

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF NPREC IN PROMOTING PEACE HEALING AND
RECONCILIATION OF YOUTHRHBIN HARARE

By

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in partial fulfilment for the
requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Peace and Governance

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Bindura, Zimbabwe

June, 2024

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. The purpose of this study is to explore and evaluate the impact of the NPRC's initiatives on youth and their perceptions of peace building and reconciliation. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gather data from youth participants in Harare. The findings of the study reveal that the NPRC has made some progress in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. The initiatives undertaken by the NPRC, such as outreach programs, community dialogues, and the establishment of safe spaces for dialogue, have provided opportunities for youth to engage in discussions about peace and reconciliation. The study highlights the significance of these initiatives in fostering understanding, empathy, and dialogue among youth from diverse backgrounds. However, the effectiveness of the NPRC's efforts is influenced by various factors. Challenges such as limited resources, inadequate youth participation, and a lack of awareness about the NPRC's mandate and activities have hindered its impact. The study concludes that while the NPRC has made strides towards promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare, there is a need for enhanced strategies and increased youth engagement to maximize its effectiveness. Based on the findings, several recommendations are put forth. It is recommended that the NPRC allocate more resources and funding towards youth-focused initiatives, ensuring that their specific needs and perspectives are adequately addressed. The study also suggests the importance of targeted awareness campaigns to increase youth participation and knowledge about the NPRC's role in peace building and reconciliation. Additionally, fostering partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including youth organizations and community leaders, can enhance the NPRC's outreach and impact.

DECLARATION

I, Munashe Mateura(B200771), hereby declare that this dissertation titled "The Effectiveness of NPRC in Promoting Peace, Healing, and Reconciliation of Youth in Harare" is my original work and that I have acknowledged all sources of information and references used. I affirm that this research has been conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and academic integrity principles.

Student signatures

Date

Supervisor's signature.....

Date.....

Chairman's signature.....

Date.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have supported and guided me in completing this dissertation. First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my supervisor, whose invaluable expertise, guidance, and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping this research. I am profoundly grateful to the youth participants in Harare who generously shared their experiences and insights, without whom this study would not have been possible. I am also indebted to my family and friends for their unwavering support, understanding, and motivation throughout this academic pursuit. Finally, I extend my thanks to the academic community, research participants, and all those who have contributed to this research in any way. Your contributions have been invaluable, and I am truly grateful for your assistance and collaboration.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

NPRC: National Peace and Reconciliation Commission

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

USA: United States of America

EU: European Union

WHO: World Health Organization

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

HR: Human Resources

AU: Africa Union

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background to the Study

The effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare is a topic of significant importance. To understand the context of this study, it is essential to examine transitional justice institutions on a global and regional scale, as well as the history of violence in relation to the topic (Smith, 2018). Transitional justice institutions have emerged worldwide to address past injustices, provide redress for victims, and foster reconciliation in post-conflict societies. These institutions include truth commissions, reparations programs, and criminal tribunals. At the global level, countries and international organizations recognize the need for such mechanisms. The African Union (AU), at the regional level, has also developed frameworks and initiatives to address human rights abuses and conflicts in Africa, emphasizing justice, accountability, and reconciliation.

Harare, a region in Zimbabwe, has experienced a history of violence and conflict (Morse, 2019). The struggle for independence and subsequent political transitions in the country were marked by instances of violence, including human rights abuses, forced displacements, and political repression. These historical events have left deep scars within communities, particularly affecting the youth in Harare. The youth in Harare have been directly impacted by the historical violence in the region (Denzim, 2018). They have witnessed or experienced trauma, loss, and displacement, leading to fear, anger, and disillusionment. Involvement in political movements and conflicts has made young people vulnerable to manipulation and victimization, intensifying the need for healing, reconciliation, and peace building efforts.

Understanding the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare is crucial in addressing the region's historical grievances and fostering sustainable peace. By examining the challenges and opportunities for transitional justice in Harare, this study contributes to the broader field of peace building and transitional justice. The findings will offer valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in promoting reconciliation and peace among the youth in similar post-conflict settings.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in Zimbabwe, aimed at promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare, there is a need to assess the effectiveness of the NPRC's initiatives and interventions in addressing the historical grievances and fostering sustainable peace in the region. The history of violence, including human rights abuses, political repression, and conflicts, has deeply impacted the youth population in Harare, resulting in trauma, loss, and a sense of disillusionment. However, it remains unclear how effectively the NPRC's efforts have addressed the specific needs and experiences of the youth and whether they have contributed to meaningful reconciliation and peace building. Furthermore, the challenges faced in implementing transitional justice mechanisms and engaging youth as key stakeholders in the reconciliation process pose significant obstacles to achieving sustainable peace in the region. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare is crucial for identifying gaps, addressing challenges, and informing evidence-based strategies that can effectively address historical grievances, empower the youth, and foster sustainable peace in the region.

1.3 Main Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare.

1.4 Objectives:

1. To assess the level of awareness among the youth in Harare regarding the NPRC's existence, mandate, and initiatives.
2. To explore the perceptions and experiences of the youth in Harare regarding the effectiveness of the NPRC's initiatives in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation.
3. To examine the extent to which the NPRC's engagement with youth in Harare has facilitated their active participation in peace building and reconciliation processes.
4. To identify the key challenges and barriers faced by the NPRC in effectively addressing the specific needs and experiences of the youth in Harare.

1.5 Research Questions:

1. How aware are the youth in Harare of the existence and mandate of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC)?
2. What are the perceptions and experiences of the youth in Harare regarding the effectiveness of the NPRC's initiatives in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation?
3. To what extent has the NPRC's engagement with youth in Harare contributed to their participation in peace building and reconciliation processes?
4. 4What are the key challenges and barriers faced by the NPRC in effectively addressing the specific needs and experiences of the youth in Harare?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study extends to various stakeholders involved in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare. These stakeholders include:

National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC):

The study's findings will provide valuable insights to the NPRC on the effectiveness of their initiatives in addressing the needs and experiences of the youth in Harare. It will help the NPRC assess the impact of their engagement strategies, identify areas for improvement, and refine their approaches to better promote reconciliation and peace building among the youth.

Policy Makers:

The study's findings will inform policy makers at the national and regional levels about the challenges faced by transitional justice mechanisms, particularly in engaging youth in post-conflict contexts. It will provide evidence-based recommendations for policy development and implementation, enabling policy makers to design targeted strategies and allocate appropriate resources to effectively address historical grievances and promote sustainable peace.

Practitioners and NGOs:

Practitioners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of peace building, reconciliation, and youth empowerment will benefit from the study's insights. The findings will help practitioners understand the specific needs, perceptions, and experiences of the youth in Harare, enabling them to design more impactful programs and interventions. It will also contribute to a broader understanding of effective strategies for engaging youth in post-conflict contexts, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of their work.

Youth Organizations and activists

The study's findings will empower youth organizations and activists in Harare by providing evidence to support their advocacy efforts. The insights gained from the research will enable them to better articulate their needs and concerns and advocate for their active participation in transitional justice processes. It will also offer a platform for youth organizations to collaborate with the NPRC and other stakeholders in implementing youth-centred initiatives for peace building and reconciliation.

Academia

The study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on transitional justice, peace building, and youth engagement. Researchers and academics working in these fields will benefit from the study's findings, which will enrich the understanding of the challenges and opportunities in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in post-conflict contexts. The research will serve as a valuable resource for future studies, enabling scholars to build upon its findings and expand the knowledge base in this area.

1.7 Research assumptions

- The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in Zimbabwe is actively engaged in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare.
- Youth in Harare have some level of awareness and understanding of the NPRC's existence and mandate.
- NPRC's initiatives have had some impact on the youth in Harare in terms of promoting healing, reconciliation, and participation in peace building efforts.
- There are challenges and barriers faced by the NPRC in effectively addressing the specific needs and experiences of the youth in Harare, which may hinder the achievement of sustainable peace.

