not published. The researcher must use pseudo names so as to protect participant's identity since the information obtained is regarded sensitive. The researcher supported this ethic by guaranteeing that the data collected from the respondents is kept confidential and the researcher employs pseudo names when analysing the data. When asking the questions, the researcher asked questions where the respondents felt that they were safe and private. The researcher also stressed to the respondents not to state their names.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The section concentrated on the research methods that were used in collecting data. The methodology consisted of research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, sampling, targeted population, and data analysis and presentation. The main focus of the next chapter is to present and analyze data that was collected during the research

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

The following section focuses on presenting, analysing and discussing on the results of the causes of child marriages and the effectiveness of government interventions on child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. In this chapter, tables, charts, and graphs were used to present quantitative data whilst the qualitative data was represented by the verbatim statements that were quoted from the targeted population in Ward 26, 27 and 29 of Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

4.1 Response Rate

Table 4. 1 Response rate information

Target Group	Sample size	Responses Received	Response Rate (%)
Children below the age of 18 years	60	56	93
Parents/ Guardians	15	13	87
Community leaders	9	8	89
VHWs & CCWs	12	10	83
DSD & VFU	4	3	75
Total	100	90	90

Out of 100 participants who were targeted by this study, 90 successfully responded giving the overall response rate of 90%, indicating a high level of participation from the selected target groups. This high response rate indicated the willingness of the selected participants in airing out their knowledge and experiences on the focused issue of adolescent marriages. The highest response rate was attributed to the purposive sampling methods which helped the author to mainly concentrate in those people who had information on this complex subject spread over a wide geographical extent.

4.2 Demographic Information

Data was collected on variables such as age, gender, marital status and age at first married, education level, and occupation and working experience.

4.2.1 Demographic distribution of participants by age

Understanding the age distribution of respondents is very important in the study of child marriage as it is linked to the issue under the research. This section helped the researcher to identify the number of children below the age of 18 comparing to adults (those above 18 years) to provide a clear picture of both those at risk of child marriage and those influencing it.

Table 4. 2 Demographic distribution of participants by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
10-13 years	12	13
13-17	44	49
18-35	19	21
36-64	10	11
65+ Years	5	6
Total	90	100

The age distribution on Table 4.1 shows that over 60% of respondents are minors (below 18 years) which are the most vulnerable group to be affected by early marriages. Their inclusion allowed the study to capture lived experiences of those boys and girls at risk especially from the age range of 13-17 years. The other targeted respondents (adults) were included to provide the study with their insights on how norms and decisions are made around child marriage in the communities.

4.2.2 Demographic distribution of participants by gender

Gender is a critical factor in child marriage where girls happen to be the most victims. Examining gender distribution gives a clear understanding of whether the study requires sufficient representation from both sexes, especially in terms of experiences, opinions and community roles in combating child marriage.

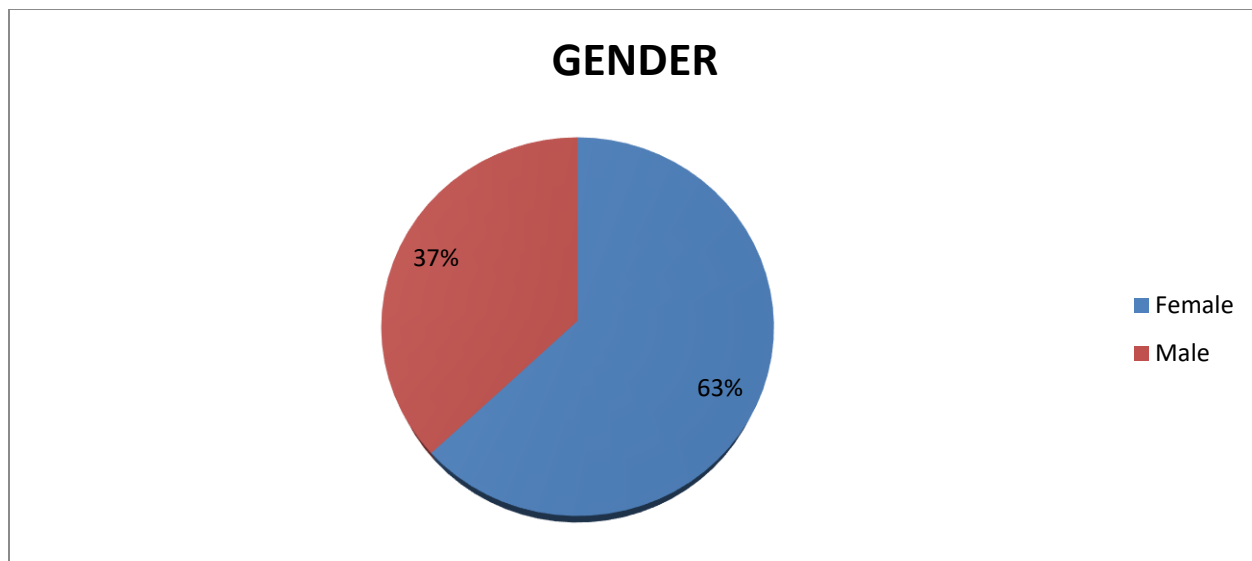


Figure 4. 1 Demographic Distribution of participants by gender

Source: Fieldwork 2025

Figure 4.1 clearly shows equitable research coverage on gender since every gender was considered in the analysis. However in this study, a significant majority of respondents are female (63%) which aligns with the gendered nature of child marriage, where girls are the most victims. This gender data imbalance was intentional and relevant because it ensured that the voice of girls, their experiences, and challenges are centered. On the other hand, men cannot be left behind since marriage is between men and women, hence male respondents were included in order to provide their key views on community roles, cultural practices, and family influences on early marriages.

