BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

PROJECT TITILE: Intervention strategies on social support in mitigating desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes in Zimbabwe. A case study of Rutendo Old people's home in Redcliff.

BY

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(B210250B)

SUPERVISOR: DR. P. MANGWIRO
2025

A dissertation sent to the Bindura University of Science Education, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Department of Social Work, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelors of Science Honors Degree in Social Work

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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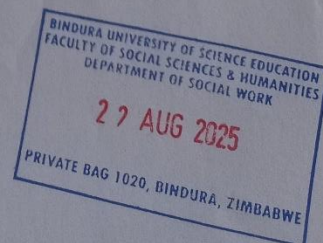
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DECLARATION

I Muzenda Marvelous (B210250B) declare that this dissertation on the topic: Intervention strategies on social support in mitigating desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes in Zimbabwe. A case study of Rutendo Old people's home in Redcliff is my own work and all the sources used in this dissertation have been acknowledged by means of references. This work has not been previously included or submitted to this or any other institution.

SIGNATURE

DATE:

+

RELEASE FORM

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Program: Social Work

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to everyone who believed in me, thank you for your faith in me and your unwavering support. I also dedicate this dissertation to my parents who have been supporting me emotionally and financially throughout the whole dissertation .

PLAGIARISM REPORT

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MARKING GUIDE: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT

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

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Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

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

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Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction	5	
Research design	10	
What instruments are you using to collect data?	30	
Population, sample and sampling techniques to be used in the study	25	

Procedures for collecting data	15	
Data presentation and analysis procedures	10	
Summary	5	
Total	100	
Weighted Mark	25	

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Chapter 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

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

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Chapter 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction- focus of the chapter	5	
Summary of the whole project including constraints	25	
Conclusions- have you come up with answers to the problem under study	30	
Recommendations(should be based on findings) Be precise	30	
References	5	
Appendices i.e. copies of instruments used and any other relevant material	5	
Total	100	
Weighted mark	10	

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Chapter 1 _____

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Chapter 4

Chapter 5

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Abstract

The intervention strategies on social support in mitigating desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes in Zimbabwe using a case study of Rutendo Old people's home in Zimbabwe was evaluated by the researcher. The goals were to explore the prevalence and characteristics of desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes, to determine the intervention strategies that can be utilised in order to deal away with desolation among elderly people and to identify the challenges faced in trying to provide social support so as to deal away with desolation among elderly people in old people's homes. The study consisted of a total number of 10 participants that were selected using simple random sampling and stratified sampled. The study employed qualitative methods using thematic analysis. The study also employed in-depth interviews with 2 key informant and 2 focus group discussions on the 8 elderly participants where each group consisted of 4 participants, one for males and the other for females. The researcher found out that desolation is most prevalent in low-income countries due to lack of resources to fully provide social support and desolation is characterised by feelings of loneliness and isolation, depression and anxiety among others. Various in intervention strategies so as to deal away with desolation among elderly people who resides in institutional care homes were discovered through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, these include enhanced social support interaction programs ,counselling and emotional support services ,family reconnection initiatives ,volunteer and community engagement and lastly personalised care and relationship building .The researcher discovered that there are challenges that hinder the provision of social support so as to mitigate and these include limited resources and others.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU   **African Union**

CBT   **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**

NGOs   **Non-Governmental Organisations**

WHO   **World Health Organisation**

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

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CHAPTER ONE: INTROUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The increase in the rate of desolation among elderly people in old people 's homes is evidence that there is need for social support so as to combat loneliness among them. This study aims at introducing social support strategies to combat desolation among elderly individuals in care homes, addressing a critical concern in aging societies. By examining issues leading to desolation among elderly people in old people's homes the research investigate effective strategies including community engagement programs, peer support networks, technology-based support, family visits and cognitive behavioural therapy. Aiming to identify effective strategies that foster meaningful connections and improve emotional well-being, the study provides actionable recommendations for creating supportive environments that mitigate feelings of isolation and promote a richer quality of life for older adults. Through evidence-based strategies, policymakers, caregivers, and healthcare professionals can develop targeted interventions to enhance social support and well-being for elderly care home residents.

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The aging global population, along with Zimbabwe's insufficient elderly care facilities, highlights the urgent need for innovative solutions to combat social isolation among older residents in care homes. Desolation among the elderly people in care homes has become a cancerous global trend. Studies in a number of research had it that about 50% of the elderly people in care homes often report to feelings of desolation which can increase depressive symptoms and cognitive decline .Cattan et al,(2005).Desolation among older adults is a global phenomenon with rates ranging from 20% to 50% in various countries (Hawkley and Cacioppo 2010) ,Desolation among elderly people is a worldwide problem and it is being caused by a number of factors including depression ,trauma and social isolation .The prevalence of desolation is often higher among those with limited social interactions and poor family connections (Mclnnis et al.2020).Research also reveals the correlation between desolation and increased mortality rates among elderly people in institutional care homes ,showing the urgent need for effective interventions that promote social engagement and emotional support (Calsyn and Winter ,2020).Globally, approaches such as person -centered care models have been advocated to address these issues ,emphasizing the importance of fostering meaningful relationships and community involvement to enhance the quality of life for older adults in care (Kitwood,2019).According to Luo et al.(2012)about 40% of elderly residents in Canada in long

term care facilities reported feeling lonely linking it to increased depressive symptoms . The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that by 2030, the global population aged 60 and older will reach 1.4 billion, with sub-Saharan Africa facing significant challenges in providing adequate care for its elderly. Globally due to the Covid 19 pandemic in countries like The United State it has been recorded that about 28% of elderly people experience feelings of desolation due to the COVID 19 restrictions. Overly desolation is a prevalent and critical issue that requires targeted strategies to improve the well-being of older adults in institutional care.

Furthermore, desolation among elderly people is an issue of major concern at continental level. Africa as a continent has high rate of property as most African countries are still developing and hence it results in high rate of desolation among elderly people due to limited access to social networks. Economic hardship is a major cause of desolation among the elderly people as this would limit their access to health care services, social services or financial aid (Negin et al.,2013) According to the research from South Africa Medical Research Council about 31% of older adults reported feeling lonely with higher rates of living alone. Also, a survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics about 27% of older adults feel lonely. Also, statics in Tanzania shows that about 25% among those living in rural areas often feel isolated and lonely due to limited access to social networks. The Socioeconomic factors also contribute to feelings of desolation among elder people in African countries. Individuals from Lowe socio economic backgrounds tend to experience higher level of desolation.

Locally, Zimbabwe, in particular, struggles with limited resources, cultural expectations regarding family and community care, and economic hardships that further endanger its older citizens. Rutendo Old People's Home in Redcliff serves as a key context for examining these issues, given its scarce resources and the societal norms that influence elderly care. While social support is crucial for the mental well-being of older adults, research on this topic within Zimbabwe is limited. Studies have pointed out the adverse effects of social isolation, such as depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline, underscoring the need for targeted interventions. A study conducted by Help Age International, (2016) found that approximately 40% of older adults in Zimbabwe reported feelings of loneliness often due to family migration and urbanization as they will be looking for greener pastures. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the experiences and challenges faced by residents at Rutendo Old People's Home and developing effective social support strategies to alleviate isolation and improve mental health outcomes. By investigating the intricate relationship between social isolation, cultural practices, and institutional care, this research intends to make a significant contribution to

enhancing the well-being of vulnerable elderly populations in Zimbabwe. Additionally, the findings will inform policy and practice enhancements for elderly care in the country, potentially leading to sustainable and culturally appropriate solutions to meet the social and emotional needs of older come.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The prevalence of loneliness and isolation among elderly residents in old people's homes has become rampant and hence raising concerns. This is caused by stigma or discrimination, difficulty in forming new relationships, limited social support networks and separation from family and friends. This is affecting the elderly residents in institutional care's mental health, causing depression, anxiety and also suicidal thoughts. Loneliness and Isolation is also causing emotional distress, social withdrawal, increased risk of elderly abuse and also aggression and agitation. It is also causing the risk of higher mortality rates, reduced life expectancy, increased blood pressure and worsening chronic illness. Lonely older adults have 26% higher risk of premature mortality (PLoS Medicine 2015). According to World Health Organization (2019) about 60% of old adults in institutional care report feeling of loneliness hence addressing this issue is of paramount importance .Despite the measures which are taken in institutional cares to reduce loneliness and isolation among the elderly people the rate is not decreasing and hence there is need for more effective strategies to address this critical issue .This study aims to investigate the importance of social support in mitigating loneliness and isolation among elderly people in Old people's homes .

1.3. STUDY AIM

This study aims to evaluate how effective social support strategies are in reducing feelings of isolation and improving mental health among elderly residents at Rutendo Old People's Home in Redcliff, Zimbabwe.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the prevalence and characteristics of desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes.

2.To determine intervention strategies that can be utilized in order to deal away with desolation among elderly people.

3. To identify the challenges faced in trying to provide social support so as to deal away with desolation among elderly people in old people's homes.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the magnitude and percentage of desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes and how does it affect their lives?

2. What types of social support services are substantial in reducing desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes?

3. What are the constraints that can inhibit the provision of effective social support services to elderly residents in old people's homes?

1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is of paramount importance as it is exploring possible social support solutions so as to mitigate loneliness and isolation among elderly people in old people's homes in Zimbabwe, using Rutendo Old people's Home as a case study. This research tries to show the impact of social support on mental health, anxiety, depression, physical health outcomes, and reducing suicidal thoughts among others. This research tries to show effective strategies to improve the quality of life for elderly residents and hence reducing isolation and loneliness. The strategies include emotional support, social engagement, practical support, technology based, family and community engagement and others. The study contributes valuable insights to Zimbabwe's elderly care knowledge base, informing policymakers, caregivers and community organizations. Its findings will guide interventions promoting emotional wellbeing, improved living conditions and a compassionate environment for elderly individuals.

1.7. RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

The assumptions of the study are that elderly people usually suffer from some kind of desolation and this can be due to a number of factors which include depress and anxiety and that social support intervention strategies are the best to deal away with it. The social support strategies that include counselling and use of social groups .

Also, it is assumed that the chosen participants will provide with accurate and valid information as to what is actually causing desolation among them and the type of social support they actually need to deal away with. It is assumed that the information that is found from the study can be applied to all the elderly people in different areas,

1.8. POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS

Methodological limitations

The data collection methods techniques to be utilized for instance interviews or focus group discussions are prone to bias as participants can sometimes not provide full information about the causing of desolation amongst them in order to come up with suitable intervention strategies.

Resource limitations

Resources is a stumbling block in this research. As a result of inadequate resources, the sample size was limited to only 10 participants and only those at Rutendo Old people's which may not be a representative of the whole population. This will make it difficult for other elderly people to receive the type of social support they actually need as people may differ and its not good to generalize.

1.9. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Geographic Scope

The study mainly focuses on the elderly people living at Rutendo Old people's home in Redcliff and hence the findings of the study can sometimes not be generalized to other elderly people in different areas as the situation in those areas may differ from that at Rutendo Old people's home.

Time frame

There is limited timeframe which becomes difficult to capture all the information or the long-term outcomes from August 2023 to May 2025. Situation and thing change every day and hence the data captured during the study may not apply some years later.

Sample size

Small based size of 10 participants can be a limitation as participants number can be too low to accurately represent the larger population of older people with desolation. Small sample size can lead to biased results.

1.10. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Intervention strategies** according to Miller and Rollnick (2012) can be referred toas client centered approaches that aim to enhance motivation for change by resolving ambivalence.

- **Social support** according to Holt-Lunstad ,(2017) is the resources available to individuals through their social networks, which can provide emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. These resources help individuals cope with life challenges, reduce stress, and promote overall health and well -being.

- **Mitigating actions** according to Giddens et al. (2017) can be defined as efforts designed to reduce the extent of harm or the protential adverse effects of an event or condition,

- **Desolation** according to Malabou,(2012) refers to an emotional and psychological condition in which a person is overwhelmed by feelings of emptiness and alienation, often resulting from trauma pr profound personal loss. It is a state of being in which the individual feels disconnected from others, their environment, and even their own identity.

1.11. DISSERTATION OUTLINE

This dissertation consists of five chapters. Each Chapter consists of different things in a bid to explore the intervention strategies towards social support to mitigate desolation among elderly people.