1.8 Delimitations

This study focuses specifically on the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth in Harare, Zimbabwe. It does not encompass a comprehensive examination of all transitional justice mechanisms or initiatives in the region. The study delimits its scope to the NPRC's mandate and activities, considering the specific context of Harare and the experiences of the youth in that area. Additionally, the study primarily relies on the perspectives and experiences of the youth themselves, limiting the inclusion of other stakeholders such as government officials, community leaders, or civil society organizations involved in peace building and reconciliation efforts.

1.9 Limitations

There are several limitations to consider in this study. Firstly, the research relies on self-reported data from the youth in Harare, which may be subject to recall bias, social desirability bias, or individual interpretations. The study acknowledges that individual experiences and perspectives may vary widely, and it may not capture the full complexity of the youth's diverse backgrounds and contexts. Secondly, due to resource and time constraints, the study may have limitations in its sample size and representativeness. While efforts will be made to ensure a diverse and inclusive sample, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all youth in Harare or other post-conflict contexts. Lastly, external factors such as political developments or changes in the implementation of NPRC's initiatives during the study period could influence the research findings and their applicability to future contexts.

1.10 Definition of Terms

National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC)

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission is a statutory body established by the government of Zimbabwe with the mandate to promote peace, healing, and reconciliation in the country. The NPRC is responsible for facilitating processes and initiatives that address past conflicts, promote national unity, and ensure transitional justice.

Youth:

For the purpose of this study, "youth" refers to individuals within a specific age range, typically between 15 and 35 years old. This age range encompasses the transitional period between childhood and adulthood, where individuals may experience significant personal, social, and political developments.

Historical grievances

Historical grievances refer to past conflicts, injustices, or grievances that have occurred within a specific time frame and have left a lasting impact on individuals or communities. These grievances may encompass instances of violence, oppression, discrimination, or other forms of social, economic, or political injustices.

Conflict:

Conflict refers to a state of disagreement, discord, or hostility between individuals or groups. It may arise from differences in interests, values, beliefs, or goals and can manifest in various forms, including political, ethnic, or social conflicts.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation involves the process of healing and restoring relationships between individuals or communities who have experienced conflict or divisions. It entails acknowledging past injustices, promoting forgiveness, and fostering understanding and cooperation to build a shared future.

1.11 Chapter outline

The first chapter provides an introduction to the dissertation titled "Effectiveness of NPRC in Promoting Peace, Healing, and Reconciliation of Youth in Harare." It begins with a background and context section, discussing the significance of peace, healing, and reconciliation in societies. The relevance of the Harare region to the study is also highlighted. The problem statement identifies gaps and challenges in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare, emphasizing the need for an effective mechanism to address these issues. The research objectives and questions are then presented, outlining the main focus of the study, which is to assess the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. The significance of the study is explained, emphasizing its potential contributions to academia, policymakers, and the local community. The chapter also includes a section on the theoretical framework and literature review, which presents the theoretical and conceptual foundations underpinning the study, along with a comprehensive review of existing literature on youth, peace building, and the effectiveness of similar peace commissions. The methodology section describes the research design, data collection methods, and analysis techniques to be employed. The subsequent chapters are outlined briefly, including Chapter 2 on the theoretical framework and literature review, Chapter 3 on the methodology, Chapter 4 on the presentation of findings, and Chapter

5 on the summary and conclusion. Overall, this chapter sets the stage for the dissertation, providing an overview of the research topic, its significance, and the structure of the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The promotion of peace and reconciliation is a critical aspect of post-conflict societies, aiming to heal wounds, restore social harmony, and prevent the recurrence of violence. Among the various stakeholders involved in the peace building process, youth play a crucial role as agents of change and catalysts for societal transformation. Recognizing the significance of youth engagement in peace and reconciliation efforts, extensive research has been conducted to understand their roles, experiences, and contributions in diverse contexts. The Introduction begins by emphasizing the importance of the youth demographic in post-conflict contexts, highlighting their energy, creativity, and capacity for positive change. It also acknowledges the specific challenges faced by youth in the aftermath of conflict, such as trauma, limited access to education and economic opportunities, and inter-generational tensions. Furthermore, the introduction underscores the significance of promoting peace and reconciliation among youth, not only for their individual well-being but also for the overall stability and sustainable development of the community. It highlights the transformative power of youth engagement in creating a more inclusive and peaceful society. The introduction also acknowledges the existing body of research on peace building and reconciliation, emphasizing the need to address the specific context of Harare and the unique challenges and opportunities it presents. It highlights the research gap in understanding the dynamics of promoting peace and reconciliation specifically among youth in Harare, calling for further exploration and analysis.

2.2 Transformative Justice Theory

The transformative justice theory serves as a theoretical framework for understanding the potential impact of transitional justice mechanisms on promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in post-conflict contexts. Transformative justice emphasizes a holistic and participatory approach that goes beyond punitive measures to address the root causes of violence, promote social transformation, and empower marginalized groups (Silverman, 2019). The theory posits that transitional justice processes

should aim not only to redress past injustices but also to challenge oppressive structures and promote sustainable peace by engaging all stakeholders, including youth, in shaping the future society. John Braithwaite: Braithwaite is a prominent scholar in the field of criminology and restorative justice. He argues for a transformative approach to justice that focuses on healing, repairing relationships, and addressing structural inequalities. His work highlights the importance of inclusive participation and the empowerment of marginalized groups in the justice process.

The transformative justice theory provides a comprehensive framework that goes beyond punitive measures and legalistic approaches, emphasizing the importance of social transformation and empowerment (Flick, 2018). It recognizes the agency and voice of marginalized groups, including youth, in shaping the justice process, promoting inclusivity and ownership. The theory focuses on addressing the root causes of violence and inequality, aiming for sustainable peace rather than short-term stability.

The transformative justice theory provides a lens through which to analyse the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. It aligns with the study's focus on empowering marginalized youth, addressing structural inequalities, and fostering social transformation. By applying this theory, the study can assess the extent to which the NPRC's initiatives align with the principles of transformative justice, examine the agency and participation of youth in shaping transitional justice processes, and evaluate the potential for long-term peace building and reconciliation outcomes. Furthermore, the theory can inform recommendations for enhancing the NPRC's approaches and interventions to align more closely with the transformative justice framework, ensuring a more inclusive and sustainable peace process for the youth in Harare and similar post-conflict contexts.

2.3 Peace, Healing, and Reconciliation

In the context of promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare, it is essential to have a clear understanding of these concepts and their implications. Scholars have provided valuable insights into the definitions and dimensions of peace, healing, and reconciliation, shedding light on their significance in post-conflict societies.

Peace, as discussed by Galtung (1969), extends beyond the absence of overt violence and encompasses positive and sustainable conditions that foster social justice, equality, and human rights. It involves addressing the root causes of conflicts and creating a society where individuals can live in harmony and dignity. This definition highlights the importance of addressing structural inequalities, promoting social cohesion, and establishing mechanisms for resolving conflicts peacefully.

Healing, on the other hand, refers to the psychological, emotional, and physical recovery of individuals and communities affected by conflict. It involves addressing the trauma experienced by victims and providing them with the necessary support and resources to rebuild their lives. According to Stover and Weinstein (2004), healing encompasses both individual and collective processes, recognizing the interconnectedness of personal and community well-being. It involves restoring a sense of agency, dignity, and hope among affected individuals and communities.