4.2.3 Demographic distribution of participants by marital status

Table 4. 3 Demographic distribution of participants by marital status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	47	52
Married	34	38
Divorced	6	7
Widowed	3	3
Total	90	100

The marital status shown in Table 4.2 above, indicated that the majority were single (52%) and these were children below the age of 18 years and some of them were still in school, showing the importance of education in reducing early marriages. Single respondents, especially younger children, offered contrasting views often shaped by education or exposure to rights-based discourses. The married respondents (38%) helped the study with firsthand understanding of marriage norms and expectations. Lastly, 10% of the widowed and divorced respondents provided the study with an insight into the long-term outcomes of early marriages that may include poverty and vulnerability.

4.2.4 Demographic distribution of participants by age at first marriage

Age at first marriage shown on the figure 4.2 below was only applicable to 43 respondents who were already in marriage. This showed the prevalence of child marriages in the area of study. 70% of the respondents were married at the age of above 18 years and this indicated the decrease in the prevalence of early marriages in Chipinge District. However, 30% of those married below the age of 18 reviewed that although there is a decrease in child marriages, the issue still exists.

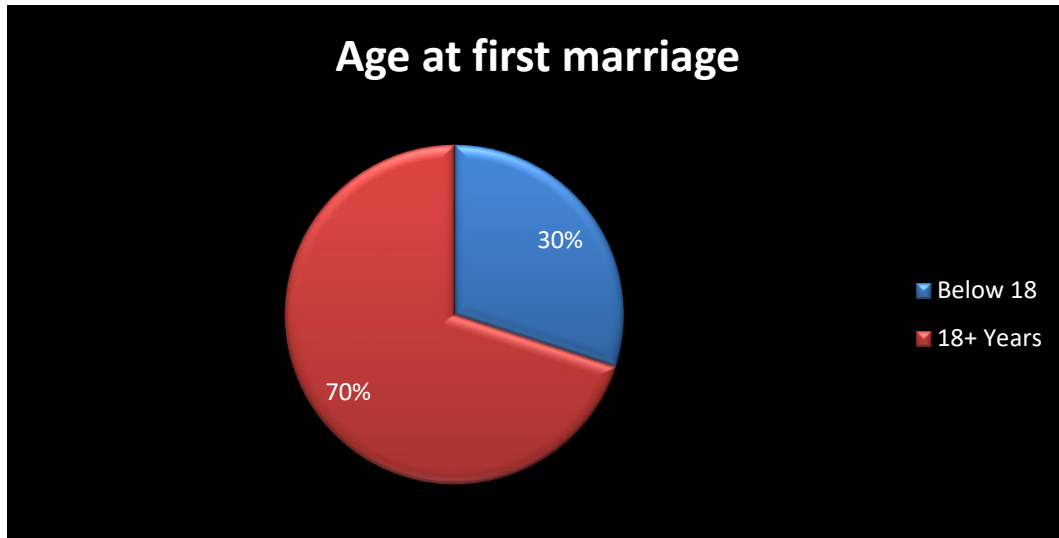


Figure 4. 2 Demographic distribution of participants by age

Source: Fieldwork 2025

4.2.5 Demographic distribution of participants by education level

Education plays a pivotal role in preventing and delaying child marriage. This section indicated the educational levels of respondents and this helped to evaluate the extent to which education or lack of education may contribute to the prevalence of child marriage. In this study, the lower the education levels the higher the vulnerability of children to child marriage.

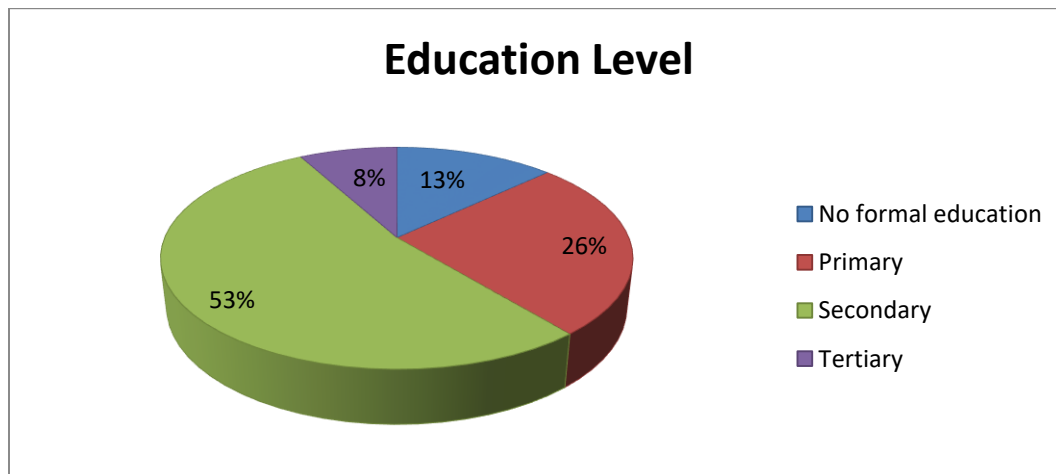


Figure 4. 3 Demographic distribution of participants by education level

Source: Fieldwork 2025

Figure 4.3 indicates the frequency of participants by certain education level they pose. The capacity of the communities to deal with issues of child marriage is also dependent upon the ability of people to acquire and use knowledge about their rights and laws regarding child marriage issues. Results in the figure 4.5 above shows that 53% of the respondents had reached secondary school while 26% reached primary level and 8% completed tertiary education. With the results shown it can be evaluated that majority of the respondents at least they reached or finished secondary education, hence, the basic levels for the respondents were generally higher enough to support delaying marriage and offer more progressive views concerning child marriages. On the other hand, 13% of the respondents had no formal education which is a key risk factor for child marriages.

4.2.6 Demographic distribution of participants by occupation

Occupational data in Table 4.3 below indicates that the majority of the respondents are unemployed (59%), clearly showing the contribution of economic vulnerability to child marriages. Government officials, health/ child care workers and community leaders add professional insight into intervention efforts that helped with a better evaluation of government efforts to reduce child marriage.