Chapter 1: Introduction and background of the study

Chapter 1 which is introduction and background of the study is of paramount important as it introduces the topic fully and pave way for the rest of the dissertation content. This Chapter consists of a number of things including introduction, background of the problem, aim of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, research assumptions, delimitations and definition of terms.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This Chapter aims to finding previous studies relating to the issue of study and see what other scholars think about desolation among elderly people and the social support measure to be taken into action. Literature review always is of paramount important it helps in providing a theoretical foundation concerning the issue of intervention strategies to mitigate desolation among elderly people.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This Chapter shows clearly aim at describing and justifying the research design, approach and the research methods to be used to investigate the problem that is desolation among elderly people. Issues like population and location, sampling techniques, ethical considerations are also shown in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

This Chapter aims at presenting, analysing and interpretating the data that has been collected to measure desolation among elderly people, the actual causes of it and effectiveness of social support measures to mitigate the desolation. There is also the use of Literature in this Chapter as supporting evidence of the data being analysed.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This is the final Chapter of the dissertation and hence it aims at summarizing the whole dissertation findings, giving some recommendation and concluding the study. This Chapter also identifies the limitations of the study and also suggests areas for future study.

1.12. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This Chapter introduced the problem which is desolation among the elderly adults who reside in old people's home. It also brought out the background of the problem which desolation among the elderly people. It also brought out the importance of the study and the objectives of the study were also introduced. The researcher also outlines the possible limitations and delimitation of the study. Also, it outlines what the research will consist from chapter up to the final chapter which is chapter five.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2:0 .INTRODUCTION

Desolation among elderly people especially those in institutional Care is on the rise and it is affecting their overall wellbeing leading to depression, stress and anxiety. Desolation among elderly individuals is characterised by feelings of despair, loneliness and Isolation. As people age it is of paramount important to address these issues. In this literature review chapter, related researches on desolation among elderly people and the social support intervention strategies to end desolation will be analysed. The theoretical framework guiding my study will also be analysed in this Chapter. The Chapter will review the prevalence and characteristics of desolation among the elderly people on global level, reginal and national level. Also, things like the intervention strategies towards social support in mitigating desolation will be analysed. Also, the challenges in providing social support in dealing away with desolation among the elderly people in care homes will always be analysed. The Chapter is going to bring some gaps that has been left by previous literature.

2:1 DEFINITION OF DESOLATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

Desolation can be understood as a profound state of emptiness, loneliness, and despair. In the sense of elderly people, it manifests as a sense of isolation and abandonment and loss of purpose. Desolation can exacerbate physical and mental health problems, leading to increased morbidity among elderly residents (Cattan et al.,2005). Desolation according to Malabou,(2012) refers to an emotional and psychological condition in which a person is overwhelmed by feelings of emptiness and alienation, often resulting from trauma pr profound personal loss. It is a state of being in which the individual feels disconnected from others, their environment, and even their own identity. Social support according to Holt-Lunstad ,(2017) is the resources available to individuals through their social networks, which can provide emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support. These resources help individuals cope with life challenges, reduce stress, and promote overall health and well -being.

2:2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research will make use of the Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory, a theory propounded by Abraham Harold Maslow 1943 is of paramount importance to my study. This theory emphasizes on the fact that human beings have got different needs which must be fulfilled in order starting from the lowest to the highest Maslow,

(1943). The theory identifies five categories of needs which are arranged in a pyramid that is physiological needs which include important requirements for survival such as food, water and shelter. After this there are safety needs that is physical and emotional and security. The third level consists of love and belonging which highlight the importance of social connections and relationships. Esteem needs follow after love and belonging representing the desire for respect, recognition and self -esteem. Lastly there is the level of self-actualization where individuals strive to realize their full potential and peruse personal growth and fulfilment. According to Maslow, (1943) as one progresses through these levels, the focus shifts from basic survival to more complex psychological and social needs ultimately leading to personal development and self-actualisation. Kenrich et al. (2010) suggested an evolutionary perspective proposing that Maslow's hierarchy should incorporate additional needs related to social belonging and reproductive success, reflecting a more complex interplay of motives. Soper et al. (2015) emphasised the import ants Maslow hierarchy of needs theory in understanding well-being-and motivation in modern contexts indicating its enduring significance in psychology and related fields.

2:3 RELEVANCE OF MASLOW HIERARCHY OF NEEDS THEORY TO MY STUDY

Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory is relevant to my study as it seeks to bring solutions so as to mitigate desolation among the elderly people in old people's homes .Basing with this theory desolation is often as a result of the needs that has not been meet especially the needs of love and belonging .According to Maslow ,(1943) lower needs must be fulfilled before higher needs .According to Boulous et Al (2021) access to basic need is essential for physical and overall quality of life and hence improving mental health of elderly people . Also, according to Hawes et Al (1999) elderly people often face threats to their safety and hence meeting this need can have an impact to mental health .The theory also put more emphasizes on the interventions that foster a sense of belonging in a way that can address the emotional needs of the elderly people that are programs that promote community engagement and peer support that is directly targeting the level of love and belonging .According to Cattan et Al (2020) community engagement programs are of paramount importance in combating isolation among elderly people. Ardent (2021) also shows that engagement in meaningful activities such as volunteering or creative pursuits can help older adults achieve self-actualization therefore mitigating feeling of desolation. Basing with this theory we can be able to come up with possible intervention strategies tch towards social support in mitigating desolation among elderly people in old people's homes by trying to meet up all the five needs propounded by

Abraham Maslow especially the level of love and belonging .In the context of Rutendo Old people's home, Maslow Hierarchy of needs provides useful intervention strategies so as to deal away with desolation among elderly people in institutional care. Applying this theory means focusing on making sure that all the five basic needs are met starting from the lowest to the highest. That is making sure that the residents do not lack any of the five needs.

2:4. PREVALENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF DESOLATION

When discussing about the prevalence of desolation we are referring to how wide spread feelings of desolation are among a particular population, in this case we are referring to the percentage of those affected in institutional care. On characteristics of desolation, we are referring to specific attributes and manifestation of these feelings.

2:4:1 PREVALENCE OF DESOLATION AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE

`The rate of desolation among the elderly people is going to be analysed.

Global prevalence

Desolation among the elderly people in care homes has become a cancerous global trend. Studies in a number of research had it that about 50% of the elderly people in care homes often report to feelings of desolation which can increase depressive symptoms and cognitive decline .Cattan et al,(2005).Desolation among older adults is a global phenomenon with rates ranging from 20% to 50% in various countries (Hawkley and Cacioppo 2010) ,Desolation among elderly people is a worldwide problem and it is being caused by a number of factors including depression ,trauma and social isolation .The prevalence of desolation is often higher among those with limited social interactions and poor family connections (Mclnnis et al.2020).Research also reveals the correlation between desolation and increased mortality rates among elderly people in institutional care homes ,showing the urgent need for effective interventions that promote social engagement and emotional support (Calsyn and Winter ,2020).Globally, approaches such as person -centered care models have been advocated to address these issues ,emphasizing the importance of fostering meaningful relationships and community involvement to enhance the quality of life for older adults in care (Kitwood,2019).According to Luo et al.(2012)about 40% of elderly residents in Canada in long term care facilities reported feeling lonely linking it to increased depressive symptoms . The World Health Organization (WHO) predicts that by 2030, the global population aged 60 and older will reach 1.4 billion, with sub-Saharan Africa facing significant challenges in providing

adequate care for its elderly. Globally due to the Covid 19 pandemic in countries like The United State it has been recorded that about 28% of elderly people experience feelings of desolation due to the COVID 19 restrictions. Overly desolation is a prevalent and critical issue that requires targeted strategies to improve the well-being of older adults in institutional care.

Regional prevalence

In Africa desolation among elderly people in care homes is rampant and a major issues of concern as Africa as continent has high rate of poverty as most of the African countries are still developing and hence resulting in limited social networks to combat desolation. Economic hardship is a major cause of desolation among the elderly people as this would limit their access to health care services, social services or financial od (Negin et al.,2013) According to the research from South Africa Medical Research Council about 31% of older adults reported feeling lonely with higher rates of living alone. Also, a survey by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics about 27% of older adults feel lonely. Also, statics in Tanzania shows that about 25% among those living in rural areas often feel isolated and lonely due to limited access to social networks. A study by Moyo et al.(2019) found that the lack of adequate social support systems and community resources intensifies feelings of desolation among the elderly .Also cultural norms that emphasises more on familial care rather than institutional care is also contributing to a sense of disconnect for many older people and hence end up feeling unwanted or isolated which increase the prevalence of desolation among the elderly people in institutional care homes (Amoah ,2020).This desolation is not only detrimental to their mental health but also contributes to a decline in physical well-being showing the urgent need for targeted interventions and policies that prioritise the needs and dignity of older people in Africa .The Socio -economic factors also contribute to feelings of desolation among elder people in African countries. Individuals from Lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to experience higher level of desolation.

Local prevalence

In Zimbabwe the rate of desolation among elderly people in care homes is increasing and is becoming a major issue of Concern. According to Moyo, (2017) In Zimbabwe cultural factors and the transition to institutional living can increase these feeling as many elderly people would feel disconnected from their families and communities. A study conducted by Help Age International, (2016) found that approximately 40% of older adults in Zimbabwe reported feelings of loneliness often due to family migration and urbanization as they will be looking

for greener pastures. Traditionally ,Zimbabwean society has placed a strong emphasis on familial care for the elderly ;however increasing urbanization and economic pressure have led to a decline in this practice resulting in many elderly individuals being placed in institutional care settings where they often feel abandoned (Zhou et al;2019).Studies review that the prevalence of desolation in these environments can be quite high with surveys indicating that over 60% of residents report feelings of loneliness and lack of meaningful connections(Chikanda and Zinyama,2021).Interventions focused on enhancing social interactions and community engagement have shown promise in alleviating feelings of desolation as highlighted by Kaseke,(2022) who advocates for programs that foster intergenerational relationships and community ties .This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the experiences and challenges faced by residents at Rutendo Old People's Home and developing effective social support strategies to alleviate isolation and improve mental health.

2:4:2: Characteristics of desolation

On Characteristics of desolation, we are referring to the effects or how the elderly people feel as a result of the desolation and the causes of desolation. According to Rokach(2006) The Characteristics of desolation often include a lack of meaningful engagement, loss of autonomy and inadequate social connection.

Depression and Anxiety

Desolation among the elderly people can manifest through various ways including the psychological symptoms including depression, anxiety and withdrawal from social interactions (Victor,et al,2005). Desolation is most linked to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. According to Barker et al., (2016) individuals in care facilities often experience higher rates of depression which can be exacerbated by feelings of desolation. A study by Bdwin et al .(2016)found that the prevalence of depression among care homes residents is markedly higher than in the general elderly population ,with manty residents reporting feelings of hopelessness and despair .According to Kane etal ,(2014) anxiety often accompanies depression as residents may worry about their health ,loss of independence or the quality of care they receive .Elderly residents often feel a sense of loneliness as a result of the transition to institutional care .Therefore we can conclude that social isolation is an important predicator of depression and anxiety leading to withdrawal and worsening mental health of the elderly people in institutional care .The prevalence of depression among elderly people in institutional care can reach up to 50% underscoring the need for effective interventions (Hsu et

al .,2019).Therefore this shows that depression and anxiety is one of the most fundamental characteristics of desolation among the elderly people who residents in institutional cares in Zimbabwe.

Feelings of Loneliness and isolation

Also, loneliness and isolation are the key characteristics of desolation among the elderly people in care homes and it is greatly affecting their emotional and psychological well-being. According research the transition to a care home often leads to a significant loss of social networks as many residents' experience bereavement and diminished family connections, increasing feelings of loneliness (Bennett,.2014). This sense of disconnection can lead to depressive symptoms and cognitive decline as highlighted by Cacioppo et al., (2011), who emphasized the detrimental health effects of perceived social isolation. The quality of interactions with care givers also plays a crucial role , McGilton et al.(2018) found that positive staff -resident relations can alleviate loneliness while negative interaction can increase feelings of desolation .Many elderly residents experience a significant loss of autonomy and independence which contribute heightened feelings of isolation (Boulous et al.,2021).However programs that promote intergenerational interactions ,group activities and community involvement have shown promising results in alleviating feelings of isolation (Martins et al.,2019).All these researches shows the importance of addressing feelings of loneliness and isolation among elderly residents in institutional care by fostering social connections and implementing targeted interventions .