Reconciliation, as defined by Lederach (1997), refers to the restoration of relationships, trust, and social cohesion in the aftermath of conflict. It involves acknowledging past harms, facilitating dialogue, and promoting understanding between conflicting parties. Reconciliation aims to address the divisions, grievances, and mistrust that arise from conflict, ultimately fostering a sense of shared responsibility and a commitment to building a peaceful and inclusive society. Scholars have emphasized the interconnectedness of peace, healing, and reconciliation in post-conflict contexts. Hayner (2002) argues that reconciliation cannot be achieved without addressing the needs of victims and promoting healing, as individuals and communities must heal from the wounds of the past to move forward. Likewise, Lederach (2003) emphasizes the importance of integrating healing processes into peace building efforts, as sustainable peace requires addressing the underlying trauma and psychological well-being of affected individuals.

Moreover, scholars have highlighted the significance of including youth in peace, healing, and reconciliation processes. Bell (2007) argues that youth engagement is essential for fostering intergenerational dialogue and promoting sustainable peace. By involving youth in reconciliation efforts, their perspectives, experiences, and aspirations can contribute to the transformation of societies and the prevention of future conflicts. Thus in this section one can note that peace, healing, and reconciliation are interconnected concepts that

play a vital role in post-conflict societies. Scholars emphasize the need to address the root causes of conflict, provide healing support to individuals and communities, and foster dialogue and understanding among conflicting parties. Understanding these definitions and dimensions is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare.

2.4 Peace building and youth

Youth play a crucial role in peace building efforts, as they represent a significant portion of the population in post-conflict societies and possess unique perspectives, energy, and potential for positive change. According to Kaldor (2007), youth can act as agents of peace by mobilizing their peers, advocating for their rights, and engaging in community development initiatives. Their active participation in peace, healing, and reconciliation processes is essential for ensuring sustainable peace and rebuilding societies affected by conflict.

However, engaging youth in peace building is not without challenges. Young people often face specific needs and vulnerabilities in post-conflict contexts, such as limited access to education, employment opportunities, and healthcare. Their voices and perspectives are sometimes marginalized or overlooked in decision-making processes, which can hinder their meaningful participation in peace building efforts (UNESCO, 2020). Moreover, they may have experienced trauma, violence, and displacement during the conflict, requiring specialized approaches to their healing and reintegration into society.

Scholars have emphasized the importance of addressing these challenges and creating inclusive spaces for youth in peace building. In his work, Berman (2009) argues that meaningful youth participation should go beyond tokenistic representation and involve actively involving young people in decision-making, policy formulation, and implementation processes. He emphasizes the need to empower youth by providing them with education, skills training, and economic opportunities, enabling them to contribute effectively to peace building initiatives.

Furthermore, Zimmerman and Robertson (2017) highlight the significance of creating safe and supportive environments for youth to express their experiences, concerns, and aspirations. They argue that such spaces can foster dialogue, empathy, and understanding among youth from different backgrounds, enabling them to collectively address the root causes of conflict and work towards reconciliation.

Additionally, scholars have emphasized the role of youth-led organizations and networks in promoting peace and reconciliation. For instance, Mac Ginty (2012) discusses the concept of "everyday peace building" and highlights the contributions of youth-led initiatives in transforming conflict dynamics at the grassroots level. These initiatives focus on building relationships, fostering dialogue, and addressing community needs, thereby promoting peace and reconciliation from within communities.

2.5 Transitional justice approaches

Transitional justice refers to the set of approaches and mechanisms employed by societies transitioning from conflict or authoritarian rule to address past human rights abuses, promote accountability, and facilitate reconciliation. Various transitional justice mechanisms have been utilized worldwide, including truth commissions, prosecutions, reparations, and institutional reforms. Understanding these approaches is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare.

Scholars have extensively studied transitional justice mechanisms and their impact on post-conflict societies. For instance, Hayner (2011) highlights the significance of truth commissions as a central component of transitional justice. Truth commissions aim to uncover and acknowledge past abuses, provide a platform for victims' voices, and contribute to public understanding and national reconciliation. They can play a vital role in addressing historical grievances and promoting healing among affected communities.

Furthermore, Roht-Arriaza and Sikkink (1999) discuss the importance of prosecutions in transitional justice processes. Prosecutions can establish individual criminal responsibility, deter future violations, and provide justice for victims. They argue that accountability for past atrocities is a fundamental aspect of achieving reconciliation, as it sends a message that impunity will not be tolerated.

Reparations programs are another critical component of transitional justice. According to de Greiff (2006), reparations aim to acknowledge and address the harm suffered by victims, restore their dignity, and support their healing and reintegration into society. Reparations can take various forms, including financial compensation, symbolic gestures, and community-based projects. They contribute to the broader goals of reconciliation and rebuilding trust among communities.

Institutional reforms are also crucial in transitional justice processes. This includes reforms in the judiciary, security sector, and public administration to ensure accountability, transparency, and the protection of human rights. Teitel (2000) argues that institutional reforms are essential for addressing the structural causes of conflict and preventing the recurrence of human rights abuses in post-conflict societies. However, scholars have also highlighted challenges and critiques associated with transitional justice approaches. For example, Mc-Evoy and McGregor (2008) discuss the limitations of truth commissions, including issues of political manipulation, limited resources, and the potential re-traumatization of victims. They emphasize the need for truth commissions to be independent, impartial, and adequately resourced to effectively serve their intended purposes.

Transitional justice approaches such as truth commissions, prosecutions, reparations, and institutional reforms are crucial for addressing past human rights abuses and promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Scholars emphasize the importance of designing and implementing these mechanisms in a way that ensures their effectiveness, legitimacy, and inclusivity. By considering these approaches, the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare can be evaluated within the broader context of transitional justice.

2.6 National Peace and Reconciliation Commission

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) is a governmental institution established to promote peace, healing, and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. The NPRC plays a critical role in addressing the legacies of violence, fostering social cohesion, and preventing the recurrence of conflicts. Understanding the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and

reconciliation among youth in Harare requires an examination of its mandate, structures, and approaches, as well as the challenges it may face.

Scholars have studied and evaluated peace and reconciliation commissions worldwide, providing valuable insights into their effectiveness and impact. For instance, Teitel (2000) discusses the role of truth commissions, such as South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in addressing past human rights abuses and facilitating reconciliation. She emphasizes the importance of truth commissions being independent, transparent, and inclusive to gain public trust and effectively contribute to the healing and reconciliation process.

Regarding the structures and approaches of peace commissions, scholars have highlighted the need for inclusivity and participation. Bell (2007) argues that peace commissions should be participatory in nature, involving representatives from diverse stakeholder groups, including youth, women, and marginalized communities. This inclusivity ensures that the voices and perspectives of all affected parties are heard and considered in the peace building process.

Furthermore, scholars have emphasized the importance of sustainability and long-term engagement. Klotz (2010) highlights the challenges faced by peace commissions in sustaining their impact beyond their initial mandate. He argues that sustained engagement with communities is necessary to address ongoing grievances, support healing processes, and foster reconciliation. This requires continued resource allocation, public support, and a commitment to long-term peace building efforts.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the NPRC, scholars have emphasized the importance of measuring outcomes and impact. Wood (2008) discusses the evaluation of peace commissions and suggests the use of indicators such as increased social trust, reduced violence, and improved access to justice as measures of their effectiveness. These indicators can help assess the contributions of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. Additionally, scholars have highlighted the challenges faced by peace commissions, including political interference, limited resources, and the potential for use of instruments. McEvoy and McGregor (2008) discuss the delicate balance between political considerations and the independence of peace commissions. They

stress the importance of maintaining the credibility and impartiality of peace commissions to ensure their effectiveness in addressing past grievances and promoting reconciliation.

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) play a crucial role in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Scholars emphasize the need for independence, inclusivity, sustainability, and outcome measurement in the work of peace commissions. Evaluating the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare requires considering these scholarly perspectives and examining its structures, approaches, and challenges within the specific context of Harare.

2.7 Challenges and barriers in promoting peace and reconciliation among youth

Promoting peace and reconciliation among youth in post-conflict societies can be a complex and challenging endeavour. Various obstacles and barriers hinder the achievement of sustainable peace and reconciliation. Understanding these challenges is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at promoting peace and reconciliation among youth in Harare. Scholars have extensively studied these challenges, shedding light on their nature and implications.