Table 4. 4 Demographic distribution of participants by occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Government Officials	5	6
Business/ Trader	2	2
Subsistence Farmers	4	4
Health/ Child care Worker	10	11
Foreign worker	8	9
Community leaders	8	9
Unemployed	53	59

Total	90	100
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4.2.7 Demographic distribution of participants by working experience

The working experience was only applicable to government officials (DSD, VFU and teachers), community leaders and Health/Child Care Workers. During the research process, respondents were also tasked to indicate the period of time they had worked in their different departments or posts. In Table 4.4 below, 39% had working experience of 1-5 years, 35% had 6-10 years period of working, those with 11-15 years of working experience had a percentage of 13%, 4% had worked for 16-20 years, and those with working experience that is above 21 years were 9%. Those with the period of working that is less than or equal to 5 years who had a greater percentage (39%) represented the presence of newer entrants suggests the ongoing recruitment of child welfare services by the government. The range experience levels that are over 6 years were seasoned professionals and this helped the study with valuable historical context and highlighted the long-standing systemic strategies to curb child marriages in the district and Zimbabwe at large.

Table 4. 5 Demographic distribution of participants by working experience

Working experience (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	9	39
6-10	8	35
11-15	3	13
16-20	1	4
21+ Years	2	9
Total	23	100

4.3 OBJECTIVE 1: The causes of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

The first objective of this study sought to analyze the causes of child marriage in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. To answer this objective, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. A questionnaire was administered to all children who were below 18 years of age, a key informant guide was used for DSD and VFU officials, key informant interviews were for the parents, community leaders and health/ child care workers.

Table 4. 6 The causes of child marriage in Chipinge District

Cause	Frequency (N=90)	Percentage
Proximity to Mozambique and South Africa	90	100
Poverty	90	100
Lack of education	88	98
Financial constraints	81	90
Religious beliefs	52	58
Tradition and culture	43	48
Orphan-hood and lack of guardianship	67	74
Teenage sex and pregnancy	84	93
Peer pressure	60	67
Weak enforcement of child protection laws	33	37

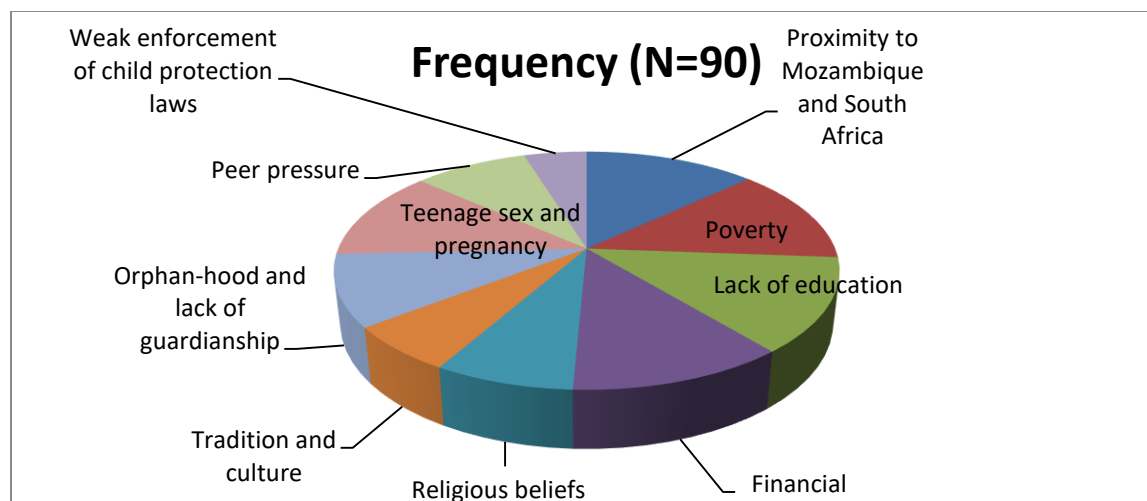


Figure 4. 4 Causes of child marriage in Chipinge District

Source: Fieldwork 2025

From the table 4.5 and figure 4.4 above, it is shown that poverty and proximity to Mozambique and South Africa contribute much to the occurrence of early marriages in Chipinge District which is cited by 100% of the respondents. The respondents in this regard were given chances of mentioning an observed cause more than once.

In this study, qualitative method was also used to gather data and most people expressed their views. Respondent (aged 22 years) who is a young mother expressed her view on the issue of the proximity of Chipinge District to Mozambique and South Africa. She mentioned that (translated from Tshangani to English Language)

“Mahenye community is very close to the border of Mozambique and it is easier for people within this area to move to Mozambique in search of greener pastures. This has become a big challenge because many young boys who go there they feel like they have made it in life and when they come back what they only think of is to get married. Young girls are failing to deny since they think that will be the greatest opportunity for them to be successful if they get married to who works in the foreign countries”. Respondent 1

Respondent 2 explained that, *“Many girls from Chisumbanje are being influenced by those men and boys who work outside the country especially South Africa. When these men, “Majonijoni”,*

when they come back for holidays many girls get attracted because of the few Rand currency they will be flashing to them and when they fall in love, girls usually get pregnant but sometimes they find out after the boys return to South Africa. When this happens the young girls' parents send their children to the boys' parents since it is regarded as an abomination to keep a pregnant woman at her parents' home. Some they get accepted leading to early marriage".

According to all these explanations it is clear that the proximity of Chipinge to Mozambique and South Africa is the greatest factor contributing to child marriages in the District followed by 98% of respondents who mentioned lack of education as another reason for early marriages. One respondent cited that:

"Lack of education is the most factor that is causing children to marry early since they do not understand their rights". Respondent 3

Another 16 years old girl mentioned that, *"it is true that every young girl from our society who has just reached her adolescent stage is mandated to go to the girls' initiation rite (khomba) for about 2 months where we will be taught about marriage issue, that is, how to handle marriage, your husband and even sexual activities. This makes the girls to think that they are now suitable for marriage since they have gotten the experience".* Respondent 4

Approximately 48% of the respondents testified on how cultural and traditional norms have contributed to child marriage in these 3 societies.