Cognitive decline

Cognitive decline is an important characteristic of desolation among elderly people in institutional care and it is affecting their emotional well-being .Recent studies have highlighted the prevalence of cognitive impairments among the elderly people in care homes which often leads to feelings of isolation and despair .This decline not only impacts their daily functioning but also contributes to emotional distress as individuals may struggle to maintain a sense of identity and autonomy in an environment that often empasises dependency (Boulous et al,.2021).According to Hsu et al .(2019),cognitive decline is associated with increased rates of loneliness and depressive symptoms among elderly residents ,emphasizing the interconnectedness of cognitive health and emotional well-being .In the Zimbabwean context where there is lack of resources there is high impact of cognitive decline .Munyati et al.(2018)noted that the prevalence of dementia in Zimbabwe ranges between 2.3% and 20%

with many cases going undiagnosed due to lack of access to appropriate healthcare services .Community based interventions such as that of Friendship bench have aimed to improve mental health literacy and provide social support to the elderly people that is addressing both the cognitive and emotional needs of elderly people in institutional care ..This increase the feelings of desolation as many elderly people with cognitive impairments often find it difficult to interact socially .Globally, In the US programs that integrate cognitive therapy with social activities have shown promise in improving the wellbeing of residents in long term-facilities (National Institute on Aging ,2020).

Social Stigma

Social stigma is also another characteristic of desolation among the elderly people in institutional cares. Stigmatization often are as a result of societal misconceptions about aging and mental health leading to some negative stereotypes that portray elderly individuals as frail, incompetent and burdensome. According to Caddell and Clare, (2010) these perceptions can result in feelings of shame and isolation among elderly residents who many withdraw from social interactions due top fear of being judged or misunderstood. In many Cultures including that of Zimbabwe, the stigma associated with cognitive decline is compounded by traditional beliefs that prioritize family support for the elderly. According to Chikanda, (2017) the cultural shift away from communal living can lead to feelings of abandonment among the elderly, increasing their sense of desolation. Many older adults may encounter negative stereotypes that portray them as less capable or irrelevant in society leading to exclusion from social activities that support networks (Chibanda et al.,2017).The social stigma can also prevent older adults from getting access to care which further acerbate the feelings of desolation amongst them .Therefore this shows that social stigma is an important characteristic of desolation among elderly individuals affecting their mental health , quality of life and the overall well-being of the elderly people in institutional care .

2:5 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE DESOLATION

Community based interventions

Community engagement initiatives that involve family members and local organizations can create a supportive environment for the elderly residents (World Health Organisation,2007).These programs can enhance social interaction of the elderly people and hence reduce the feelings of desolation amongst them .According to Tarlow et al ,(2004)initiatives that promote community involvement such as volunteering and group

activities have shown positive effects on mental health .Such activities will help in dealing away with stress , anxiety and depression among the elderly people in old people's homes . On community based intervention there is also the issue of peer support groups which helps the elderly people to be more comfortable and hence opening up .According to Davidson and Faulkner ,(2014) facilitating peer to peer connections can help individuals share their experiences and reduce feeling of isolation .According to Holt Lustand et al ,(2015) desolation in elderly individuals is frequently linked to a lack of social interaction ,loss of autonomy and cognitive decline leading to feelings of worthlessness and despair mostly in institutional care .Hence here community based intervention are just aiming at fostering social connection and enhancing the support network available for elderly residents.

Globally community engagement initiatives such as intergenerational programs have been shown to foster social connections between elderly individuals and younger generations. According to Bowers et al (2020) these interactions can significantly reduce feelings of loneliness and enhance emotional well -being.

Also in Africa, traditional community structures provide a natural support system for the elderly. Programs that leverage local cultural practices such as storytelling and communal gatherings can enhance social cohesion and reduce feelings of isolation (Magisha et al.,2021)

In Zimbabwe local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO'S) for example HelpAge Zimbabwe have implemented community -based activities that encourage elderly participation in social events promoting intergenerational interactions and reinforcing community ties so as to deal away with desolation.

Psychological interventions

Globally, psychological interventions play a crucial role in addressing mental health issues among the elderly individuals in institutional care especially those staying at institutional care .On psychological interventions we are talking about those interventions that is to deal with the mind or the way of thinking of the elderly people .Implementing psychological support program's such as cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness training can be beneficial in addressing the emotional aspects of desolation among the elderly people (Keng et al ,2011). Cognitive Behavioral therapy has been effective in reducing depression and anxiety among the elderly helping them reframe coping strategies (Cuijpers et al,2007). Mindfulness practices such as meditation and mindful breathing have been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression among elderly populations (Keng et al.,2011).Studies indicate that mindful

based interventions improve emotional regulation and decrease feelings of loneliness (Choi et al.,2018).On psychological intervention there is also what is called reminiscence therapy .Reminiscence therapy encourages elderly individuals to recall and share memories from their past which can enhance mood and foster social connections(Bohlmeijer et al .,2010).A systematic review found that significant reductions in depressive symptoms and feelings of isolation among older adults engaging in this therapy (Wang et al.,2018).

Regionally, in many African countries psychological interventions must be culturally sensitive to be effective. Many elderly individuals may have different beliefs about mental health necessitating respect for cultural norms and values. According to Asante et al. (2018) in countries like Ghana integrating traditional healing practices worth psychological interventions creates a holistic approach to mental health care for the elderly.

In Zimbabwe due to economic hardships there is limited availability psychological interventions for the elderly people. According to Chinyama and Zinyama, (2015) many elderly individuals do not receive the psychological support they need leading to increased feelings of desolation. In Zimbabwe it is of paramount importance to integrate traditional healing practices with psychological interventions. According to Moyo, (2018) combining modern psychological approaches with traditional counselling methods creates a more effective framework for addressing mental health issues among the elderly in Zimbabwe.

Policy Recommendations

In a bid to deal away with desolation among the elderly people it is of paramount importance to implement polices that promote mental health of the elderly people .According to Moyo ,(2017) advocating for policies that support the mental health needs of the elderly is crucial, this includes funding for social support services and training for staff in old people's homes .Training staff to recognize and address signs of loneliness can improve resident wellbeing (Chaudhury et al .2016).Training of staff is a fundamental policy that can be adopted as a way to combat desolation among the elderly people as improve social engagement (Barker et al.2014).Zimbabwe has adopted a number of polices to promote mental health of elderly people as a way of addressing desolation among elderly people .In Zimbabwe ,a number of policies have been implemented including Zimbabwe National Heath policy which promotes mental health awareness and recognizes the specific needs of elderly people and encourages the development of targeted interventions .Also there is the Older Person's Act in Zimbabwe which is significantly helping in mental health issues and hence reducing desolation among

elderly people . Studies indicate that the act has facilitated improved access to mental health care and social programs for elderly individuals contributing to decreased desolation (Kaseke metal .,2018).Globally, a number of polices have been implemented over the years ,World Heath Mental Action Plan 2013-2020emphasises the important of mental health promotion and the integration of mental health services into primary healthcare ,particularly for vulnerable populations including the elderly (WHO ,2013).Therefore it is of paramount import ants to implement policies that promote the mental health of elderly people especially those in institutional care so as to deal away with feelings of desolation .

Technological Interventions

Globally, Due to the rise of technology there are various innovative ways which can be utilized so as to deal away with desolation amongst the elderly people in care homes. Engaging with online platforms can help elderly individuals connect with others and share their experiences (Hinsch and Sheldon,2018). However, the rise of technology has created both opportunities and barriers. Technological intervention strategies include telehealth services which enables remote consultations with healthcare professionals ,allowing elderly individual to access mental health services without the need for physical visits .Studies have shown that telehealth can significantly reduce feelings of isolation and depression by providing timely support and resources (Gonzalez et al.,2020).Hwang et al .(2020) argues that while technology can enhance connectivity , many elderly individuals lack the skills or resources to navigate these platforms ,further isolating them The digital divide highlights the need for targeted interventions to improve digital literacy among older adults .

In Africa ,mobile technology has played a vital role in enhancing communication and social connectivity among the elderly individuals .Mobile phones allows for easier communication with family and friends ,helping to mitigate feelings of desolation .For example in Kenya ,the M-Pesa mobile money transfer service has been instrumental in connecting individuals with their families .],allowing for financial and social support (Duncombe and Heeks,2002).In South Africa ,the Health Access Initiative uses telemedicine to connect elderly patients with healthcare providers improving access to medical care and reducing feelings of desolation .

In Zimbabwe technological interventions have been of great importance and has been helpful in dealing away with desolation among the elderly people in institutional care. Mobile phones have become an essential tool to maintain connections with their families and friends and hence reducing feelings of desolation. Many elderly individuals in urban areas use mobile phones to

stay in touch with their families, however this is still a challenge to those who cannot afford to buy the mobile phones. In Zimbabwe telehealth initiatives are starting to emerge particularly in response to the challenges posed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2:6 CHALLENGES FACED IN PROVIDING SOCIAL SUPPORT

Resource limitations

Providers of Social Support services often face significant challenges ,including limited financial resources ,insufficient staffing and inadequate training (Makhubele,2020).These limitations can be a huge stumbling block in providing social support services to the elderly people in Care homes .Financial constraints in care facilities often restrict the availability of engaging programs that is without sufficient funding many initiatives to foster social connections are underdeveloped .Many care homes face challenges in recruiting and training qualified staff, particularly in rural areas or underserved areas, this shortage can result in high turnover rates which disrupt continuity of care and diminish the emotional bonds that residents develop with caregivers(Hsu et al .2019).At regional level African countries often have a high rate of desolation among the elderly people as most African counties are still developing and hence there is high rate of poverty .Borsch -Supan et al .(2015) found that low income countries often lack infrastructure to support elderly populations adequately leading to high rates of desolation .The divide between urban and rural areas is pronounced in many regions .Smith et al .(2020)noted that rural elderly populations face significant barriers such as transportation issues and limited healthcare services .

Cultural barriers

According to , Chikanda,(2017)Cultural attitudes towards aging and institutional care can also pose challenges as many African cultures emphasizes more on family care which can lead to stigma against elderly individuals living in homes .These barriers often stem from differences in beliefs, values and practices related to menta health ,aging and caregiving Many cultures emphasizes on familial responsibility for elder care which can create a perception that is institutional care is inadequate or inappropriate leading to feelings of abandonment among residents (Gonzalez et al.,2019).Moreover, cultural stigmas surrounding mental health can prevent elderly individuals from seeking necessary support as may view such needs as a personal weakness rather than a health issue (Cheng et al., 2020).Furthermore, cultural misunderstandings can lead to mistrust and disengagement from social support programs as residents may feel that their cultural values are not respected or understood (Bowers er

al .,2018).The stigma can reduce the willingness of families to engage with care facilities and hence it becomes difficult to provide social support . Globally cultural attitudes towards aging significantly influence the nature and extent of social support available .A study by World Health Organization(2018) highlights that in collectivist societies elderly individuals often have stronger familial support ,whereas in individualistic cultures they may experience greater isolation .Addressing these cultural barriers is essential for developing effective culturally sensitive interventions that foster a supportive environment for elderly people who stay in institutional care .

Communication barriers

Effective communication between elderly residents and care providers is essential for successful social support ,However language barriers and differences in cultural norms can complicate interactions (Makhubele,2020).Language is a major challenge that can be encountered in a bid to provide social support as many elderly people speak their native language or indigenous language that caregivers or the providers of social support cannot fully understand .According to Chikanda ,(2017) linguistic disconnect can lead to misunderstandings and feelings of neglect among residents who may struggle to express their needs and preferences effectively , such barriers not only limit access to essential services but also exacerbate feelings of isolation and desolation as residents may feel unheard and unsupported in their daily lives .Also the influence of technology in facilitating communication presents booth challenges and opportunities as many elderly people lack digital literacy or access to technological resources . According to Gonzalez et al. (22020) bridging the digital divide is essential for improving communication and social support for the elderly, but efforts in this area remain limited in Zimbabwean care homes

African Union. (2021). Mental health policy framework for older adults. African Union.

Mental health issues

Mental health issues is another challenge that can be faced by the providers of social support in a bid to deal away with desolation among elderly people who residents in institutional care homes .Many individuals requiring social support may face mental health issues such as depression and anxiety which can complicate interactions and make it harder to provide effective support .According to Baldwin et al .(2019), approximately 40% of the residents in institutional care facilities exhibit signs of depression which can hinder their ability to engage socially and participate in supportive programs .Smith et al .(2021) point out that caregivers

often lack adequate training to recognise and address these mental health needs, resulting in ineffective support systems .This is compounded by stigma surrounding mental health as noted by Cheng et al.(2020) which discourages residents from seeking help or participating in social initiatives. Therefore, this creates a cycle of desolation among the elderly people in institutional care which is difficult to deal away with, showing the need for comprehensive intervention strategies to enhance social support in care homes.