Youth who have experienced conflict often suffer from trauma and psychological distress. This can hinder their ability to engage in peace building efforts and embrace reconciliation. According to Betancourt and Khan (2008), trauma can manifest as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression, affecting their social and emotional well-being. Addressing the psychological impact of conflict and providing appropriate mental health support are essential for enabling youth to participate effectively in peace and reconciliation processes. In post-conflict societies, inter-generational tensions and divisions can hinder peace and reconciliation efforts. Young people may harbour resentment or mistrust towards older generations due to their involvement in the conflict. Similarly, older generations may view youth as symbols of the conflict or may be reluctant to involve them in decision-making processes. Fostering inter-generational dialogue and creating opportunities for meaningful youth participation can help bridge these divides, as suggested by Bell (2007).

Youth in post-conflict settings often face limited access to education and economic opportunities. The lack of education and viable livelihoods can contribute to frustration, marginalization, and a sense of hopelessness, which can undermine peace and reconciliation efforts. Scholars like Machel (2001) emphasize the importance of investing in education, vocational training, and employment opportunities to empower youth and promote their meaningful participation in peace building processes. Political manipulation and the use of youth for partisan purposes can undermine genuine peace and reconciliation efforts. Political actors may exploit youth grievances, mobilize them for violent purposes, or manipulate them for political gains. Scholars like Richmond (2012) highlight the need to protect youth from such manipulation and ensure their agency and independence in peace building initiatives. Rebuilding trust and fostering social cohesion among diverse youth populations is a significant challenge. In deeply divided societies, youth from different ethnic, religious, or political backgrounds may harbour deep-seated mistrust and resentments. Building trust and promoting dialogue, as advocated by Lederach (2003), are essential for bridging divides and establishing a sense of shared identity and common purpose among youth. Insufficient resources and support for youth-focused peace and reconciliation initiatives can hinder their effectiveness. This includes limited funding for youth-led organizations, inadequate access to skills training and capacity-building programs, and a lack of mentorship and guidance. Scholars stress the importance of sustained investment in youth programs and the provision of comprehensive support to enable them to contribute meaningfully to peace and reconciliation efforts (Bell, 2007).

2.8 Research Gap:

Significant research has been conducted on peace building, healing, and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. However, there are still notable research gaps that need to be addressed to enhance our understanding of promoting peace and reconciliation among youth in Harare. These research gaps pertain to various aspects and dimensions of the topic. One research gap is the need to explore youth perspectives and experiences. Understanding the unique challenges that youth in Harare face, their perceptions of the peace building process, and their visions for a peaceful future would provide valuable insights for designing targeted interventions and policies.

Another research gap is the intersection of youth identities and how it intersects with peace and reconciliation efforts. Marginalized youth, including those from minority ethnic groups, religious minorities, or disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, may face additional barriers and challenges in participating and benefiting from peace building initiatives. Exploring these intersectional dynamics and giving voice to marginalized youth is crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable peace and reconciliation processes. Furthermore, research often fails to examine the long-term impact and sustainability of peace and reconciliation efforts among youth. Understanding how the experiences and interventions during youth contribute to their lifelong commitment to peace building and reconciliation would shed light on the long-term effectiveness of such initiatives.

There is also a research gap in identifying innovative approaches and best practices. While some studies highlight successful interventions and best practices in promoting peace and reconciliation among youth, there is a lack of comprehensive research that systematically analyses and compares different approaches. Exploring innovative and context-specific strategies, lessons learned, and success factors would provide a valuable resource for practitioners and policymakers working in youth-focused peace building. Additionally, there is a need for more rigorous evaluation and measurement of the impact of youth-focused peace and reconciliation initiatives. Developing appropriate indicators and methodologies to assess the outcomes, effectiveness, and long-term impact of interventions would contribute to evidence-based practices and inform future policy decisions.

Lastly, with the increasing use of digital technologies and social media platforms, there is a research gap in understanding how these tools can be effectively utilized to engage and empower youth in peace and reconciliation processes. Exploring the potential of digital platforms for fostering dialogue, disseminating information, and mobilizing youth could provide valuable insights into leveraging technology for positive social change. Addressing these research gaps would require interdisciplinary approaches, mixed-methods research designs, and collaborations between academics, practitioners, and youth themselves. By filling these research gaps, we can gain deeper insights into the dynamics of promoting peace and reconciliation among youth in Harare and develop more effective strategies to build sustainable peace and foster social cohesion.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the challenges and barriers in promoting peace and reconciliation among youth in Harare, a post-conflict society. It highlighted the complexities involved in engaging youth in peace building efforts and identified several key obstacles that hinder the achievement of sustainable peace and reconciliation. The chapter discussed the psychological impact of conflict on youth, including trauma and related mental health issues, and emphasized the importance of addressing their psychological well-being to enable their meaningful participation in peace building processes. It also examined the inter-generational tensions and divisions that exist in post-conflict societies and the need for fostering inter-generational dialogue to bridge these divides. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the limited access to education and economic opportunities faced by youth, which can contribute to frustration and marginalization, hindering peace and reconciliation efforts. It stressed the significance of investing in education, vocational training, and employment opportunities to empower youth and promote their active involvement in peace building. Political manipulation and use of youth for partisan purposes were identified as additional barriers to promoting peace and reconciliation. The chapter emphasized the need to protect youth from such manipulation and ensure their independence and agency in peace building initiatives. Moreover, the chapter addressed the lack of trust and social cohesion among diverse youth populations and the importance of building trust and promoting dialogue to bridge divides and establish a sense of shared identity and common purpose. Lastly, it discussed the inadequate resources and support for youth-focused peace and reconciliation initiatives, calling for sustained investment and comprehensive support to enable youth to contribute meaningfully to peace building efforts.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter focused on the research designs, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and other data presentation methods that were used in the study. This chapter described and explained how data and research information were gathered in a bid to understand the effects of central government interference on the performance and operation of urban councils. The chapter also examined and defined the research design, research methodology, research philosophy, research instrument, target population, data collection techniques, sample, data analysis and presentation, and ethical issues. These are significant because they culminate in the collection of data relevant to the subject under study.

3.2. Research philosophy

This study used interpretivism as a research philosophy because there are various advantages of the qualitative research methods as it application to interpretivism. First, qualitative research methods provide valid and reliable data as they have the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances and situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Second, qualitative research enables researchers to generate hypotheses and test them in an exploratory manner (Creswell, 2014). Third, qualitative research allows researchers to collect rich and detailed data that can capture the richness of social life and culture (Maxwell, 2013). Although qualitative research methods have a couple of demerits, it has been suggested that qualitative research methods have the potential for researcher bias and the generalizability of its finding is questionable. The validity and reliability of the findings may be in question, and hence, the researcher needs to take care to reduce researcher bias by using objective data collection measures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

3.3. Research methodology

This study focused on Qualitative research as an exploratory methodological approach used to understand human behaviour through the observation of natural settings, experiences, and interactions. It focuses on interpreting and understanding meanings, perceptions, and concepts through the use of non-numerical data. Qualitative research is subjective and often more flexible than quantitative research; it enables researchers to collect richer, deeper data on the experiences of individuals, groups, and cultures (Leedy, 2019). In contrast to quantitative research, which use numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research relies on the collection of verbal, visual or written data that can be analysed through a more subjective or interpretive lens.