Discussion

Both quantitative and qualitative findings indicated that a significant proportion of respondents identified economic hardships (poverty and financial constraints), cultural norms and weak enforcement of child protection laws the primary factors of child marriage. This convergence between both data sets suggests that these factors are deeply interrelated. It was notable that these findings aligned with the research made by Hodgkinson (2016) who reported that adolescent marriage is triggered by economic hardships and that early marriage is believed to be used as a means of survival by those families. However, in contrast to the findings in the literature review, the collected data suggested that foreign workers contribute much to the existence of early

marriage in the district of Chipinge. This divergence can be attributed to the proximity of Chipinge District to Mozambique and South Africa.

OBJECTIVE 2: The impacts of child marriage in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

The second goal of the research was to evaluate impacts of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. A mixed-method approach was applied for data collection and quantitative results were presented on the table 4.7 below.

Table 4. 7 Impacts of child marriage in Chipinge District

Impact	Frequency (n=90)	Percentage
Increased school dropouts	86	96
Increased Poverty	75	83
Health Impact	80	89
Family burden	79	88
Increased maternal-mortality rate	68	76
Early responsibility and psychological stress	68	76
Divorce	58	64

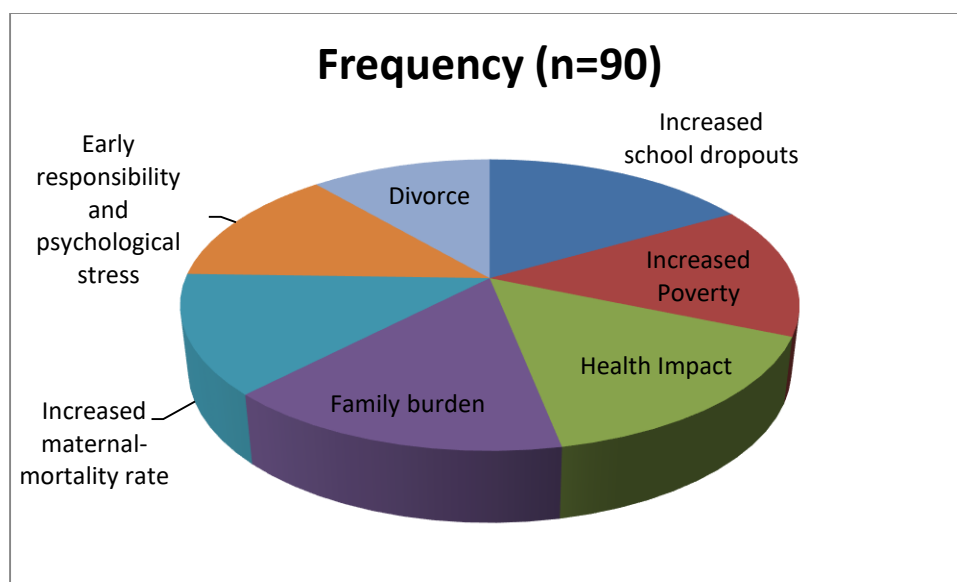


Figure 4. 5 Impacts of child marriage in Chipinge District

Source: Fieldwork 2025

As shown in the figures above, 96% of the respondents accepted that child marriages are causing a devastating increase in school dropouts as well as poverty (83%). The respondents (89%) also supported on health impact, 76% indicated early responsibility and psychological stress, 88% mentioned family burden, 64% were on divorce and 76% indicated on the increase in maternal-mortality rate. Again, the respondents were allowed to select more than one impact of child marriages in their area.

The researcher also probed into deeper understanding of the impacts of child marriages by asking open questions to the questionnaire respondents, interviewees and key informant guide respondents. One female parent related (Translated to English):

“...my daughter eloped last year when she was in form 1 at Vheneka Primary School. We did follow-ups with the help of school staff and we found out that she went to Masvingo with her boyfriend. That is how she got married and did not go back to school”. Respondent 5

This supported the research done by Magwa and Ngara (2015) who state that on causal factors influencing girl child dropout in parts of Zimbabwe found that some of the major contributors to school dropout were early marriage, poverty and teenage pregnancy.

One of the Village Health Workers in Ward 26 mentioned that, *“a lot of girls in Chisumbanje are getting married whilst young and this is affecting them during birth. Some get to live with long lasting birth complications and others are dying during giving birth”*. Respondent 6

“It is very difficult for me to accept that I was rejected by my husband at this age and left me with 3 children. I got married when I was 16 years old and my husband was 20 years old by that time. He was the first man in my life and I trusted him but when he was taken to South Africa by his relatives for employment everything was good not after last year when he returned and told me to pack my things and go back to my paternal home. He told me that I now found the one who matches my standards so we should separate”, said respondent 7

Discussion

This emphasizes the impacts caused by child marriages. The above responses shows that child marriages have a negative impact on the lives of people especially the survivors of child marriage and these impacts include increase in schools dropouts, divorce, psychological stress, health impacts and death as mentioned during the interviews. These impacts have become a burden to the society and they need a quick and an effective intervention before they become uncontrollable.

The findings aligned with the literature review since they all stress the fact that child marriage leads to increased school dropouts, health impacts and increased maternal-mortality rates. These confirm the previous studies by Luseno et al (2017) who cited that in Zimbabwe, child marriage confers risks to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV and AIDS, early child bearing and the associated health hazards. The study also confirms the study made by Magwa and Ngara (2015), which states that it was found that in many parts of Zimbabwe, the main drivers of girls leaving school were teenage marriage, economic hardships as well as teenage pregnancy.