2:7 GAPS LEFT BY EXISTING LITERATURE

The Literature review highlighted the prevalence of desolation among elderly people in old people's homes and the characteristics of desolation that is what causes desolation and the effects of it. It also highlighted the strategies to use as to combat the desolation of elderly people who live in institutional care. It also brought attention to the challenges that can be faced in trying to provide the social support to the elderly people. However there is gap in literature despite the fact that there has been significant research on desolation of elderly people   as current literature often fails to consider the intersectionality of factors such as gender and ethnicity in shaping experiences of desolation .Understanding how these intersecting identities impact the emotional and psychological well- being of elderly residents is crucial for developing comprehensive support systems .Therefore there is need to conduct a research on how gender and ethnicity shape the experiences of desolation.

2:8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In Conclusion this Chapter has provided intervention strategies so as to mitigate desolation among elderly people in institutional care homes by looking at a number of factors that offer possible intervention strategies. The chapter focused on the theoretical framework, The prevalence and characteristics of desolation. It also focused on some theoretical framework that act as a guide to my study, the intervention strategies to be adapted so as to deal away with desolation among the elderly people in institutional cares and the challenges faced in trying to provide the social support. Issues like the research technique will be highlighted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The Chapter outlines the research methodology used in the study so as to come up with suitable intervention strategies to deal away with desolation among the elderly people in institutional care .A number of things are discussed in this chapter which include the research approach, research design ,study setting target population, sampling method and sample ,research instruments ,data collection and analysis ,ethical considerations and feasibility of the study .The methodology employed in this study is designed to provide with a deep understanding of the experiences of elderly people living in institutional care and try to come up with suitable intervention strategies so as to mitigate desolation among them.

3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPY

In this study Constructive research philosophy was used. This philosophical approach emphasises understanding the subjective experiences and perspectives of individuals making it well suitable for exploring complex social phenomena such as social support and feelings of desolation. Constructivism posits that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. In this study a constructive approach facilitated a deep exploration of how elderly people perceives desolation and social support in institutional care settings. Also, this philosophy promoted a participant-centred approach, crucial when working with vulnerable people. According to Cresswell and Puth(2018) there is need to incorporate participants' voices in research ,ensuring their experiences shape the findings .According to Larkin et al (2019) this approach encouraged an open dialogue ,fostering deeper insights into participants' realities .Insights gained through constructivist approaches informed the development of tailored intervention strategies that address specific challenges faced by elderly individuals .This aligned with the goals of applied research aimed at fostering meaningful change in practice (Patton,2020).

3:2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach that was used in my study to investigate the prevalence of desolation among elderly people in people's homes and come up with suitable social support intervention strategies to deal away with it is qualitative research approach. Qualitative research approach is of paramount importance as its helps in providing quality information. Qualitative research approach provided in-depth examination of Rutendo Old people's home. In-depth interviews

with the residents at Rutendo old people's home were done and hence getting quality firsthand information. These methods enabled participants to share their thoughts and feelings in their own words, providing deeper insights into their experiences. The significance of understanding individual perspectives in qualitative research is emphasized by Cresswell (2013) and Charmaz (2014), highlighting how these methods yield rich contextual data. Focus groups were also used to obtain quality information that is interview with care givers. In order to get quality information also Participant observation was also used in other areas so as to get quality information.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Yin (2009) research design is a technique used in social research to identify and collect. The study employed a case study design case, which facilitates a thorough exploration and analysis of what causes desolation, effects of desolation among elderly people and possibly come up with possible intervention strategies so as to mitigate desolation. According to Cresswell (2012) the case study focuses on the explanation for a question or a phenomenon and the results are not up for interpretation. Cresswell (2012) also noted that case study research design explores why something occurs when limited information is available. Case study provides an in-depth examination of a case and hence making it easy to fully understand the exact causes, the effects and ways to mitigate the situation. In a case study data was collected using various methods which include interventions and observations. Studying a single case helps in getting in-depth and quality information. This design was used in a bid to achieve the research objectives.

3.4. STUDY SETTING

The research was conducted in Redcliff at Rutendo Old people's home which is an institution under the Municipality of Redcliff. Redcliff is a small town which is about 229kilometres from Harare using the Bulawayo Road. This facility provides residential care for the elderly individuals who may be socially isolated or in need of additional; support due to health-related issues. Rutendo Old people's home is a dedicated institution that offers various services including accommodation, meals, healthcare and recreational activities for its residents. The home aims to create a supportive environment that fosters social interaction and community among the elderly .The elderly population at Rutendo varies in age ,health status and background .Understanding the demographic composition including gender, age distribution and socio-economic status is of paramount important in coming up with suitable intervention

strategies .The social dynamics within the home play a significant role in the experiences of the residents .The study setting that is Rutendo Old people's home is particularly important because the home operates in resource-limited settings. Access to social support services can be challenging due to limited resources and hence it is contributing to desolation among elderly people.

3.5. TARGET POPULATION

Babbie (2013), defines the target population as a group of individuals or units for which the research is meant to be generalized. The target population of the study on the intervention strategies towards social support in mitigating desolation among elderly people in old people's home are people above 60 living in old people's homes in Zimbabwe specifically those living at Rutendo Old people's home. Also, the study is also targeting caregivers so as to understand their perspective and be able to come up with possible intervention strategies to mitigate desolation. By focusing on this specific population, the study was able to gather insights that is representative of the broader context of desolation among the elderly people who live in institutional care.

3.6. SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZE

It is of paramount importance to be able choose a suitable sampling technique and sample size as it contributes significantly to the outcomes of the study. Sampling techniques are crucial in research as they determine the quality and reliability of the data collected. Selecting a representative sample ensures that the findings can be generalized to the larger population. In this context of studying intervention strategies towards social support to mitigate desolation among elderly individuals in institutional care, effective sampling techniques helped in identifying the specific needs and experiences of the vulnerable group. According to Cresswell, (2014) a well-designed sampling strategy not only enhances validity of the research but also ensures ethical considerations are met, particularly when working with populations with limited autonomy.

3.6.1 SAMPLE SIZE

According to Cresswell (2014), a sample size is defined as the number of participants selected for a study from the target population. This study involved in-depth interviews with 10 participants at Rutendo Old people's home selected using the simple random sampling technique. The sample consisted of 10 participants which included 4 female old people, 4male

old people and 2 caregivers. The inclusion of both genders in the study helps to come up with suitable social support intervention strategies as the causes of desolation among elderly people in institutional cares can differ with gender. With fewer participants more detailed interviews were conducted and also managing a small sample is easier. According to Mason, (2010) small sample size is believed to be adequate for achieving data saturation. Furthermore, Hennick et al (2017) indicate that smaller samples can often yield comprehensive insights without unnecessary repetition.

3.6.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES.

Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was used when gathering data. According to (Gray 2019), simple random sampling technique entails that all possible subsets of a population are given an equal probability of being selected. Simple random sampling involves randomly selecting respondents from a sampling frame that is when dealing with elderly residents at Rutendo old people's home you randomly pick but with large sampling frames, usually a table of random numbers. In this study the researcher listed all the residents in the elderly home, giving each person an identification number. The researcher then randomly selected participants from the list making sure that each individual had an equal chance of being selected in the study. This technique helped in minimizing selection bias. A number of 5 participants were selected using this technique

Stratified Sampling

Stratified sampling was used in this study to ensure that different subgroups of elderly residents were proportionately represented .Firstly the researcher divided the elderly residents into distinct strata based on relevant characteristics that might affect their experiences of social support and desolation .These characteristics included factors like age ,gender and health status .Once the strata were identified , the researcher randomly selected participants from each group to ensure that each group was represented in the sample . The number of participants selected from each group was proportional to the overall size of the sample. A total number of 5 participants was selected using stratified sampling.

3.7.DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection methods are the techniques used in research so as to gather relevant information which can help in coming up with problem solution.

3.7.1. INDEPTH INTERVIEWS

In this study the researcher made use of interviews as a data collection method to be able to come up with rich information as to what causes desolation and the effects of it to the elderly people especially those at Rutendo Old people's home. Interviews are a qualitative data collection method that involves in-depth conversations between researchers and participants. . According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), an interview is essentially a purposeful, structured conversation between researcher and participant. Through interviews, researchers can capture participants' emotions, perspectives, and experiences, gaining valuable insights into their thoughts and behaviors. In this study 2 caregivers were interviewed so as to get rich information about their experiences on desolation among the elderly people since they have been working with them for some time. The researcher created a comfortable environment so that the participants can be able to feel safe and provide information. During the interviews local language was also used so as to accommodate everyone as some people may be comfortable talking in their native languages. The researcher took about 20 minutes interviewing each care giver, so basically the interviews took about 40 minutes. The interviews were conducted face to face so as to be able to capture the emotions of the participants. The researcher made use of structured questions when conducting the interviews so as to make sure that no important information is left out.

3.7.2. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus group discussions are a qualitative research method that gathers collective insights, attitudes, and experiences from a diverse group of participants. Led by a facilitator, these guided conversations utilize a semi-structured guide with open-ended questions to explore specific topics, fostering dynamic interactions and free-flowing discussions. This approach allows researchers to capture rich, qualitative data on participants' thoughts, emotions, and experiences, providing a deeper understanding of complex issues and themes. By encouraging group dialogue and exchange, focus group discussions helps in coming up with different views of the people on a certain topic that is providing with rich information about desolation among the elderly people. In this research 2 focus groups discussions were created each group consisting of 4 old people selected randomly. The focus group discussions will last for about

an hour to 2 hours and the discussions are to take place at Rutendo Old People's home. The researcher drafted questions which were used in focus group discussions so as to avoid missing some important parts. During the focus group discussions

3.8. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

These are the tools or the instruments used in the study to gather information and analyse the research .

3.8.1. INTERVIEW GUIDES

Study guides are the most important data collection tool used in qualitative research. Study guide is a tool that contains questions and topics to be addressed during an interview. It can be structuring or unstructured. In this study interview guide was used as a data collection tool as it helps in facilitating in-depth information to ensure that key topics are addressed. Interview guides help in reducing the rate of forgetting to ask important questions during interviews. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), interviews are valuable for understanding the meanings that participants assign to their experiences. The interview guide was made for the two caregivers so as to gain deep information about their observations on desolation among the elderly people. The questions on the guide were estimated to make about 20 minutes on each caregiver.

3.8.2. PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant observation is another data collection method. This tool is whereby the research participants in the daily lives of the people to be studied in order to get quality of information about their experiences. In this study this is of paramount importance as it helps to get some sensible information which participants can feel uncomfortable to share. Through observation the researcher will be recording behaviors of the elder residents who are experiencing desolation. Here the researcher worked at Rutendo Old people's home for a week in partnership with the caregivers. This helped the researcher to be able to come up with a better understanding of desolation among the elderly people at Rutendo Old people's home and hence this is of paramount importance in coming up with possible social support intervention strategies.

3.9. REASEARCH PROCEDURE

The research undergoes a certain a certain procedure to ensure that valid information is obtained so as to come up with social support intervention strategies to mitigate desolation

among elderly people. The process started by seeking permission from the Municipality of Redcliff as Rutendo Old people's home is a council institution .After getting the permission to researcher began .The elderly people to use un the research were selected randomly and there was a mixture of both female and male .The researcher asked permission from the selected participants because it ethically wrong conducting a research without fully explaining it to the participants .The caretakers at Rutendo Old people's home were also interviewed about the social and emotional wellbeing of the elderly people under their supervision .

The data collection was planned so that high quality data is obtained from the interviews .Interview guards were created and used to avoid missing important information .The researcher provided enough time for interviews , taking into consideration that elderly people tend to be forgetting some of the things and hence they need time to remember .The study also relied on acts and statutory instruments concerning the care of elderly people in order to have a deeper understanding about desolation among the elderly people .According to Braun and Clarke (2013)documents provides deep information that can complement data collected through interviews and observation .The research procedure in this study helped in giving rich information about desolation among elderly people which paved way in coming u[p with suitable social support intervention strategies to mitigate it

3.10.DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION

Data analysis can be referred to as a process of coming up with meaningful information from the data that has been collected. In this study qualitative data analysis was made use. This study employed qualitative analysis to explore non-numerical data, focusing on words, experiences, and observations. To uncover meaningful insights, thematic analysis was utilised. Thematic analysis identifies and analyzes patterns and themes within the data, coding and categorizing information around central topics. Thematic analysis is categorized into 6 stages as shown below.