3.4. Research design

A case study research design is a qualitative approach used in social sciences to conduct detailed and in-depth investigations on a specific phenomenon, individual, or group of people (Borden's, 2014). The design encompasses gathering data from many sources, such as interviews, observations, and documentation, to shed a light on the behaviour, context, and experience of the subject of interest. The approach has evolved over time and is widely used in various fields, including education, psychology, public health, and business research. The case study research design is a popular method in social science research that involves an in-depth examination of a single case or a group of cases. The design allows the study to explore complex social phenomena that are difficult to study using other research designs. Case studies can be used to test a hypothesis, generate new hypotheses, describe a phenomenon, or examine a particular issue in detail (Creswell, 2014). The researcher gathers data from several sources, including interviews, observations, and records, to reconstruct the case and provide insights into the behaviour and experience of the subject. Case studies are particularly useful when addressing questions such as 'how' and 'why,' where the aim is to understand the processes and mechanisms that underlie the phenomenon of interest (Yin, 2012). Case studies are also effective when studying rare and unique phenomena, as they provide a detailed and nuanced picture of the subject in question. The case study design is useful when the researchers have little control over the situation, as it allows them to conduct an examination of the given situation in significant depth.

3.5. Population & sampling

This study collected data from the senior management and administrative personnel of the NPRC, NGOs, Academia and community. The collection of participants with relevant information to the study is referred to as population. The population is any group that has with at least one characteristic in common (Criswell, 2013).

3.6. Sampling

Sampling refers to the act of selecting certain data sources from which to gather data in order to progress the study's aims (Sunusi et al., 2016). In the social sciences, it is not possible to obtain data from every respondent relevant to our study but only from a subset of the respondents; this process is known as sampling.” (David, 2013). As Fox (2012) mentions, sample design’ refers to the joint method of selection and estimation; sampling should be designed in such a way that estimate error is minimized.

3.7 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. It involves selecting participants based on specific criteria that are relevant to the research question (Creswell, 2016). This method is commonly used in qualitative research where the researcher wants to gather in-depth information about a specific group of people or situation. Purposive sampling is useful when the research question requires the collection of detailed information from a specific group of participants who have unique experiences. The participants were selected based on their involvement in the management or administration

3.9. Data collection methods

The phases in the data collection procedure, according to Kahn (2014), involve scheduling phone, fax, or letter appointments with study participants; delivering and administering instruments to the sample through hand, mail, or research assistance; and finally retrieving the equipment. There are several data collection methods that can be used to gather data the study used surveys and interviews.

3.9.1 Survey

Surveys are structured research methodologies used to collect data and information from a specific sample of a population through the use of questionnaires or interviews (Creswell, 2016). The information and data collected from surveys are used to analyse trends, behaviours, opinions, and other relevant variables that would help answer research questions and objectives. Surveys could be conducted in-person or remotely, depending on the preferences of the researcher or the available resources. The study used interviews to collect data from a sample consisting of both males and females above the age of 18.

The survey consisted of structured, open-ended questions designed to solicit specific information from the locals. The research used both face-to-face and telephone interviews to conduct the survey. The researcher assisted the participants in answering the questions they didn't understand, and gave them a chance to express their thoughts freely without any coercion.

3.9.2. Key informants interviews

The key informant interviews were conducted to gather expert opinions, experiences, and insights on the subject matter. Participants were chosen based on their expertise, experience, and involvement in the operations and management of NPRC. Key informant interviews are a type of qualitative research methodology used to gather information from people who have first-hand knowledge or experience regarding a particular subject (Mukopfa, 2015).

3.9.3 Documentary search

Documentary search is a research technique that involves searching for and reviewing relevant documents to gather information on a particular topic (Brown, 2018). The purpose of a documentary search is to identify and analyse primary and secondary sources of information, including books, academic journals, government reports, newspaper articles, and other written materials.

3.10 Validity & reliability

The results of the study are meaningful and can be used to make informed decisions or to formulate policies. Without validity, the results of a research study would be unreliable and could lead to inaccurate conclusions. Reliability in research is crucial because it

guarantees that the findings of a study are consistent and can be replicated or repeated. This means that the study's findings can be trusted and used to make informed decisions or to formulate policies. Without reliability, the results of a research study would be unstable and could not be used to make valid conclusions. Validity is the extent to which a research instrument measure the theoretical construct it is designed to measure (Ahmad et al , 2019).The use of pretesting was done to prove the validity of the data and also following strictly the research objectives.

3.11. Data presentation & analysis

Data presentation refers to the process of organizing and displaying data in a meaningful and understandable way (Metway, 2012). This involves using various tools and techniques to present the data in a format that is easy to comprehend and interpret. The goal of data presentation is to provide insights into the data and communicate the findings to the intended audience. The first step was to collect relevant data on the research topic. The data was then, cleaned and organized to ensure that it is accurate and complete. This involved removing any duplicate or irrelevant data, and ensuring that the data was in a format that can be easily analysed.

Data analysis, on the other hand, refers to the process of examining and interpreting data using statistical and analytical methods (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of data analysis is to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends in the data that can be used to gain insights into the research topic. The next step was to analyse the data using statistical and analytical methods. The data was then presented in the form of visualizations such as charts, and tables. These visualizations can help to communicate the findings of the analysis in a clear and concise way.

3.12 Ethical considerations

The key ethical consideration for the research conducted during the study was informed consent. This ensured that interviews would only take place with respondents' consent and that no harm would be done to them while also protecting their privacy and respect. Participants were given the choice of accepting or rejecting participation in the study at any point. All research participants were asked for their permission before being interviewed as part of the study. Research conduct guidelines are governed by ethics (William,

2012). It is vital to assess whether the study processes are likely to hurt someone physically or mentally as data collection methods are devised. Berg (2014) asserts that ethics help researchers resolve moral conundrums that develop during the study.

3.13 Chapter summary

The chapter focused on different data gathering and analysis methods. The study's research design was a case study based on a qualitative paradigm. Selective sampling and Simple random procedures were utilized to generate a sample from the population. Journals, textbooks, and reports secondary data sources. Data gathering methods and all other procedures were employed to guarantee that the information used was reliable, devoid of bias, and capable of demonstrating the effectiveness of NPRC.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and presentation of data collected for the study on the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the objectives of the study, followed by a detailed analysis of the data collected in relation to each objective. The findings are presented through thematic analysis, supported by direct quotes from the participants to provide a comprehensive understanding of the youth's perspectives and experiences. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the key challenges and barriers faced by the NPRC in addressing the specific needs and experiences of the youth in Harare.

4.2 Response Rate

The research used interviews and documentary analysis to collect data. Response rate refers to the actual number of participants who participated in the research in relation to the targeted number. The research targeted 20 participants. Out of the 20 participants it managed to interview only 12 participants. The 8 participants who were left out could not participate due to many reasons. According to Thein (2020) a Response rate that is above 60% is reliable. This means that the study is reliable since it had a Response rate above 60%.

4.3 Level of Awareness among the Youth in Harare regarding the NPRC's Existence, Mandate, and Initiatives

Objective 1 of this research sought to assess the level of awareness among the youth in Harare regarding the existence, mandate, and initiatives of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC). The findings shed light on the knowledge and

understanding of the youth in Harare regarding the NPRC, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of its outreach and communication strategies.

The data analysis revealed varying levels of awareness among the youth in Harare regarding the NPRC. Some participants demonstrated a good understanding of the NPRC's role in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation, while others had limited knowledge or were completely unaware of its existence. For instance, Participant A stated

I have heard about the NPRC and know that it is supposed to promote peace and reconciliation, but I don't know much about its specific initiatives." In contrast, Participant B expressed, "I have never heard of the NPRC before. I didn't even know such a commission existed."

These findings align with previous studies that have highlighted the challenges faced by the NPRC in effectively reaching out to and engaging with the youth population (Kurebwa and Chinyonga, 2020). The limited awareness can be attributed to inadequate public outreach efforts by the NPRC, including a lack of targeted communication campaigns and community engagement initiatives specifically tailored to the youth in Harare.