OBJECTIVE 4.3: Government interventions and challenges faced in reducing early marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

This objective number 3 of the research aimed at examining the effectiveness of government interventions in child marriages as well as looking at the challenges the government of Zimbabwe is facing in trying to minimize the magnitude of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. The objective is shown on the tables below:

Table 4. 8 Effectiveness of Government interventions on child marriage in Chipinge District

Government intervention	Frequency	Percentage
Legal and policy frameworks	79	88
Programmes implementation	81	90
Partnerships and collaborations with other stakeholders	63	70
Education support	75	83

The above information on table 4.7 clearly shows that the government of Zimbabwe is doing its best to reduce child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe. During the study, the researcher found out that the strategy that the community has accepted to be the most effective is the implementation of programmes by the government in the society. This strategy carried 90% of the respondents, followed by legal and policy frameworks that had 88% as well as education support with 83% and 70% were on partnerships and collaborations made by the government with other stakeholders such as NGOs, Private sector and International organisation. Qualitative method was also used to collect data and most people expressed their views. One respondent said that:

“The government of Zimbabwe is working with other stakeholders to reduce the prevalence of child marriages in this district. NGOs such as Family Aids Care Trust (FACT) and CAMFED have been working hand in hand with the government in doing child marriage case follow-ups. FACT has been funding our department with emergency funding (cash or fuel) to conduct child marriage case follow-ups. We also appreciate CAMFED organisation for reporting and following up some of the girls who get married before they reach 18 years and take them back to school”. Respondent 8 (Chipinge District Social Development Officer)

Another respondent explained that:

“I am currently in Form 4 at Mahenye Secondary School. I was not expecting to reach this level because I am an orphan and I stay with my two little brothers. I had decided to drop out of school so that I can be able to work for my other siblings but because of BEAM Programme I have

managed to complete my Ordinary Level studies”. Respondent 9 (a form 4 learner at Mahenye Secondary)

Respondent 10 *“According to the Zimbabwean government law it is an offence to engage into sexual intercourse with a minor. The offence reads: **Having sexual intercourse with a young person as defined in Section 70(1) of the Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act Chapter 9:23.** The culprits are heavily punished if found guilty”.*

Table 4. 9 Challenges faced by government in reducing child marriage

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate funding and resources by the government	79	88
Corruption	72	80
Cultural resistance and traditional practices	64	71

4.3.1 Inadequate funding and resources by the government

Respondent 11 (Social Development Officer mentioned), *“Almost everyday, we receive a lot of different cases of child marriages from community people, CCWs, VHWs and leaders but only few cases are being attended to due to insufficient resources. At this department we have a very reliable car that helps to do case follow-ups but due to lack of fuel we end up not attending to the cases”.*

4.3.2 Corruption

One parent (48years old) reported that, *“2 years ago my daughter was taken by a 35 years old man to be his 3rd wife. I reported the case to the police station since my daughter was only 15 years old. The police did their investigation and the case was supposed to be taken to court but it did not go lie that. The police refused to take the case seriously and the man did not receive any punishment as per the law and my daughter was already pregnant but nothing was done to compensate the damage. Since the man was rich, I suspected that he paid those police officers so that they can silence the case”.* Respondent 12

The statement indicates that the law is not being taken seriously as those who are supposed to represent the law are now doing what benefits themselves not the society.

4.3.3 Cultural resistance and traditional practices

During the study, the researcher found out that there are some cultures that are still practiced that are disturbing the government efforts to reduce child marriages in Chipinge District. the most cultural norm was found to be that of them girls initiation rites. During the interview, one of the respondents explained that,

“In this community we still practice Chinamwari ceremony whereby early adolescent girls are taken to an isolated area to be taught on how to take care of the family, husband and all the activities done in the inner room (bedroom). A lot of girls when they complete the ritual they do not take long without getting married because they already have that information required in marriage”. Respondent 13

Therefore, this rite is perpetuating girls to marry early since they will want to experience what they have been taught during the initiation ceremony.

Discussion

The above information clearly proves the hard work that the government of Zimbabwe is doing in trying to reduce child marriages in Chipinge District and Zimbabwe at large. This also support the article made by the Government of Zimbabwe (2013) which says Section 81 of the Zimbabwe Constitution is a Bill of Rights which states that children are to be protected from economic and sexual exploitation, from labour, neglect or any form of abuse. Although the government of Zimbabwe is doing its best to end child marriages, it has been proven that the government is still facing challenges that are hindering its efforts to end child marriages in Chipinge District.

OBJECTIVE 4.4: Improved methods that can be employed by the government to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe.

Last on early marriages, the study also came up with alternatives to be employed in minimizing early marriage rates in Zimbabwe. The main goal of this section was to suggest measures to programmes, organisations and Zimbabwean government to end child marriages in Zimbabwe. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data. During the interview, only

few strategies to curb early marriages in Zimbabwe were given and these included, (i) education support, (ii) provide economic support and income to girls and families, (iii) promoting media and exposure, (iv) awareness campaigns and (v) imposing strict laws and regulations.