Stage 1: Familiarization
This is the first stage of the thematic analysis where the researcher immersed themselves in the collected data from interviews and focus groups with elderly individuals, taking note of their experiences with social isolation, emotional support needs, and community engagement.

This stage helped the researcher develop empathy and understanding of the participants' perspectives and gain comprehensive understanding of the content.

Stage 2: Coding

When analysing the data, the researcher assigned preliminary codes related to elderly individuals' experiences, such as feelings of loneliness, importance of family support, and barriers to community participation. Generally, here the researcher identified features of the data relevant to the research questions, ensured that the coding process was systematic and reflective of the participants' voices (Saldana,2016). These codes will provide a foundation for identifying patterns and themes in the data.

Stage 3: Generating Initial Themes

The researcher identified patterns and relationships between codes, developing preliminary themes that reflect the complexities of elderly individuals' social support needs. Themes may include Social Connection and Belonging, Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience, and Access to Community Resources. This stage involved careful consideration of how themes relate to the research questions and the overall narrative (Tuckett,2005).

Stage 4: Reviewing and Refining Themes

To ensure accuracy and relevance, the researcher reviewed and refined themes in consultation with elderly participants, caregivers, and healthcare professionals. This stage involves member checking to validate findings and incorporating feedback from stakeholders to guarantee that the themes accurately represent the experiences of elderly individuals and contribute to a deep understanding of the problem.

Stage 5: Defining and Naming Themes

This stage clearly articulates the essence of each theme, ensuring that they reflect the participants' experiences and insights. The researcher defined each theme's scope and content, focusing on the unique experiences of elderly individuals. For example, Social Connection and Belonging explored the importance of relationships and community engagement for elderly individuals, highlighting the significance of social support in promoting emotional wellbeing.

Stage 6: Writing the Report

This is the final stage of the thematic analysis. The researcher presented the themes in a clear narrative, using quotes and examples from elderly participants to illustrate each theme. The report discussed implications for social support interventions, highlighting recommendations for healthcare providers and caregivers, policy implications for addressing social isolation among elderly individuals, and future research directions for improving elderly wellbeing. By applying Thematic Analysis, the researcher aims to gain a deeper understanding of elderly individuals' experiences.

3.11. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY /TRUSTWORTHINESS

In the study of intervention strategies towards social support to mitigate desolation among elderly individuals in institutional care, the researcher rigorously addressed the dimensions of validity, reliability and trustworthiness. To ensure construct validity established frameworks were utilized from scholars like Cohen and Wills(1985)who emphasized the critical role of social support in health outcomes .Also Content validity was achieved through consulting experts including Aldwin,(2007) who evaluated the intervention components to ensure they were relevant and comprehensive .The outcomes of the intervention were compared with validated instruments such as the social support questionnaire developed by Sarasin et al.(1983)

3.12. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When conducting research, it is important to uphold ethics for professionalism. According to Resnik (2011) ethical considerations in research are necessary to protect research participants, ensure accountability, build public trust and uphold social responsibility

Informed consent

Here the researcher ensured that all the elderly people under study are fully aware of the purpose of the study. Everything was made transparent to them. The researcher informed the participants the reason they were participating and also what their participation entails. It is inappropriate for one to undergo a study and yet hide information to the participants of the study. So, in order to uphold the ethical consideration of informed consent the researcher explained everything to the participants before undertaking the study. This involves clearly explaining the purpose, risks, and benefits of treatment options, allowing them to make knowledgeable decisions about their care Faden and Beauchamp (1986). This whole process aligns with the American Psychological Association (APA,2020).

Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidentiality was of paramount importance when dealing with the old people in institutional care. In order to keep the elderly people comfortable and free to share their experiences the researcher upholder the principle of confidentiality. The researcher implemented robust measures to securely store and protect personal and health related data collected during the study. Here the researcher made sure that he or she does not share any sensitive information to other people or reveal names of the participants.

Beneficence and non -maleficence

Under this ethical consideration the researcher made sure that the study benefited the elderly people in old people's homes rather than causing harm to them. Before undergoing the study, the researcher analyzed the benefits of the study. If the study can end up causing more harm than good then it's best to terminate the study. These principles advocate for actions that benefit the individual while avoiding harm. The researcher focused on interventions that alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation, such as social programs or mental health support Glover et al., (2020).

Respect for vulnerable population

Elderly people need to be respected that is respecting their needs and their choices. Hence when conducting the study, the researcher was more sensitive to the elderly people's needs, experiences and potential or physical limitations. In gerontology, it is vital to involve elderly individuals in their care plans, ensuring their voices are heard Beauchamp & Childress, (2019). Here the researcher asked the elderly people if they are comfortable in participating in the study that is respecting their needs and choices.

3.13. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study encountered a number of challenges that impacted its fundings and overall validity.

Methodological limitations

The data collection methods techniques utilized for instance interviews or focus group discussions were prone to bias as participants sometimes failed to provide full information about the causing of desolation amongst them in order to come up with suitable intervention strategies. Due to fear of being judged the participants tend to be hiding some of the information. Participants tended to be responding in socially desirable ways and hence

affecting the findings of the study. This is a common concern in qualitative research where personal biases can influence responses (Smith et al.,2009). Researchers can address this bias by ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in data collection procedures. They should establish a trusting and non -judgmental environment during interviews or focus group discussions to encourage honest and open responses.

Resource limitations

Resources was a stumbling block in this research. As a result of inadequate resources, the sample size was limited to only 10 participants and only those at Rutendo Old people's which may not be a representative of the whole population. This made it difficult for other elderly people to receive the type of social support they actually need as people may differ and it's not good to generalize. Also, due to limited resources it becomes difficult to come up with suitable social support intervention strategies to deal way with desolation among the elderly people in institutional care. To overcome these challenges the researcher considered conducting online surveys which would reduce travel cost and even saves time and also suggested partnership with some NGOs so as to get funding for the resources needed for the study.

Time constraints

The study faced time constraints as one of the weaknesses which limited the depth of data collection and analysis .The time that was taken for the study was not long to get in-depth information about desolation among the elderly people who live in institutional cares .In order to overcome this weakness it is of paramount importance for researchers to acknowledge the time constraints and clearly state the scope of the study .They can prioritize key research questions and focus on collecting and analyzing data that aligns with the study objectives .It is of paramount importance to strike the balance between the available time and the quality of data collected. Future studies can also consider long research periods to allow for more comprehensive data collection and analysis.

3.14.CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this Chapter the researcher adopted an interpretivist philosophical perspective and a qualitative approach in studying desolation among elderly people in institutional cares and come up with social support intervention strategies to mitigate that. Using Rutendo Old people's home as a case study the study made use of thematic analysis to identify the patterns

and themes of desolation among the elderly people in institutional care. In-depth interviews, focus group discussed were the data collection methods that were used.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to come up with intervention strategies towards social support as to mitigate desolation among elderly people in institutional care homes in Zimbabwe .A case study of Rutendo Old people's home in Redcliff .The main agenda of this chapter is to present and analyse data that was found through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions .Data presentation and analysis will be guided by the objectives of the study which are what is the prevalence and characteristics of desolation ,intervention strategies to mitigate desolation and lastly challenges faced in providing social support .This chapter presents and analyses the data gathered from interviews and observations conducted at Rutendo Old people's home. Data was collected from 8 elderly residents and 2caregivers. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data, and participants' voices are quoted directly to enrich the findings.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE ELDERLY PARTICIPANTS

Name	Sex	Age	Duration in the institution	Family support system
P1	F	65	2 years	Present
P2	F	67	4 years	Absent
P3	F	71	8 months	Absent
P4	F	60	5 years	Absent
P5	M	73	10 years	Present
P6	M	68	1 year	Absent
P7	M	77	6 years	Absent
P8	M	64	5 months	Present

The table above shows the demographic information of the 8 participants who participated. The table also shows that 4 females and 4 males participated. The age of the participants included a 65-year-old ,67years ,71 years 60 years ,73 years ,68 years 77 years and lastly a 64-year-old. The table also shows duration of stay at the institution of the participants. There was one with 2years ,4 years ,8 months ,5 years ,10 years,1 year ,6 years and lastly 5 months duration of stay at the institution. The table also shows that 5 participants had no family support and only 3 had family support .The age of 60 years and above was valid as this age often experience significant life changes which can contribute to feelings of desolation .In order to

have quality information all the genders were represented equally that is gender balance .The duration of stay of the participant shows that they had more experience at the institution and hence would provide valid information for the study.

Table 2

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE KEY INFORMANTS

DESIGNATION	SEX	EXPERIENCE
Caregiver	Male	5 years
Caregiver	Female	7 years

The table above shows the demographic information of 2 caregivers. The table shows that one care giver was a female and the other was male. The table also shows the level of experience of the care givers in which one had 5 years' experience and the other had 7 years of experience. Choosing 2 caregivers of different sex was of paramount importance since some elderly people feel very free to share their problems with a caregiver of the same sex as them. The years of experience of the caregivers were important in the study as it offered a rich understanding of the complexities of caregiving and the needs of the elderly residents since they had more experience.

4.2. QUALITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data below is going to be presented in qualitative form. It is going to be presented in the order of the objectives which will be presented as the themes and under those themes there will be sub themes also.

4.2.0. PREVALENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF DESOLATION AMOMG THE ELDERLY RESIDENTS IN OLD PEOPLE'S HOMES.

The study shows the rate of desolation among the elderly people who residents in institutional care homes and also the characteristics are shown by the people who are experiencing desolation in institutional care homes. The data clearly shows that desolation is both prevalent and multifaceted among the elderly in institutional care. It encompasses feelings of abandonment, emotional numbness, and lack of meaningful interaction. Despite being in shared spaces, residents often experience internal solitude and perceived social disconnection. This highlights the urgent need for targeted intervention strategies to foster social support and emotional connection.

4.2.1. Prevalence of desolation

The study shows that there is high prevalence of feelings of desolation, marked by loneliness, emotional emptiness, and neglect. Desolation has become a common issue among the elderly people who residents in institutional care due to abandonment by family members at most.

Participant P1 said:

"*Chero Ndidi pane vanhu ndinonzwa senge ndirindega , chero vana vangu havachambouye kuzondionawo ndinotombofunga vakakanganwa kuti ndichiri mupenyu .*"(Even if I am surrounded by people I feel lonely , even my children don't even come to visit me sometimes I think they have forgotten that l still exist).

This quote reflects the emotional and social isolation experienced despite being in a communal setting. A number of participants expressed similar feelings that's showing that desolation has become rampant among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes.

Another participant with a similar case also said :

"*Handina kujaira kugara panhu pane runyararo , kumba taimbotandara tichinzwa mimhanzi uye vaenzi vaimbouyawo asi pano pakanyanyisa kunyarara.*"(I am not used to stay at a quiet place like this ,back at home we used to be listening to music and people would come and visit sometimes but here the silence is too much.)

This also highlights the contrast between past social environments and the current institutional setting, reinforcing the sense of disconnection and loss .Almost all the participants confirmed that they feel lonely , isolated and forgotten ever since they started saying at the old people's home .The study found out that there is high prevalence of desolation among the elderly people who resident in institutional care homes as the Old age need more company, entertainment and support from the family in order for them to feel wanted , seen and heard .This is in line with the research by Moyo,(2017) which shows that in Zimbabwe the cultural factors and the transition to institutional living can increase desolation as elderly people would feel disconnected from families and communities .Therefore this shows that changing of environment is major cause of desolation among the elderly as they tend to find it hard to adapt to the new environment.

4.2.2.Characteristics of Desolation

The study brought out a number of characteristics of desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes .

4.2.3. Emotional Withdrawal

The study shows that emotional withdrawal is a major characteristic of desolation .Participants showed signs of emotional disengagement, reporting numbness and lack of interest in daily activities.   The study shows that a lot of people who reside in institutional care homes experience emotional withdrawal as a result of desolation .Many of them end pulling back from social interactions or relationships because they feel that they are not wanted .