The lack of awareness among the youth regarding the NPRC's existence, mandate, and initiatives poses a significant obstacle to the commission's ability to effectively fulfil its objectives. To address this challenge, the NPRC should prioritize enhancing its outreach strategies by utilizing various communication channels, such as social media platforms, community radio, and direct engagement with youth organizations. By doing so, the NPRC can increase its visibility among the youth and ensure that they are informed about its role, functions, and on-going initiatives. Furthermore, the findings emphasize the importance of aligning the NPRC's outreach efforts with the specific needs and preferences of the youth in Harare. This includes utilizing youth-friendly language, engaging youth influencers and opinion leaders, and employing culturally appropriate communication methods to effectively convey the NPRC's messages and objectives.

.4.4 Perceptions and Experiences of the Youth in Harare regarding the Effectiveness of the NPRC in Promoting Peace, Healing, and Reconciliation

Objective 2 of this research aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of the youth in Harare regarding the effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation. By delving into the perspectives of the youth, this objective sought to provide valuable insights into their assessment of the NPRC's initiatives and their impact on peace building and reconciliation processes.

The analysis of the data collected from the participants revealed diverse views regarding the effectiveness of the NPRC's initiatives. Some participants acknowledged the positive impact of the NPRC's efforts in fostering peace and reconciliation, while others expressed scepticism and raised concerns about the limited tangible outcomes. For instance, Participant A expressed,

L has seen some positive changes in my community since the NPRC started its work. There is more dialogue and efforts towards healing and reconciliation.

On the other hand, Participant B stated,

"I feel that the NPRC's initiatives lack concrete actions and have not made a significant difference in promoting lasting peace and reconciliation."

These findings align with existing literature that highlights the challenges faced by transitional justice mechanisms in achieving their intended outcomes (Mazorodze, 2018). The NPRC's effectiveness in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation relies on several factors, including adequate resources, collaboration with key stakeholders, and the ability to foster trust and confidence among the affected communities. The mixed perceptions and experiences of the youth in Harare underscore the need for the NPRC to continuously evaluate and adapt its strategies to address the specific needs and expectations of the youth population.

Furthermore, the findings suggest the importance of inclusivity and meaningful participation of the youth in the NPRC's initiatives. Participants emphasized the need for the NPRC to actively involve the youth in decision-making processes related to peace building and reconciliation initiatives. This aligns with the theoretical framework of participatory approaches, which argues that the inclusion of diverse voices and perspectives leads to more effective and sustainable peace building outcomes (Tietel , 2020). By incorporating the views and experiences of the youth, the NPRC can enhance the relevance and impact of its initiatives and ensure the ownership of the peace building process by the affected communities. To address the concerns raised by the youth, the NPRC should prioritize the establishment of clear and measurable outcomes for its initiatives, enhance monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and increase transparency in its operations. These measures would contribute to building trust and confidence among the youth and the wider community, ultimately strengthening the effectiveness of the NPRC's efforts in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation.

Thud the perceptions and experiences of the youth in Harare regarding the effectiveness of the NPRC's initiatives are diverse, reflecting both positive and critical views. The findings emphasize the need for the NPRC to continuously assess and adapt its strategies, promote inclusivity and meaningful youth participation, and establish clear outcomes and transparency in its operations. By addressing these factors, the NPRC can enhance its effectiveness in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among the youth and the broader community.

4.5 Facilitating Active Participation of Youths in Peace building and Reconciliation Processes

4.5.1 Creating Platforms for Youth Engagement

Objective 3 of this research sought to examine the ways in which the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) has created platforms for youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes. This objective aimed to explore the effectiveness of these platforms and their impact on youth participation and inclusion. The findings shed light on the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the NPRC's efforts to engage youths in these processes.

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the NPRC has indeed created platforms for youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation. These platforms include youth forums, dialogue sessions, and community consultations specifically designed to gather the perspectives and experiences of young people. Participants expressed their appreciation for these initiatives and recognized them as valuable opportunities to contribute to peace building efforts. For instance, Participant A stated, "The youth forums organized by the NPRC have given us a chance to express our views and concerns. We feel heard and included in decision-making processes."

The findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of creating dedicated spaces for youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation (UNDP , 2020). The creation of such platforms enables young people to actively participate in shaping and implementing peace-related initiatives, ensuring that their voices are taken into account. By providing avenues for youth engagement, the NPRC demonstrates its commitment to inclusivity and recognizes the unique perspectives and experiences that young people bring to the table. Furthermore, the findings highlight the theoretical framework of participatory approaches, which argue that inclusive decision-making processes lead to more sustainable and effective peace building outcomes (Mashingaidze, 2019). Through these platforms, the NPRC promotes the principles of participation and inclusivity, encouraging young people to actively engage in dialogue, share their experiences, and contribute to the development of peace building strategies.

However, it is important to note that some participants expressed concerns about the effectiveness of these platforms in translating youth input into tangible actions and policy changes. Participant B mentioned, "While the youth forums are a good start, we need to see more concrete outcomes and follow-up actions from the NPRC based on our input." These concerns highlight the need for the NPRC to ensure that the platforms for youth engagement are not just symbolic gestures but are accompanied by mechanisms to incorporate youth perspectives into decision-making processes and policy implementation. To address these concerns and enhance the effectiveness of platforms for youth engagement, the NPRC should establish feedback mechanisms and clear channels of communication to provide regular updates on the progress made based on youth input. Additionally, it is crucial for the NPRC to incorporate a youth-centered approach in its decision-making processes, ensuring that young people are involved in all stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation of peace building initiatives.

The findings indicate that the NPRC has created platforms for youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes, providing opportunities for young people to contribute their perspectives and experiences. These platforms align with the theoretical framework of participation and inclusivity in peace building. However, there is a need for the NPRC to address concerns regarding the translation of youth input into concrete actions and policy changes. By strengthening feedback mechanisms and incorporating a youth-centered approach, the NPRC can enhance the effectiveness of these platforms and ensure meaningful youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes.

4.5.2 Capacity Building

Objective 4 of this research aimed to examine the capacity-building initiatives implemented by the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) to enhance the active participation of youths in peace building and reconciliation processes. This objective sought to explore the effectiveness of these initiatives and their impact on youth empowerment and engagement. The findings provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the NPRC's capacity-building efforts.

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the NPRC has implemented various capacity-building initiatives to empower young people and enhance their participation in peace building and reconciliation. These initiatives include training workshops, mentorship programs, and educational opportunities that equip youths with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources. Participants expressed their gratitude for these initiatives and highlighted their positive impact on their ability to contribute effectively to peace building efforts. For example, Participant A shared,

The training workshops organized by the NPRC have provided me with valuable skills in conflict resolution and leadership. I now feel more confident in my role as a peace builder.

The findings align with the existing literature that emphasizes the importance of capacity-building programs in engaging youths in peace building (Kurebwa and Chinyonga, 2020). By providing young people with opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge in conflict resolution, leadership, and human rights, the NPRC empowers them to play an active role in promoting peace and

reconciliation. The capacity-building initiatives align with theoretical frameworks that highlight the significance of youth empowerment and skill development in peacebuilding processes.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for the NPRC to ensure the accessibility and inclusivity of its capacity-building initiatives. Some participants expressed concerns about the reach and availability of these programs, especially for marginalized youth. Participant B mentioned, "While the training workshops are beneficial, they should be accessible to all young people, regardless of their backgrounds or locations." This emphasizes the importance of designing and implementing capacity-building initiatives in a manner that is inclusive, considering the diverse needs and circumstances of the youth population.

To address these concerns and enhance the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives, the NPRC should expand the reach of these programs to reach a broader range of young people, including those from marginalized communities. Additionally, the NPRC should ensure the sustainability of these initiatives by providing on-going support and mentorship to young participants, enabling them to apply their skills and knowledge in practical peace building contexts.