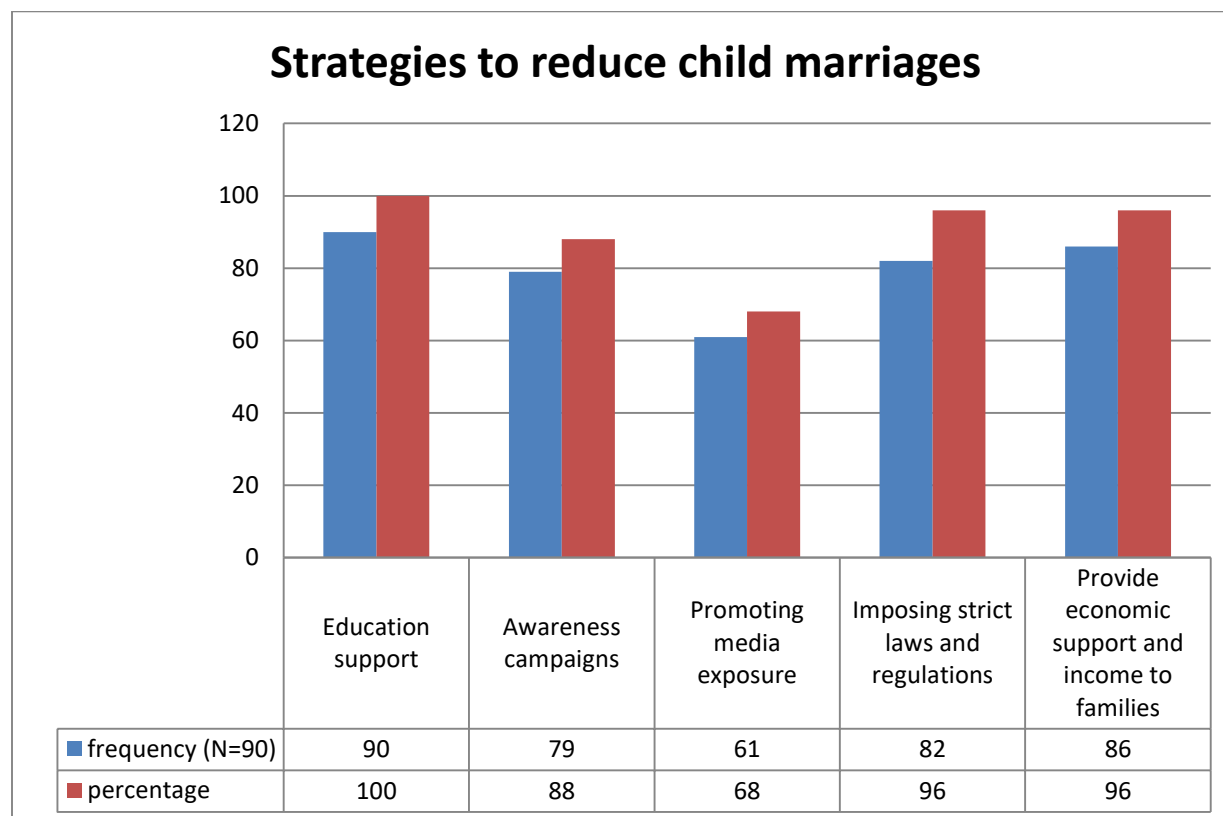


Figure 4. 6 Strategies that can be employed to reduce child marriage in Zimbabwe

Source: Fieldwork 2025

Figure 4.6 shows that 100% of the respondents gave emphasis on education support, 96% supported the imposing of strict laws and regulations by the government as well as provision of economic support and income to families, 88% were on the promotion of media and exposure and lastly 68% indicated awareness campaigns to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe. Respondents emphasized on the need of education support to end child marriages.

Qualitative data was also produced through interviews, questionnaires and key informant guides.

4.4.1 Education support

The participants in this category indicated that one of the best ways to reduce child marriages is to equip teenage girls, boys, men and women with knowledge and skills by ensuring that they get quality education. This meant to allow them have knowledge on their rights and skills to avoid early marriages. One parent who was a teacher mentioned that:

“Keeping girls and boys in school is the best way to delay them from marriage. Their mind will be focusing on how they can pass their tests or examinations thus keeping their minds busy with school than spending much of their time interacting with married people who may influence them to get married early”. Respondent 14

One young girl who was in form 3 at Mahenye Secondary, stated that, *“all of my 3 elder sisters got married before they reached the age of 18 because our parents had no money to send them to school. I want to thank CAMFED organisation for helping me with school fees because now I am in form 3 and I have no intention of getting married since I have everything needed for me to remain in schools”.* Respondent 15

These views are supporting a study done by Kurebwa and Kurebwa (2018) reported that girls with lower levels of education are more likely to be married as children than girls who would have attained higher levels of education.

4.4.2. Provide Economic Support and Income to Families

Other respondent gave suggestion on the provision of financial assistance to girls and their parents or guardians as a way to minimize child marriages. They stated that government should continue to provide empowerment programmes to girls and their families such as credit facilities, non-repayable funds, financial incentives and social cash assistance. This is evident in the verbatim below:

“Many families in this community are stricken by poverty since they mostly depend on subsistence farming which is hard to practice due to unfavorable climate conditions. They end up sending their teenage daughters to men who seem to be successful for marriage and in return they get dowry in the form of money and other items in order to earn a living. Therefore, it will be very beneficial to the society if the government provide some incentives for families to engage in different businesses

or projects to increase their income so that they don't take their children as a burden and end up marrying them young” said respondent 16 (one of the community leaders).

4.4.3. Imposing strict laws and regulations

Participants in this group said that enforcing stringent laws and regulations against child marriage was the best way to combat child marriage. They contended that some rules are ineffective, which leads some parents and guardians to disregard the law and keep marrying off their daughters when they are still young. They also recommended that stringent regulations be enforced and that survivors be able to access the policies pertaining to case reporting. This opinion is supported by the following quote

“The government should make sure that every person who marries a child under 18 years is given a punishment they deserve because if the person is left unpunished it may cause others to do the same knowing that they cannot be punished”. Respondent 17 (CCW)

4.6 Chapter Summary

In chapter 4, the researcher outlined the results found in the study through narratives for the qualitative data as well as charts, tables and graphs for the quantitative data. The goal of this section was to transform data into meaningful information that responds to the research objectives and questions. The next chapter is going to focus on the summary, conclusion and recommendations basing on the key findings and objectives of the study.