Participant P4 mentioned :

> *"Mazuva akawanda ndinongogara hangu Ndaka Tarisa panze ,hapana zvakawanda zvandinotarisira"*(Most of the times l just sit down staring and the window ,I don't expect much in my life).

Caregiver P2 added:

' Most of them tend not to have interest in anything ,it's like they have lost hope in their lives '

The study brought out that as a result of feelings of loneliness and isolation many elderly people in institutional care homes end up losing hope and not looking up to anything , they are just leaving .The researcher found out that emotional withdrawal is at some point being caused by stigmatization in the community as they can encounter some negative stereotypes that portray them as irrelevant or less capable and they end up being excluded even from social interactions . All this led to emotional withdrawal . Caddell and Clare,(2010) are in support of the same idea as they show that societal perceptions about aging that portray elderly individuals as incompetent and burdensome result in feelings of shame and isolation among elderly residents who may withdraw socially and emotionally due to top fear of being judged or misunderstood .Hence this shows that the elderly people are the most fragile people and hence they need much love and attention so that they won't withdraw emotionally which end up causing desolation .

4.2.4. Feelings of loneliness and isolation

The study found out that desolation is characterized by feelings of loneliness and isolation . A number of participants at Rutendo old people's show signs of loneliness. Relationships within the homes were described as shallow or formal there is no meaningful relationships and hence people end of feeling isolated at some point .The caregivers since they were few they may not have time to sit down and have meaningful conversations with all the residents but rather they will just give them food and medication and goes .

Participant P5 said:

'Ehe tinodya hedu but hapana anonyatsotaura neumwe ,munhu wese anenge akanyarara achifunganya nenhamo nematambudziko ake pachake .'(We eat together, yes, but no one really talks. Everyone is lost in their own sorrow.)

Caregiver P1 added:

'I have noticed that they don't have time to sit down and talk ,each and every one will be doing his or her things .It's like they will be lost deep down in thoughts'

The study reviewed that desolation is characterized by loneliness and isolation as due to sorrow and lack of meaningful relationships ,the elderly people end up feeling not wanted and rejected .Most of the people find it difficult to adapt to institutional care especially the first days after coming from home and this results in loneliness and isolation . Some will isolate themselves from others , they won't talk to anyone .This is in line with Bennett,(2014)who shows that the transition to a care home often leads to a significant loss of social networks as many residents' experience bereavement and dismissed family connections increasing feelings of loneliness . This shows that basically changing environments will cause the study shows that many elderly residents feel forgotten by their families and society. The study shows that only a few of the family members still visit the people ,most of them don't even come except when they come with some medicine or food .This would make them feel depressed and increases anxiety because sometimes all the elderly people want is the family love where they would sit down talk and laugh with their family members . Only a few of the residents are receiving such love from their family members that's leading to sadness ,hopelessness and depression. Therefore, this cause the elderly people to feel unwanted and rejected and hence activities that promote group activities and community involvement would make them feel better and hence combating the feelings of loneliness and isolation amongst the elderly people .

4.2.5. Depression and Anxiety

The study shows that many elderly residents feel forgotten by their families and society. The study shows that only a few of the family members still visit the people ,most of them don't even come except when they come with some medicine or food .This would make them feel depressed and increases anxiety because sometimes all the elderly people want is the family love where they would sit down talk and laugh with their family members . Only a few of the

residents are receiving such love from their family members that's leading to sadness ,hopelessness and depression.

> *'Ndinogara ndichinzwa kutya kuti kokana pakaitika anything chakashata kwandiri izvi zvinonyanyokonzereswa nekufungisisa kuti sei hama dzangu dzichiita sege dzakatokangamwa neavangu.'*Almost every time I will be anxious that what if something bad happens to me ,this is being caused by the thoughts of abandonment by family members and friends).

Caregiver P2 added:

> *I have noticed that residents who are feeling desolate often struggle with anxiety and worry about the future .They might express fears about being alone or worrying about their family's wellbeing .*

The study shows that the longing for love and affection from family members can cause desolation among elderly people and this manifest through depression and anxiety . This in line with the Maslow hierarchy of needs theory which shows that human beings have five different needs which must be fulfilled . According to this theory desolation is often as a result of the needs that has not been met especially the needs of love and belonging . Therefore, in order for the residents at old people's home to feel less depressed and anxious it is of paramount importance to come up with programs where follow ups are made to the families as a reminder to come and visit their relatives once in a while .

4.3: INTERVENTION STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE UTILIZED IN ORDER TO DEAL AWAY WITH DESOLATION AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE.

This theme captures the participants suggestions, experiences, and reflections on what strategies can effectively reduce desolation among elderly residents in institutional care settings. The responses of the elderly people and the key informants acted as a map to the strategies that can be used so as to mitigate desolation among the elderly people.

4.3.0.Enhanced Social Interaction Programs

The study reviewed the need for consistent, engaging group activities to build social connections with others . Social interactions programs makes the residents feel wanted and part of the community and thereby reducing the rate of desolation among the elderly people.

Participant P6 said

'Ndinonzwawo kufara patinenge tichiimba uye patinenge tichitamba mitambo'(I feel most alive when we have singing sessions or play simple games. That's when we laugh and forget our problems.)

Caregiver P2 supported this:

"Even something as simple as a storytelling circle makes a big difference. It reminds them they're not alone"

This shows that regularly scheduled recreational and group-based activities serve as an emotional lifeline, fostering a sense of community and reducing the rate of loneliness and isolation among the elderly people .The study also shows that sharing experiences has got some psychosocial benefits and that group activities does not only serve as entertainment but has got some form of therapy . The laughter and the joy that comes with those activities helps in combating desolation among elderly people who reside in institutional care homes .This is in line with Holt Lustand et al ,(2015) who came up with the idea that desolation in elderly individuals is frequently linked to a lack of social interaction ,loss of autonomy leading to feelings of worthlessness and despair mostly in institutional care . Therefore, this shows that the old age generally need the most attention because as people age tend to be more vulnerable and hence lack of social attention can lead to desolation and hence the researcher recommend group activities ,social events , technology-based programs and also intergenerational programs so as to deal away with desolation .

4.3.1 Counselling and Emotional Support Services

Participants echoed the value of being listened to by someone trained in emotional care. Sharing problems with someone especially someone trained for it is of great importance as the elderly people get to express their emotions rather keeping their problems to themselves . Through sharing and expressing the emotions the elderly people can end up feeling relieved and therefore reducing desolation .

Participant P1 stated:

"Dzimwe nguva ndinongodawo munhu anogara neni pasi achindibvunza kuti ndirikunzwa achindipawo mashoko esimbiso sei kwete kungopiwa mushonga nechikafu obva atoenda'(Sometimes I just want someone to sit with me and ask how I'm feeling and giving me words of encouragement not just give me pills, food and go.)

Caregiver P2 added:

"We need trained counsellors or at least sessions where residents can express themselves. Right now, they keep too much pain inside ."

The study highlighted that psychosocial support, such as regular counselling or peer-sharing sessions, is crucial to addressing the emotional roots of desolation. This shows that the elderly people need people who are always there to listen and offer quality support not just people who are available .This is in line with a study by Cuijpers et al ,(2007) which shows that cognitive behavioural therapy has been effective in reducing depression and anxiety among the elderly helping them reframe coping strategies .The study also reviewed that institutions mostly prioritize physical health and end up neglecting mental health. It is therefore important to introduce regular counselling , group therapy as it could help the residents process grief and past traumatic events .

4.3.2.Family Reconnection Initiatives

The study highlighted that many residents expressed a deep longing for their families and suggested that institutions should help bridge that gap. The study shows that almost all the participants were complaining that it sems their families have abandoned them . This was making them feel unwanted and irrelevant and is one of the major causes of desolation amongst the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes .

Participant P7 said:

'Kana vachikwanisawo kufonera mwana wangu mukomana auye azondiona…handide zvakawanda ndoda kungonzwawo izwi remunhu wandoziva'(If they could just call my son and remind him to visit... I don't even need much, just a voice I know.)

Caregiver P1 noted:

"We've tried writing letters or arranging video calls, but it needs to be more regular and supported."

This shows that strategies that facilitate and encourage family contact, such as scheduled calls, letter writing, or family open days, can significantly reduce feelings of abandonment. The study shows that desolation can sometimes be caused by fear of being forgotten by the loved ones not just by being alone .Mostly the elderly people in institutional care homes interpret silence from family members as rejection at causes depression amongst them .The study also

highlighted that institutions have to play a bigger role in connecting the elderly with their families . This is in congruency with the Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory that points out that there are 5 basic needs every individual need and amongst them there is love and belonging . Love and belonging is important especially amongst the elderly people as it makes them feel wanted and hence lack of this need will end up causing desolation .Therefore there should be programs like family reconnection days , phone call schedules or even assistance with letter writing .

4.3.3.Volunteer and Community Engagement

The study brought out that involving external volunteers, especially from churches, schools, or youth groups, was viewed positively. When groups of people come visit the institution ,it instils some sort of happiness to the elderly individuals as they can play some games ,storytelling and singing . When churches do their services at the institution it brought so much joy and happiness to them therefore it helps in combating desolation .

Participant P8 remarked:

'*Vanhu vechidiki pavanotishanyira tinonzwa kurangarirwa uye vemamwe machechi pavanombouya kuzoitira chechi yavo pano zvinotifadza . Zvinhu zvinofadza chose kuona zviso zvatisati tamboona'*(When young people come to visit, I feel remembered even when some churchs come to do their services here it feels good . It's nice to have new faces and conversations.)

Caregiver P2 noted:

'*We have noticed that whenever we have visitors from various organisations ,the elderly people seem to be so happy* '

The study reviewed that community integration programs that bring in volunteers can create meaningful cross-generational interactions and reduce monotony for residents. The study also shows that volunteers do not always come for entertainment but to prove to the elderly that they still matter and are important people in the community also . The presence of volunteers from diverse institutions can be of great importance as people can end up laughing as they will be having conversations and hence helping in combating desolation among the elderly people in institutional care homes . This is concurring with the study by World Health Organization ,(2007) which points out that initiatives that involve family members and local organizations can create a supportive environment for the elderly residents ,these programs can enhance

social interaction and hence reduce desolation .This shows that these are the same strategies that were used before but the rate of desolation is still increasing and hence there is need for improvement and hence the researcher recommend integrating family reconnection into volunteer programs .

4.3.4. Personalized Care and Relationship Building

The study brought out that participants valued staff who made an effort to know them personally. It makes them feel important and loved and at some point it is of paramount importance in dealing away with desolation among the elderly people.

Participant P8shared:

*'Pane umwe murapi anotoziva tinofarira tea ne ginger'.Zvinhu zvdiki asi zvinoita ndinzwewo sendakakosha pavamwe'(*There's one nurse who knows I like tea with ginger. It may be small, but it makes me feel seen.)

Participant P6 shared the same idea and said:

'Ndinotonyatsoziva kana munhu achinyatsondiziva zvemashuwa chaizvo ,kwete kungoziva zita rangu chete asi kutozivawo zvandinofarira uye zvinondichemedzawo'(I can really tell when someone actually knows me ,not just my but what l like and the things that makes me cry).

The study reviewed the importance of person-cantered care that recognizes individual preferences and histories helps residents retain a sense of identity and self-worth. The study also shows that when the caregivers invest their time in relationship building -learning the residents' likes and dislikes , what makes them happy and what makes them sad , it fosters trust and emotional security .However there is a gap in the study by Moyo,(2017) who addressed issues like staff training as a way to deal away with desolation but not micro level—rational care .Building some relationship with the residents is emotionally enriching and hence helps in combating desolation among the elderly people who residents in institutional care homes .Therefore the researcher would recommend polices that foster one on one interaction so as to build connections as this can help in combating desolation .

4.4:CHALLENGES FACED IN TRING TO PROVIDE SOCIAL SUPPORT SO AS TO DEAL AWAY WITH DESOLATION AMOMG ELDERY PEOPLE IN OLD PEOPLES HOMES.

In exploring the challenges faced by caregivers, staff, and even the elderly themselves in delivering or accessing social support, several recurring themes emerged. These challenges greatly hinder the effectiveness of interventions meant to mitigate desolation in institutional care settings. The study shows a number of challenges that are being face in trying to provide social support to the elderly people in institutional care homes .