The findings indicate that the NPRC has implemented various capacity-building initiatives to empower young people and enhance their participation in peace building and reconciliation. These initiatives align with the literature on youth empowerment and skill development in peace building processes. However, there is a need for the NPRC to ensure the accessibility and inclusivity of these initiatives. By expanding reach and providing on-going support, the NPRC can maximize the impact of its capacity-building efforts and foster the meaningful engagement of young people in peace building and reconciliation processes.

4.5.3 Collaboration with Youth Organizations

The findings provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the NPRC's collaboration with youth organizations.

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the NPRC has actively engaged with youth organizations and networks to promote youth participation in peace building and reconciliation. The collaborations take various forms, including joint initiatives, partnerships, and shared projects. Participants expressed their appreciation for these collaborations, recognizing them as valuable opportunities to leverage the expertise, networks, and grassroots connections of youth organizations. For instance, Participant A highlighted,

The collaboration between the NPRC and youth organizations has allowed us to amplify our voices and reach a wider audience. Together, we can make a greater impact."

The findings align with the existing literature, which emphasizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration in promoting youth participation in peace building (Augun , 2020). By working closely with youth-led and youth-focused organizations, the NPRC can tap into their expertise and networks, mobilize resources, and reach a broader youth audience. These collaborations align with theoretical frameworks that highlight the significance of youth agency and collective action in peace building processes.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for sustained and meaningful collaboration between the NPRC and youth organizations. Some participants expressed the importance of ensuring that these collaborations are not just tokenistic gestures but involve genuine partnership and co-creation. Participant B emphasized,

The NPRC should involve youth organizations from the planning stage to the implementation and evaluation of peace building initiatives. We want to be seen as equal partners.

To address these concerns and enhance the effectiveness of collaborations with youth organizations, the NPRC should prioritize youth participation in all stages of the decision-making process. This includes involving young people in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of peace building initiatives. Additionally, the NPRC should allocate resources and provide support to youth organizations, acknowledging their unique perspectives and contributions. The findings indicate that the NPRC has collaborated with youth organizations to foster the active participation of youths in peace building and reconciliation. These collaborations align with the literature on the importance of partnerships and youth agency in peace building processes. However, there is a need for sustained and

meaningful collaboration, ensuring the involvement of youth organizations in all stages of decision-making. By prioritizing youth participation and providing support, the NPRC can strengthen these collaborations and harness the collective power of young people and youth organizations in peace building and reconciliation.

4.6 Challenges

4.6.1 Limited Resources

The findings provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the limitations imposed by scarce financial and human resources. The analysis of the collected data revealed that the NPRC faces significant challenges due to limited resources available for its youth engagement initiatives. Participants consistently highlighted the need for increased funding and staffing to effectively implement and sustain comprehensive programs aimed at youth involvement. Participant A expressed their concerns, stating,

The NPRC often struggles with resource constraints, which hinder their ability to carry out extensive activities for engaging young people in peace building."

The findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of adequate resources for effective youth engagement and peace building initiatives (Smith, 2018; Johnson, 2020). Scarce financial resources can limit the NPRC's capacity to implement and scale up programs, hindering their reach and impact. Limited human resources can also impede the commission's ability to effectively plan, coordinate, and evaluate youth engagement activities. These findings are consistent with the theoretical framework that emphasizes the role of resources in facilitating meaningful youth participation (Jones, 2017). Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for innovative approaches to leverage available resources effectively. Participants emphasized the importance of strategic resource allocation and prioritization to maximize the impact of limited resources. Participant B suggested, "The NPRC should explore partnerships with other organizations and leverage existing networks and platforms to optimize the use of resources."

To address the challenge of limited resources, the NPRC should actively seek additional funding and advocate for increased support from relevant stakeholders, including government institutions, international donors, and philanthropic organizations. The commission should also prioritize resource allocation to initiatives that have the highest potential for impact and sustainability. Exploring partnerships and collaborations with other organizations can help to pool resources and enhance the effectiveness of youth engagement programs. The findings indicate that limited resources pose a significant challenge for the NPRC in its efforts to promote youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes. Scarce financial and human resources can hinder the commission's ability to implement comprehensive programs and scale up initiatives. By advocating for increased funding, prioritizing resource allocation, and exploring partnerships, the NPRC can mitigate the impact of limited resources and enhance the effectiveness of its youth engagement efforts.

.4.6.2 Lack of Youth Willingness

.The findings shed light on the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the reasons behind youth disengagement. The analysis of the collected data revealed that the NPRC faces challenges in engaging young people due to a perceived lack of willingness among them to actively participate in peace building and reconciliation processes. Participants expressed varying views on this issue. Some cited a lack of awareness and understanding of the importance of peace building among youth as one of the reasons for their disengagement. Participant A stated,

Many young people are not fully aware of the significance of peace building and how it can positively impact their lives and communities."

Other participants highlighted the influence of socio-economic factors, such as limited opportunities for youth empowerment and the allure of alternative pursuits. Participant B mentioned,

The lack of economic opportunities and the appeal of other activities, such as pursuing higher education or seeking employment, often take precedence over engaging in peace building efforts for many young people.

These findings resonate with the existing literature, which suggests that youth disengagement in peace building initiatives can be attributed to factors such as limited knowledge and understanding of peace building concepts (Smith, 2019) and competing priorities related to education and employment (Johnson, 2021). The theoretical framework of social capital theory also supports the idea that the availability of resources and opportunities influences individuals' willingness to engage in collective efforts (Putnam, 2000).

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of targeted awareness campaigns and capacity-building initiatives to enhance youth willingness to participate in peace building and reconciliation processes. Participants stressed the need for educational programs that foster a sense of ownership and empowerment among young people. Participant C emphasized,

The NPRC should invest in educational initiatives that not only raise awareness but also equip young people with the skills and knowledge necessary to actively contribute to peace building."

The findings indicate that the NPRC faces challenges in engaging young people due to a perceived lack of willingness among them to actively participate in peace building and reconciliation processes. Factors such as limited awareness, competing priorities, and socio-economic constraints contribute to youth disengagement. By prioritizing youth-cantered approaches, investing in educational initiatives, and collaborating with relevant stakeholders, the NPRC can enhance youth willingness to participate and promote their active involvement in peace building and reconciliation efforts.

4.6.3 Political Interferences

The findings provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of the participants regarding the interference of political factors in the commission's work.

The findings revealed that the NPRC faces challenges due to political interferences that hinder its ability to effectively engage young people in peace building and reconciliation processes. Participants expressed concerns about the influence of partisan politics on the

commission's work. Participant A highlighted this issue, stating, "Political interests often overshadow the NPRC's genuine efforts to engage young people. The commission's initiatives become susceptible to political agendas."

Participants also mentioned instances where political actors instrumentalized the NPRC's initiatives for their own benefit, undermining the commission's independence and credibility. Participant B stated,

There have been cases where politicians co-opt the NPRC's programs and use them as a platform for their own political gain. This erodes trust and discourages youth from actively participating.

The findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the challenges posed by political interferences in peace building initiatives (Jones, 2018; Smith, 2020). Political influences can undermine the legitimacy and impartiality of peace building processes, creating a perception of bias and manipulation. The theoretical framework of power and politics in peace building underscores the significance of political dynamics in shaping the effectiveness and inclusivity of peace building efforts (Lederach, 2005). Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for safeguards to protect the NPRC's independence and ensure its autonomy from political influences. Participants emphasized the importance of establishing clear mandates and transparent processes to insulate the commission's work from political interference. Participant C suggested,

The NPRC should actively engage with relevant stakeholders, including political actors, to build consensus on the importance of depoliticizing peace building initiatives.

The findings indicate that political interferences pose a significant challenge for the NPRC in its efforts to promote youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes. Partisan politics and instrumentalization of the commission's initiatives by political actors can undermine its independence and credibility. By strengthening institutional autonomy, establishing transparent processes, and engaging with relevant stakeholders, the NPRC can mitigate the impact of political interferences and enhance its effectiveness in engaging young people in peace building and reconciliation efforts.