5.0 CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This is the final section in this research, through which the researcher focused on summarizing key findings, conclusion in relation to the objectives of the research and suggestions of both current

and future practices. The response rate of this research was favourable since the researcher managed to reach a bigger percentage of the targeted respondents. Out of one hundred respondents that were targeted by the research, a total of ninety respondents were reached. This represented: $90 \div 100 \times 100 = 90\%$. Therefore the research had response rate of 90%. This chapter was presented in three main sections, including, summary, conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

5.2.1 Causes of child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

This research indicates that early marriages in Chipinge Region are being perpetuated by different drivers in which lack of education, poverty and the proximity of Chipinge District to Mozambique and South Africa became the leading causes. Poverty emerged as a cause of child marriages in the district with families marrying off their teenage girl children in order to reduce household burdens as well as getting access to bride wealth. The study also found that the existence of child marriages is triggered by the traditional and cultural beliefs that often regard girls as ready for marriage once they reach puberty stage. Limited access to education leaves most girls vulnerable to early marriages since they will be not fully equipped with knowledge and concerning children rights and issues regarding child marriages. In some cases, orphan-hood and lack of proper guardians were regarded as other factors that increase the chances of a girl child to get into marriage at a tender age.

5.2.2 Effects of child marriage in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

The study clearly showed that child marriage has numerous adverse impacts on children and their families in Chipinge District. It was found out that due to early marriage, a lot of girls are dropping out of school and this limits their future economic opportunities, leading to a continuation of the cycle of poverty and dependence. The study also came out with health problems as the other challenge faced by survivors of child marriage especially girls when giving birth and this can lead to prolonged birth complications and increase in maternal-mortality rate. Child marriages were also found to be the cause of psychological stress whereby young brides are suffering from trauma, depression and sense of isolation due to separation from peers and family as well as after divorce.

5.2.3 Government interventions on child marriage in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

It is very crucial to know that the government of Zimbabwe has implemented several strategies to reduce child marriages in the area of study. The government of Zimbabwe, through partnerships and collaborations with different ministries and NGOs, has implemented programmes that are aiming at curbing child marriages. According to the respondents, these programmes included awareness campaigns and social protection initiatives such as education support through BEAM programmes and social cash transfer programme with DSD to vulnerable families and children.

5.2.3.1 Challenges faced by the government in reducing child marriages in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

Despite all these efforts, the government of Zimbabwe is facing several challenges. Deep-rooted traditions and cultural norms continue to promote early marriages, often undermining legal frameworks. Government departments that deal with child protection issues are facing a challenge of inadequate funding and resources which is hindering their efforts to implement and monitor anti-marriage programmes. In addition, corruption is also a challenge since it allows perpetrators to escape accountability. Therefore, child marriages continue to happen in these societies due to the notable challenges that are hindering government efforts to curb child marriage.

5.2.4 Strategies that can be employed by the government to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe.

During the study, the researcher came up with different strategies to reduce child marriages in Zimbabwe. These strategies were contributed by participants who gave their different opinions on what the government is supposed to do in order to end child marriage in Zimbabwe. The best strategy that was suggested is strengthening education systems to ensure that girls remain in school. Economic empowerment programmes for girls and their families can reduce the financial incentives for marrying off girls and also collaborations among government, NGOs, traditional leaders and community members was suggested to be an effective strategies to enhance holistic and sustainable solutions.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Conclusion for objective 1

According to the study's main conclusions, child marriage in Chipinge District is a complex problem with roots in poverty, culture, illiteracy, and the region's close proximity to South Africa

and Mozambique. Child marriages will also continue to occur in these research locations as long as locals are unemployed and will continue to travel abroad in quest of better opportunities. Furthermore, cultural variables which include cultural norms, and fear of a girl child remain single, as well as other factors including poverty, peer pressure, adolescent pregnancy, and financial restrictions, significantly contribute to the prevalence of child marriage. These causes stem from the conflicting attitudes of society, which have led to discrimination against the girl child in her attempts to use education as a powerful tool for self-emancipation and empowerment. Instead of being treated like a commodity, a girl child should be treated with dignity and her rights should not be violated.

5.3.2 Conclusion for objective 2

Examining the impacts posed by teenage marriage in Zimbabwe's Chipinge Region was the second goal. It was determined that among the consequences of early marriage were a rise in school dropouts, which restricted the ability of early marriage survivors to rely on themselves. Due to the immaturity of the parties, early marriages can result in a rise in divorce lawsuits. Early marriage increases the risk of maternal mortality, malnutrition, and STDs, endangering the health of teen moms and their children.

5.3.3 Conclusion on objective 3 and 4

The government is implementing a number of steps, including partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders to develop successful methods to eliminate child marriage, as well as legal and policy frameworks that prohibit marriages between minors under eighteen years. The research identified other tactics to prevent child marriages, such as implementing social safety programs, education assistance programs, and awareness campaigns.

5.4 Recommendations

- Zimbabwean government should enhance community-based awareness programmes that challenge cultural norms supporting child marriages.
- The government should invest in girl-child education, including provision of schools materials and safe learning environments so that girls get the best trainings they require so as to avoid getting into early marriage.

- Law enforcement agencies must be well-trained and resourced to effectively implement child protection laws.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be strengthened in order to continuously assess the impact of ongoing interventions.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The researcher concentrated on the conclusions drawn from the primary findings and the summary of findings in this phase of the study. The study examined government initiatives to prevent child marriages as well as the factors that lead to them. The researcher concluded by making some suggestions for future procedures and policy creation.

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APPENDIX 1: LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR IDENTIFICATION

SCHOOL OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES, DISASTER & DEVELOPMENT
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



BINDURA, ZIMBABWE
WhatsApp : +263773281212
E-mail: jbowora@buse.ac.zw

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON'S OFFICE

Thursday 03 April 2025

TO WHO IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir or Madam

RE: RESEARCH SUPPORT LETTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STUDENT

I am writing on behalf of the Sustainable Development Department requesting your collaboration on the research of our fourth-year student, BEAULAH MUTURUKWA REGISTRATION NUMBER B212203B.

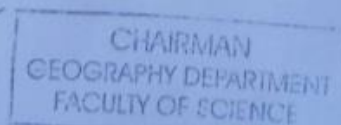
The student is studying for a 4-year Bachelor of Science (Honours) Degree in Development Studies (HBSc.DG). During the fourth year of study, students are required to do field research which require them to do their data collection for research purposes.