4.4.0.Inadequate Staffing and Workload

Caregivers cited being overstretched due to staff shortages, limiting their capacity to provide personalized emotional support. Only one caregiver will be in charge of a number of elderly people and hence it becomes difficult to pay critical attention to all of them .This will at some point increase the rate of desolation among the elderly people who resides in institutional care homes as it is difficult to attend to all the people at once hence some will be left unattended .

Caregiver P1 noted :

"I'm responsible for over 10 residents each day. By the time I finish with their basic needs that is meals, medication, cleaning ,there's little time left to just talk or sit with them."

Participant P8 noted :

'Dzimwe nguva tinoshaya anotibetsera zvakakwana ,vabetseri vedu vanenge vakawandirwa nevanhu vekubetsea uye nemabasa chaiwo izvo zvinoita tishaye munhu wekunyatsotaurira matambudziko edu.(Sometimes we have no one to attend to us fully , those who are incharge of taking care of us will be busy doing some work and also they are few so it's difficult for them to attend to all of us .)

The study shows that lack of time makes social interaction more of a luxury than a routine part of care, further exacerbating desolation. Social interaction is an important aspect especially when dealing with the old people at institutional care homes who need to feel wanted or part of the community . By engaging in group activities and one on one conversations residents cannot feel lonely and it also foster their sense of belonging . The study also highlighted that prioritizing social interaction can lead to improved cognitive stimulation ,physical health and ultimately enhancing the quality of life for elderly residents .Hence due to inadequate stuffing

there won't be time for any of that that's increasing the rate of desolation among the elderly individuals .The researcher would recommend the implementation of strategies to manage caregiver workload and prevent burnout such hiring additional staff.

4.2.1 Limited Resources and Funding

The study also shows that most institutions rely on minimal budgets that prioritize physical care over emotional or recreational needs. Social programs are often underdeveloped or non-existent. In order to deal away with desolation among the elderly people in institutional care ,there is need for resources for recreational activities ,community engagement activities , technology for connection and many other resources . Desolation cannot be completely dealt with if we have limited resources for conducting programs that include the old people in institutional care homes .

 Caregiver P1 remarked:

"*We would love to organize more group activities or even outings, but there's simply no money for that. Even getting newspapers or radios regularly is a struggle.*"

Caregiver P2 also added :

'There are some programs that we end up not participating in due to lack of funds and this is dragging us backwards and no progress is made in dealing away with desolation among our residents .'

This reveals how financial constraints directly affect opportunities for meaningful engagement, a crucial component of social support. This is why there is lower rate of desolation among elderly people in institutional care in developed countries rather than in developing countries as developed countries usually can afford to support the elderly individuals in almost everything .This is in line with Borsch -Supan et al (2015) who found out that low-income countries often lack infrastructure to support to support the elderly populations adequately leading to high rate of desolation . Therefore, this shows that in order to deal away with desolation ,resources and funding is very crucial so as to support the elderly people with their needs .The researcher would recommend resource mobilization strategies for instance seeking resources from volunteers ,community groups or even partnership with other organizations .

4.4.2 Lack of Family Involvement

The study also shows that lack of family involvement is another challenge in the provision of social support to mitigate desolation .Many elderly residents expressed deep sorrow over the absence of family contact, which increase their feelings of desolation. Caregivers, too, felt disempowered when residents received little external emotional support. The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions showed that lack of family involvement is a common challenge faced by the elderly people that hinder the provision of social support . A number of participants reported that their family have abandoned them ever since they started living at the institution .

Participant P7 expressed:

"*Kubva pandakauya pano mwana wangu akangouya kamwe chete, sekuti vakangamwa Kuti ndiripo* ".(Ever since l started living at this institution my child only came once to see me maybe she has forgotten about me)

Caregiver P1 added:

"Sometimes we try to encourage families to be more involved, but they say they're too busy. Some never come at all."

This family disengagement creates a huge gap that institutional efforts alone cannot fill. Even though the institution is trying their best to make the elderly people feel wanted and important , that alone cannot be enough to deal away with desolation among the elderly people in institutional care homes .The old people at institutional care can start questioning their worth especially comparing themselves to a few individuals who their families frequently visit .This will even increase the rate of loneliness and isolation and hence we can regard this as a stumbling block. This is not in line with Makhubele,(2020) who only emphasized more on financial resources being a huge stumbling block to providing social support leaving lack of family involvement. Hence the researcher would recommend family reconnection initiatives where calls can be made to the families encourages to frequently visit the elderly residents .

4.4.3Communication Barriers

The study shows that communication is a huge stumbling block to providing social support to the elderly .Some elderly residents suffer from conditions such as dementia, hearing loss, or depression, which make it harder to engage them effectively. This makes it difficult to be able to communicate with them and hence this becomes a stumbling block in trying to provide social support as a way to mitigate desolation.

Participant P2 noted:

"Handinyatsokunzwa zvakanaka ,Pamwe pacho vanhu vanotaura vachikasika ndopedzisira ndisina chandanzwa".(I cannot hear properly especially when people talk faster l will end up not hearing anything).

Caregiver P1 added:

'Language is sometimes a problem that hinder communication , for instance it is very difficult to communicate with someone with hearing impairments .'

The study shows that caregivers found it difficult to form bonds when communication was hindered by cognitive or physical limitations. Effective communication between the elderly residents and care provider is essential for successful social support and hence communication barrier is a huge stumbling block . This is concurring with Chikanda ,(2017) who came up with the idea that linguistic disconnect can lead to misunderstandings and flings of neglect among residents who may struggle to express their needs and preferences effectively , such barriers no only limit access to essential services but also exacerbate feelings of isolation and desolation. This therefore shows that in cases where the elderly people have hearing impairments it hinders effective communication and it becomes difficult for that person to effectively express his or her emotions and hence they may end up feeling unheard that's increasing desolation .The researcher would recommend the provision of interpreters ,translation services or multilingual staff to facilitate communication with resident with hearing problems or those who speak different languages .

4.4.4 Cultural and Generational Gaps

The study brought out that the differences in language, values, and generational experiences between staff and residents also present a barrier to authentic connection. It makes it difficult for the caregivers to relate and understand the old people at the institution well .Due to cultural gap and generational gap what is important to the elderly people could be very different to what is important to others and hence it becomes very difficult to fully understand them .

Caregiver P1 stated:

"Sometimes it's hard to relate. What matters to them doesn't always make sense to us, especially younger staff. We try, but it takes patience."

Participant P7 stated:

'Zvinorwadza kuti vacho vanotibetsera havana ruzivo mayererano nezvitendero zvedu uye nezvimwe zvinhu zvatinoda isusu zvakasiyana nezvavo ,izvi zvinoita ndisanyatsonunununguka'(It hurts that those who are in charge of taking care o us are not fully aware of what we want as old people and they are also not aware of our culture, it makes us to be less comfortable around them)

This shows that due to cultural differences it becomes difficult for the caregivers to fully understand the elderly people and hence suggest that it is of paramount importance that caregivers become cultural sensitive and generational understanding that is learning about historical events and experiences .In order for a person to fully understand the other person it's important to understand and appreciate their culture too and this is important as it helps in creating some bond with the elderly residents and it creates trust between the caregivers and residents . This is concurring with Bowers et al, (2018) who came up with the idea that cultural misunderstandings can lead to mistrust and disengagement from social support programs as residents may feel that their cultural values are not respected or understood. Hence this shows that it is if paramount importance to form some bonds with the residents so that they can engage in social support programs. Here the researcher would recommend cultural sensitivity training or workshops to help the caregivers address needs of the residents of different cultures and generations.

4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This Chapter illustrated data presentation and analysis using the data that was collected utilizing the study methodology. The data presented was covering and answering the research objectives which included the prevalence and characteristics of desolation, the challenges that can be encountered in trying to provide social support and lastly the possible intervention strategies that can be utilized so as to deal away with desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The Chapter summaries the findings of the study on the intervention strategies towards social support in mitigating desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes. Also presents conclusions from the research findings according to the research objectives that is prevalence and characteristics of desolation, intervention strategies to mitigate desolation and lastly the challenges that can be faced in trying to provide social support. Also, this Chapter presents recommendations to care homes institutions and the community in trying to mitigate desolation among the elderly people and to tackle challenges that can hinder the provision of social support. The Chapter also highlights study gaps and how future researches should fill them.

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The previous Chapters discussed the background of the study, reviewed the literature, methodology of the study and data presentation and analysis. The study sought to come up with the intervention strategies towards social support so as to mitigate desolation among the elderly people in old people's homes. The study was guided by three objectives which were to explore the prevalence and characteristics of desolation among elderly residents in Old people's homes ,to determine intervention strategies that can be utilized in order to deal away with desolation among elderly people and lastly to identify the challenges faced in trying to provide social support services so as to deal away with desolation among them .Maslow Hierarchy of needs theory was used as the theoretical framework of the study .The study followed a qualitative nature which was employed through the use of face to face interviews and focus group discussions .These were applied on 2 caregivers and 8 elderly residents of Rutendo Old people's home .The participants were picked using simple random technique and thematic analysis was then used to come with the main and sub themes of the study.

5.1.1Prevalence and Characteristics of desolation among the elderly people in old people's homes.

The study reviewed that desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes has become rampant due to a number of factors for instance lack of family involvement and entertainment. The study also shows that desolation is also being caused by the transition

to institutional living as the elderly people will end feeling unwanted .Also the study shows that desolation is mostly prevalent in low income countries or developing counties due to lack of resources to provide social support services to the elderly people .The research also indicated that desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes is characterized a number of factors which include emotional withdrawal ,feelings of loneliness and isolation and lastly ,depression and anxiety ,The study also shows that due to desolation

5.1.2 Intervention strategies that can be utilized to deal away with desolation among the elderly people in old people's homes.

The study brought out that there are various methods that can be utilised so as to deal away or minimize desolation among the elderly people. The study through the use of interviews and focus group discussions with the residents of Rutendo Old people's home managed to bring out some new intervention strategies that can be used. The intervention strategies brought out by the study include enhanced social programs, counseling and emotional support services, Family reconnection initiatives, volunteer and community engagement and lastly there is personalized care and relationship building. Although the study brought out various intervention strategies that can be utilised so as to deal away with desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes, Family reconnection initiatives seem to be the most powerful strategy as almost all the participants were pointing to it.

5.1.2. Challenges that can be faced in trying to provide social support services to the elderly people.

The study reviewed a number of challenges that act as stumbling block when trying to provide social support services to the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes. The study brought out that limited resources and funding is a major stumbling block as social programs cannot hold without resources and funding. The other challenges brought out by the study include inadequate staffing and workload where in cases where there are few caregivers to monitor a number of residents , lack of family involvement , communication barriers and cultural and generational gaps .The study also shows that in order to deal away with desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes there is need to tackle these problems that hinder the provision of social support and hence the researcher made some recommendations to deal away with desolation among residents at Rutendo Old people's home .

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the research findings the study concluded that although there are a number of intervention strategies that are being made so as to deal away with desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care ,there are challenges that are acting as a stumbling block to those strategies .This is making it difficult to provide social support services to the elderly people .Therefore by addressing the challenges identified that hinder the provision of social support effective intervention strategies will be implemented enhanced and these include enhanced social interaction programs , counseling and emotional support services , family reconnection initiatives ,volunteer and community and engagement and lastly personalized care and relationship building . These interventions if implemented correctly will help in sealing away with desolation among the elderly people in old people's homes.