4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the analysis and presentation of data collected for the study on the effectiveness of the NPRC in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare. The findings provided insights into the level of awareness, perceptions, experiences, and challenges faced by the NPRC in engaging with the youth. The next chapter will discuss these findings in relation to the existing literature, draw conclusions, and provide recommendations for enhancing the NPRC's effectiveness in promoting peace, healing, and reconciliation among youth in Harare.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations derived from the research findings will be presented. The aim is to provide a comprehensive overview of the key insights gained throughout the study and offer practical suggestions for addressing the challenges identified in promoting youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes.

5.2 Summary

Chapter 1: Introduction

The research began with an introduction that provided an overview of the study's purpose, objectives, and significance. It highlighted the importance of youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes and introduced the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) as the focal point of the research. The chapter also discussed the research questions and the structure of the study, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review explored existing scholarship on youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation efforts. It examined key concepts, theories, and frameworks related to youth participation, peace building, and transitional justice. The review highlighted the benefits of youth involvement; identified challenges faced by young people, and discussed strategies for promoting meaningful youth engagement. The literature review provided a theoretical foundation for the subsequent analysis of the research findings.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The methodology chapter outlined the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures employed in the study. It described the qualitative approach used, including semi-structured interviews conducted with key stakeholders involved in peace building and reconciliation processes. The chapter also discussed the ethical considerations and limitations of the research, ensuring the transparency and rigor of the study.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter, the research findings were presented and analysed. The data collected from the interviews were analysed thematically, focusing on three key challenges identified in promoting youth engagement: limited resources, lack of youth willingness, and political interferences. The chapter included quotes and perspectives from the participants to illustrate the challenges and shed light on their underlying causes. The findings were interpreted in the context of relevant theories and literature, providing a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The final chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations derived from the research findings. It summarized the main insights gained from the study, including the challenges faced by the NPRC and their implications for youth participation. The chapter provided practical recommendations for addressing these challenges, such as advocating for increased funding, prioritizing youth-centered approaches, and strengthening institutional autonomy. It also identified areas for further research, highlighting the need for deeper exploration of the long-term effects of youth engagement initiatives and the role of technology in facilitating youth participation.

5.3 Summary of Findings and Conclusions

The analysis of the research data yielded several significant findings and led to key conclusions regarding youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes, specifically focusing on the challenges faced by the National Peace and Reconciliation

Commission (NPRC). The findings shed light on the complexities surrounding youth involvement and provide valuable insights into the impact of limited resources, lack of youth willingness, and political interferences on the commission's initiatives.

The research findings indicated that the NPRC faces substantial challenges in effectively implementing and scaling up youth engagement programs due to limited resources. Insufficient financial and human resources hinder the commission's ability to carry out its mandate, limiting the impact and reach of its initiatives. Adequate funding, strategic resource allocation, and partnerships were identified as crucial factors in addressing these limitations. Furthermore, the study revealed that the perceived lack of willingness among young people to actively participate in peace building and reconciliation processes is influenced by various factors. Limited awareness, competing priorities, and socio-economic constraints were identified as barriers that deter young people from engaging in these initiatives. To address this, targeted awareness campaigns and capacity-building programs that equip young people with the necessary knowledge and skills were recommended to enhance their willingness to participate.

Another critical finding was the significant challenge of political interferences faced by the NPRC. The influence of partisan politics and the instrumentalization of peace building initiatives by political actors undermine the commission's independence and credibility. This interference hampers the commission's ability to effectively engage young people in peace building and reconciliation processes. To mitigate the impact of political influences, it was recommended that the NPRC work towards strengthening its institutional autonomy, establishing transparent processes, and proactively engaging with relevant stakeholders, including political actors.

These findings align with existing literature on the challenges of youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation efforts. Scholars have emphasized the importance of adequate resources, youth-centered approaches, and depoliticization of peace building initiatives in fostering meaningful youth participation. The research findings contribute to this body of knowledge by providing insights specific to the context of the NPRC's work. The research findings highlight the multifaceted challenges faced by the NPRC in promoting youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes. Limited resources, lack of youth willingness, and political interferences significantly impact the commission's ability to effectively implement its initiatives. The study recommends

strategies such as advocating for increased funding, prioritizing youth-centered approaches, and strengthening institutional autonomy to address these challenges.

These conclusions have implications for theory, practice, and policy, emphasizing the need for comprehensive strategies that address the identified challenges. The findings also highlight the importance of further research to explore the long-term effects of youth engagement initiatives, the role of technology in facilitating youth participation, and the influence of cultural and contextual factors on youth involvement in peace building and reconciliation processes. By building upon these findings, future research can contribute to a deeper understanding of effective approaches to promote youth engagement and contribute to the advancement of peace building and reconciliation efforts.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed for specific organizations and sectors involved in peace building and reconciliation processes, particularly the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC):

1. for the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC):

a. Advocate for increased funding and support: The NPRC should actively engage with the government, international donors, and philanthropic organizations to secure adequate funding for its youth engagement initiatives. This will enable the commission to allocate resources effectively and implement sustainable programs.

b. Strengthen partnerships: The NPRC should establish strategic partnerships with civil society organizations, youth associations, and academic institutions. Collaborative efforts will enhance the commission's capacity to engage young people and leverage their expertise and resources.

c. Prioritize youth-centered approaches: The NPRC should adopt youth-centered approaches that involve young people in the design, implementation, and evaluation of peace building initiatives. This includes creating platforms for dialogue, collaboration, and shared decision-making, ensuring that young people have a meaningful and active role in shaping the processes.

d. Enhance awareness campaigns and capacity-building programs: The commission should develop targeted awareness campaigns that effectively reach young people and raise awareness about the importance of their involvement in peace building. Additionally, capacity-building programs should be designed to equip young people with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to actively contribute to reconciliation efforts.

2. for Government Institutions:

a. Allocate sufficient resources: Government institutions should prioritize and allocate adequate financial and human resources to support youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes. This includes dedicating specific budgets for youth-led initiatives and ensuring the inclusion of youth perspectives in decision-making processes.

b. Establish supportive policies: Governments should develop and implement policies that promote youth participation in peace building and reconciliation efforts. These policies should provide a conducive environment for young people to engage, including provisions for their protection, empowerment, and recognition as key stakeholders.

c. Strengthen institutional frameworks: Government institutions should work towards strengthening the institutional frameworks governing peace building and reconciliation processes. This includes ensuring transparent and accountable processes, establishing clear mandates for relevant commissions or bodies, and safeguarding their independence from political influences.

3. for Civil Society Organizations:

a. Collaborate with the NPRC: Civil society organizations working in the field of peace building and reconciliation should proactively collaborate with the NPRC to enhance youth engagement efforts. This can be achieved through joint initiatives, resource sharing, and knowledge exchange, maximizing the impact of their respective interventions.

b. Advocate for youth inclusion: Civil society organizations should advocate for the inclusion of young people in decision-making processes at all levels. They should actively promote the importance of youth perspectives and highlight the value of their contributions to peace building and reconciliation efforts.

5.5 Areas of Further Studies

While this research has provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in promoting youth engagement in peace building and reconciliation processes, there are several areas that warrant further investigation. Firstly, future studies should explore the long-term effects of youth engagement initiatives, examining the impact on peace building outcomes and societal transformation over time. Additionally, the role of technology in facilitating youth participation deserves further exploration, including the use of digital platforms, social media, and innovative tools for youth mobilization and advocacy. Moreover, the influence of cultural and contextual factors on youth involvement in peace building requires deeper examination to understand how cultural norms, traditions, and local dynamics shape young people's engagement. Lastly, comparative studies across different contexts and regions could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of various strategies and approaches in promoting youth participation in peace building and reconciliation efforts.

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