We will be highly obliged to furnish you with additional information about the research project if our request meets your favorable consideration.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Bowora'.

Dr. J. Bowora
(Chairperson)



**APPENDIX 2: LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY IN
WARDS 26, 27 AND 29 IN CHIPINGE DISTRICT**

Official Communications should
Development
not be addressed to individuals



ZIMBABWE

Department of Social

Chipinge District Office

Box 219

Chipinge



Date: 7 April 2025

Miss Beulah Muturukwa (Reg No B212203B)

Bindura University Science Education

Bindura

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC
ENTITLED ASSESSING THE CAUSE OF CHILD MARRIAGE AND GOVERNMENT
INTERVENTIONS ON CHILD MARRIAGE. A CASE OF WARD 26,27 AND 29
CHIPINGE DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 3 April 2025

Please be advised that permission is hereby granted for you to carry out a research on the above topic in the mentioned Wards in the district. Permission granted is strictly on condition that the research is for academic purposes of your degree in Development Studies (HBSoc. DG) only and data collected should not be shared with third parties

Your faithfully

Gumbo T

District Social Development Officer

CHIPINGE DISTRICT

CELL: +263772876260

Landline: +263272042362

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18

My name is Beulah Muturukwa and I am studying a Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research on a topic entitled: *Assessing the causes of child marriage and government interventions on child marriage; a case of ward 26, 27, and 29 in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe*. All information regarding the participants will be kept confidential and the findings will solely be used for academic purposes.

SECTION A: *Background Information*

1. Age:

2. Gender: Female ☐ Male ☐.

3. Ward of residents: 26 ☐ 27 ☐ 29 ☐.

4. Level of Education: Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐.

SECTION B: *Knowledge and awareness*

5. Have you heard about child marriage before? Yes ☐ No ☐.

If yes, then proceed to question 6. If selected no skip question 6 and ask for explanation from the facilitator.

6. What do you understand about child marriage?

.....

7. Do you know anyone of your age who is married or was married? Yes ☐ No ☐.

If yes, what was the reason?

.....

SECTION C: *Personal experience and attitude*

8. Have you ever been pressured to get married? Yes ☐ No ☐.

If yes, what was the reason?

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9. What do you think are the reasons why children in your area get married early?

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SECTION D: *Impact, Effects and Suggestions*

10. How does early marriage affect children in your community?

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11. What do you think can be done to stop early marriages in your area?

.....
.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX 4: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW FOR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

My name is Beulah Muturukwa and I am studying a Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research on a topic entitled: *Assessing the causes of child marriage and government interventions on child marriage; a case of ward 26, 27, and 29 in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe*. All information regarding the participants will be kept confidential and the findings will solely be used for academic purposes.

Questions

1. How common are child marriage cases in this community?
2. What do you think are the causes of child marriage in this community?
3. What are the challenges being faced by young mothers in this community?
4. Have there been any government or NGO efforts to reduce child marriage in this community?
5. What do you think are the challenges faced by these institutions in trying to reduce child marriage in this community?
6. Do you have recommendations on what can be done to reduce child marriages in this community?

APPENDIX 5: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

My name is Beulah Muturukwa and I am studying a Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research on a topic entitled: *Assessing the causes of child marriage and government interventions on child marriage; a case of ward 26, 27, and 29 in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe*. All information regarding the participants will be kept confidential and the findings will solely be used for academic purposes.

Questions:

1. Name (optional)
2. Community name/ ward no.
3. What is your leadership position in this ward?
4. What is the scale of child marriage in this community?
5. What are the causes of child marriage in this community?
6. What role do you as community leaders play to reduce child marriages in this community?
7. What challenges do you face in addressing child marriage in your community?
8. How is the government support working in reducing child marriages in this community?
9. What other strategies do you think the government should adopt to reduce child marriages?

APPENDIX 6: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS AND CHILD CARE WORKERS

My name is Beulah Muturukwa and I am studying a Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research on a topic entitled: *Assessing the causes of child marriage and government interventions on child marriage; a case of ward 26, 27, and 29 in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe*. All information regarding the participants will be kept confidential and the findings will solely be used for academic purposes.

1. Name (optional)
2. Ward name
3. Are you a VHW or CCW?
4. How often do you encounter cases of child marriage?
5. In your opinion, what are the causes of child marriage in this ward?
6. What health challenges being faced by young mothers in this ward?
7. Are there support services available for affected children?
8. How effective are the current intervention programmes?
9. What are the challenges faced in preventing challenges?
10. What recommendations would you give to improve prevention efforts?

APPENDIX 7: KEY INFORMANT GUIDE FOR DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (DSD) AND VICTIM FRIENDLY UNIT (VFU)

My name is Beulah Muturukwa and I am studying a Bachelor of Science (Honors) degree in Development Studies at Bindura University of Science Education. As part of my studies, I am carrying out a research on a topic entitled: *Assessing the causes of child marriage and government interventions on child marriage; a case of ward 26, 27, and 29 in Chipinge District, Zimbabwe*. All information regarding the participants will be kept confidential and the findings will solely be used for academic purposes.

SECTION A: *Background Information*

1. Name (Optional)
2. Position/Title
3. Number of years in service
4. Area / ward of operation

SECTION B: *understanding the causes and impacts of child marriage*

5. What do you think are the most causes of child marriage in your area of operation?
6. What are some of the effects of child marriage that you have observed on the girls involved?
7. How does child marriage affect the families and the wider district?

SECTION C: *Government interventions, challenges and recommendations*

8. What government policies or programmes currently being implemented to reduce child marriage in Chipinge?
9. What role does your department play in addressing child marriages?
10. Are there any partnerships with NGOs, community leaders, or schools in addressing this issue?
11. How effective are these interventions been in your opinion?
12. What challenges are being faced in trying to reduce child marriages in this district?

13. What strategies do you think could be more effective in reducing child marriage in your district?

14. Is there anything else you would like to add that we did not cover?

TURNITIN REPORT

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