5.3Recommendations

In light with the research's conclusions, the researcher recommends that:

- There should be interpreters, translation services or multilingual staff to facilitate communication with residents with communication problems.
- There should be cultural sensitivity training or workshops to help when dealing with residents of diverse cultures
- There should be family reconnection initiatives where calls can be made to the families encouraging them to frequently visit the elderly residents.
- There should be resource mobilization initiatives for instance seeking resources from volunteers, community groups or even through partnership with other organisations
- There should be programs in which caregivers are trained so as to manage caregiver workload and prevent burnout.
- There should be the implementation of policies that foster one on one interaction so as to build connections between the elderly residents and caregivers.
- There should be the introduction of regular counselling and group therapy sessions as it can help in processing grief.
- Group activities, social events, technology-based programs and also intergenerational group activities should be introduced.
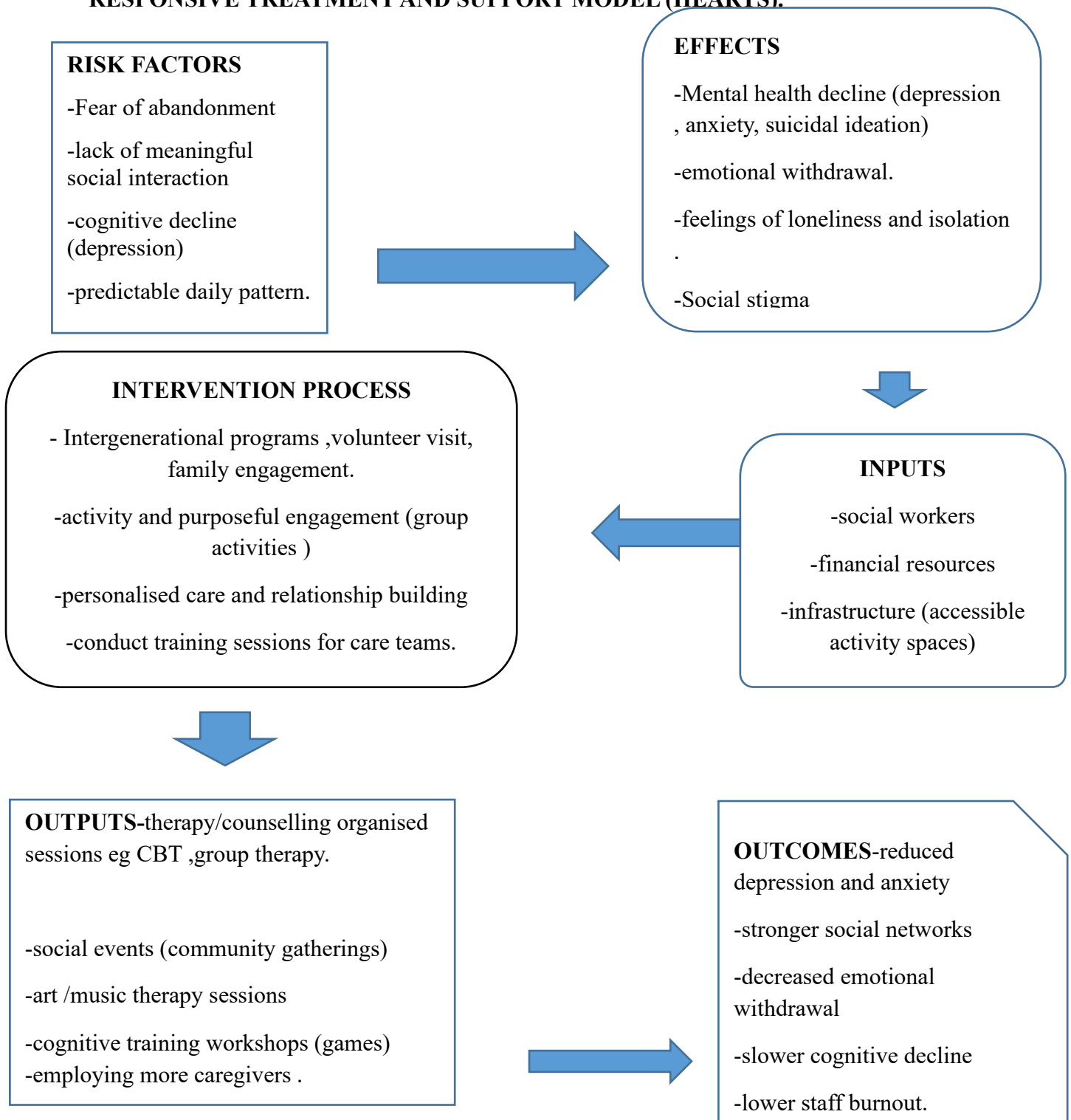
5.4. Implications to social work profession

- The study is of paramount importance to social work profession as the study's results can inform social work practice by highlighting the importance of addressing desolation among elderly residents through targeted social support interventions.

- The study is important to social work profession as it enhances assessment skills to identify the unique needs and experiences of the elderly residents including their social support needs.

- The study also promotes policy and program development. The study findings can inform policy and program development in care homes such as implementing regular social activities and other initiates that promotes community engagement.

- The study also promotes development of cultural competence. Social workers should develop cultural competence, understanding the diverse experiences, values and preferences of elderly residents from various cultural backgrounds.

- The study promotes interdisciplinary collaboration. Collaboration between social workers, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders is essential to address the complex needs of elderly residents, ensuring comprehensive and holistic care.

5.5. Area for further study

The researcher suggest that the study conduct longitudinal studies examining the long term effects of social support interventions on desolation among the elderly residents .The study should also conduct a comparative study in desolation experiences among elderly people in different care settings for instance home care vs institutional care as comparing outcomes across different settings can help identify best intervention strategies and also understanding how care settings influence desolation can inform tailored interventions .

5.6 INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK: A HOLISTIC ELDERLY APPROACH FOR RESPONSIVE TREATMENT AND SUPPORT MODEL (HEARTS).

RISK FACTORS

-Fear of abandonment

-lack of meaningful social interaction

-cognitive decline (depression)

-predictable daily pattern.

EFFECTS

-Mental health decline (depression , anxiety, suicidal ideation)

-emotional withdrawal.

-feelings of loneliness and isolation .

-Social stigma

INTERVENTION PROCESS

- Intergenerational programs ,volunteer visit, family engagement.

-activity and purposeful engagement (group activities)

-personalised care and relationship building

-conduct training sessions for care teams.

INPUTS

-social workers

-financial resources

-infrastructure (accessible activity spaces)

OUTPUTS-therapy/counselling organised sessions eg CBT ,group therapy.

-social events (community gatherings)

-art /music therapy sessions

-cognitive training workshops (games)
-employing more caregivers .

OUTCOMES-reduced depression and anxiety

-stronger social networks

-decreased emotional withdrawal

-slower cognitive decline

-lower staff burnout.

A Holistic Elderly Approach For Responsive Treatment And Support Model (Hearts) is basically a seven phase process that was developed after the researcher managed to collect and analyse the data so as to be able to come up with a practical intervention strategy that can be used to mitigate desolation among elderly individuals who reside in institutional care homes .The model was developed to answer the critical problem questions in this project which are ; what is the prevalence and characteristics of desolation ?, what are the possible intervention strategies to mitigate desolation? And lastly what are the challenges that can be faced in trying to provide social support?

The first stage of the model shows the risk factors leading to desolation among the elderly people who reside in institutional care homes which include fear of abandonment, lack of social interaction, cognitive decline and predictable daily pattern. The second stage explains the effects of the risk factors for example it will lead to mental health decline that is depression and anxiety. The third stage then illustrates the inputs that are needed so as to start the intervention process for instance social workers and financial resources .The fourth stage brings out the intervention process stage in which the inputs are utilized so as to address desolation among the elderly people in institutional care homes . The fifth stage consists of the outputs or the immediate results which comes after the intervention process for example community gatherings. The last phase shows the outcomes or the long-term results of the intervention process which include reduced depression and anxiety, stronger social networks and slower cognitive decline.

This framework if taken into consideration will help in addressing desolation among the elderly individuals who reside in institutional care homes .This model will help to understand the root causes of the problem , the effects of the problem and how to effectively deal away with desolation amongst elderly people Elderly people are generally one of the vulnerable populations and hence the researcher to be the voice of those elderly people so that intervention strategies towards social support can be made to deal away with the problem . .

5.7. Chapter Summary

The Chapter provided a brief overview of the study's findings by focusing on the intervention strategies towards social support in mitigating desolation at Rutendo Old people's home. The important conclusions of the study were summarized briefly in thus chapter. The study emphasized on the prevalence and characteristics of desolation among the elderly people. It also highlighted on the possible intervention strategies that can be utilised to deal away with

desolation and lastly it focused on the challenges that can be faced in trying to provide social support. The researcher also provided with some recommendations to address problems that can affect the provision of social support and also recommend activities to do so as to deal away with desolation among elderly people. The researcher also identified areas for further research so as to come up with intervention strategies for example conducting a comparative study comparing outcomes across different settings.

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APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Statement

My name is Marvelous Muzenda a Social Work student at Bindura university of Science Education conducting a study on the intervention strategies on social support in mitigating desolation among elderly residents in old people's homes in Zimbabwe. Your opinions and experiences will help in shaping our understanding of desolation among elderly people and come up possible intervention strategies .

I would like to thank you for accepting to be part of my study .Please note that participation in this study is voluntary meaning you are free to withdraw anytime if you do not feel like continuing .If you feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions you have the right not to answer .The information you provide will be kept confidential following on of the ethics of this research and I assure you that no names ill be provided. If you have read and fully understand this you can proceed to sign this consent form below .

If you have anything you wish to understand regarding this study to not hesitate to contact me directly at marvelousmuzenda@ gmail.com/ 0785940040

Participant's
signature……………………………………………………………………………….

Researcher's
Signature…………………………………………………………………………………..

Date……………………………………………………………………………………………
………………..

APPENDIX B: KEY INFORMANT INEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE.

Section A: Participant Background Information.

1.Name

2.Role

3.How long have you been in this role?

4.What is your view or contribution about desolation among elderly people in institutional care homes?

Section B. Prevalence and Characteristics of desolation .

1.How often do you see elderly residents looking lonely or isolated? What signs do you notice?

2.Can you estimate the percentage of elderly people facing desolation ,and what do you think causes it?

3.How do elderly residents who feel lonely and isolated usually interact with others ,like family or staff? What methods have worked well for you to engage them?

4.What specific situations or triggers have you noticed that lead to feelings of loneliness in elderly residents? How do you usually handle those situations?

Section C:Intervention strategies to mitigate desolation

1.What activities help elderly residents feel less lonely and how often do you use them ?

2.How do you help elderly residents interact with each other ,and what works best for building friendships?

3.Can technology like video calls or messaging apps help reduce loneliness in elderly residents, and are there any programs already doing this?

4.What kind of training or support do you think you need to better the provision of social support to the elderly people?

Section D: Challenges faced in providing social support .

1.In your opinion what are the challenges that are affecting the provision of social support at Rutendo Old people's home and how do you solve it?

2.What additional resources or support do you think are effective to overcome the challenges being encountered when providing social support?

3.How do you find time to help elderly residents socially when you have other important tasks to do?

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSSION GUIDE.

SECTION A :Background Information

1.Name

2.Age

3.How long have you been staying at the institution?

4.Can you tell us a bit about your life experiences ?

SECTION B:Prevalence and Characteristics of desolation.

1.How often do you feel lonely or isolated?

2.Have you ever experiences feelings of desolation or loneliness? If so can you describe what it was like ?

3.What contributes to your feelings of loneliness or disconnection ?

SECTION C: Intervention strategies to mitigate desolation

1.How can healthcare providers, family members and caregivers better support your social and emotional needs?

2.Are you comfortable using technology such as video conferencing to stay connected to others

3.Have you ever participated in any support groups or counselling services? If so what was your experience like?

4.What types of social activities would you like to participate in but currently you don't have access?

5. What activities do you think makes you happy and connected to others?

SECTION D:Challenges faced in providing social support

1.Are there any challenges that you face that you feel are contributing to your feelings of loneliness and isolation?

2. Do you think lack of family involvement is the root cause for feeling disconnected to others?

3.What additional resources or support do you think are effective to help you overcome the challenges that you face?

APPENDIX D: Approval forms from Municipality of Redcliff

Municipality of Redcliff

All communications to be
addressed to the Town Clerk.

Our ref: ....

Your ref:..........................

Municipality of Redcliff
Civic Center
Stand 1383, Sally Mugabe Way
P.O. BOX 100
Redcliff
Tel: 055-62372
General Line: 055-68787 -9
Email:gmchakauya@redcliffmunicipality.org.zw

27 February ,2025
Bindura University of Science Education

REF: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH FOR MUZENDA MARVELOUS OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCES HONORS DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK AT BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION.

Please be advised that the permission is hereby granted for you to carry out research on a topic titled "Intervention **strategies towards social support in mitigating desolation among elderly people in old people's homes in Zimbabwe. A case study of Rutendo Old people's home Redcliff."**

Permission is granted strictly on condition that the research is for academic purposes only in pursuit of your Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Social Work. The data collected shouldn't be shared to third parties for confidential purpose.

You are kindly requested to submit a copy of your final research document to the Department of Social Development upon completion as your research may be of help to the institution.

Mr. K Musonza
Community services officer -Redcliff Municipality
Cc Town Clerk
    file

MUNICIPALITY OF REDCLIFF
DIRECTOR C
AND COMM
2 7 FEB 2025
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