

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

**The promotion of children's rights within the institutional care system a case study
of St Mary children's village in
Chitungwiza Zimbabwe.**

BY

(B200826B)

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
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BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK HONOURS DEGREE**

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ABSTRACT

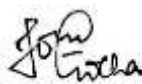
The purpose of the study is to analyze the promotion of Children's rights within institutional care systems in an attempt to improve the existing systems for the benefit of these children with St Mary Children's Home in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe being the case of the study. The study's objectives were to identify the children's rights that are being promoted, to examine how the care givers are promoting the rights and to proffer ways of improving children's rights within the institutional care system. The research utilized the qualitative approach as such key informant interviews, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to gather data. The findings of the research showed that there is the promotion of children's rights at St Mary Children's Home and they do their level best to ensure that every children has gone to school, received adequate attention in terms of their health care services and also that food and shelter is properly provided. The study discovered that the institution prioritizes that each child receives the knowledge they need about the rights that they deserve. Furthermore, the study found that the institution experiences lack of funding which hinders the effective practice of promoting children's rights within the institution. Lack of funding results in most children being sent back home from school due to fees arrears and it also results in the shortages of medicines for the wellbeing of the children. As such the study recommends that the government and other organizations intervene to support and strengthen the projects being done at St Mary Children's Home by providing funding and land for them to use in order to alleviate this situation. There should be rights education for both the children and the staff to ensure that everyone knows about the children's hence ensuring an easy way for promoting these rights within St Mary Children's Home.

APPROVAL FORM

I certify that I supervised **Ashley B Taruwinga** carrying out this research titled: **The Promotion Of Children's Rights Within The Institutional Care System. A Case Study Of St Mary Children's Village In Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe.** in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Science, Honours Degree in Social Work and recommend that it proceeds for examination.

Supervisor Name: J.C. Magocha

Signature:



Date: 14 June 2024

Chairperson of the Department Board of Examiners

The departmental board of examiners is satisfied that this dissertation report meets the examination requirements and therefore I recommend to Bindura University of Science

Education to accept this research project by **Ashley B Taruwinga** titled: **The Promotion Of Children's Rights Within The Institutional Care System. A Case Study Of St Mary**

Children's Village In Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe in partial fulfilment of the Bachelor of Science, Honours Degree in Social work.

Chairperson

Name..... Signature..... Date.....

DECLARATION

I, Ashley B Taruwinga, declare this study titled:

The Promotion of Children's Rights within Institutional Care Systems. A case study of St Mary Children's Home, Chitungwiza is my original work which has never been submitted to any university for similar purposes.

.....ATaruwinga.....

Ashley Taruwinga (B200826B)

Date: 16 September 2024

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my family, friends and fellow academia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Almighty God to whom all the glory is due, I would like to thank Him for granting me an opportunity to advance my education. I would like to appreciate my supervisor for the perfect supervision and guidance throughout the whole research process. Without his matchless support, academic guidance and constructive criticism, this project would not have been a success.

My sincere gratitude goes to the amazing people at St Mary Children's Home for their participation and valuable contributions during the course of the research process.

Special thanks goes to the members of my family especially my parents for the love and support

To the Ministry Of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

Finally, I would like to sincerely express that I am thrilled to be part of BUSE.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BUSE.....Bindura University of Science Education

COVID-19.....Coronavirus disease 2019

PVOs.....Private Voluntary Organizations

DSD.....Department of Social Development

UNCRC.....United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

HIV and AIDS.....Human immunodeficiency virus and Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

UNICEF.....United Nations Children’s Fund

FGD.....Focus Group Discussions

UN.....United Nations

UDHR.....Universal Declaration of Human Rights

OVC.....Orphans and Vulnerable Children

HRBA.....Human Rights Based Approach

ACRWC.....African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

MPALSW Ministry of Public Affairs, Labor and Social Welfare

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The background information for the research project on the local, regional, and international institutional care system's support of the rights of children is given in this section. In Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, at the St. Mary Children's Home, the study was conducted. Thus, this chapter will set the stage for the investigation by outlining the study's background, purpose, rationale, goals, main research questions, scope, structure, and, lastly, a few key terms that are essential to the investigation. As a result, these research-related issues will be thoroughly examined in the sections that follow.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The term institutional care system refers to a range of establishments, including foster homes, residential care facilities, and orphanages that offer short- or long-term care to children unable to live with their biological families as according to Biffi (2020). Children are defined as individuals who are less than eighteen (18) years old under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which was signed in 1990 (Skinner, 2004). The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) defines orphaned and vulnerable children as those who are more likely to be unable to have their rights to survival, health, to develop, and to be protected due to a variety of circumstances, such as the death of one or both parents, poverty, disability, discrimination, or living in a region affected by conflict (UNICEF, 2011).

Globally, orphan-hood and the exponential increase in the number of children at risk are widespread issues (Muzingili, 2018). Many homeless children from Europe were adopted by

American families after World War I, according to Rathburn et al. (1958). According to UNICEF (2023), the global residential care rate is estimated to be 105 per 100,000 children. There are several reasons why children are homeless nowadays, including the COVID-19 pandemic, divorce, unplanned pregnancies, AIDS and HIV epidemics, natural calamities, and child abuse (Chineka, 2021). Consequently, society has made it its mission to establish places where these children can live as they need a place to dwell in order to survive. According to Erens' (2022) theory, a study by the American Bar Association in 2022 revealed that 60% of parents had not made any plans for their children's care in the event of their death, suggesting that most parents do not plan for their children's needs before passing away, leaving them practically penniless and in need of housing. A project done by National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in 2021 revealed that only 25% of parents with young children had a will in place. According to Higginbotham (2018), the subject of residential care has returned to prominence in recent years, and during the 1990s, national governments have shown a discernible increase in interest in the background of child welfare services in numerous western countries (De Wilde, 2020).

According to United Nations data (2000), more than 13 million children living in sub-Saharan Africa had been orphaned by the AIDS crisis, having lost both of their parents (Sharma, 2002). Additionally, the US Census Bureau calculated that the number of children who had had one parent or both to have died with AIDS in Africa would rise from 15 million in July 2000 to 28 million by 2010 (Sharma, 2002). These orphaned children are often cared for by surviving family members, leading to an increased demand for children's homes.

UNICEF projected that by 2010, AIDS would have orphaned 15.7 million children in SubSaharan Africa (UNICEF, 2004). Older orphans were more than younger ones, and the children may suffer even before the death of their parents, potentially missing or not going school to so that they would

take care of their parents who are not feeling well. This burden falls disproportionately on female children. Research indicates that these orphaned children not only lack access to education but also often reside in households where food was scarce or little and are likely susceptible to experiencing anxiety and depression (Richter, 2004).

Additionally, the children who had lost one or both parents may be forced to relocate, going far away from their familiar neighborhood and social networks in the process (UNICEF, 2008). Without questioning, the issues facing AIDS-affected children and their orphans require attention and answers. However, since donor and relief campaigns have frequently been focused on supporting children orphaned by AIDS alone, this focus on AIDS-related orphans has obscured most orphans to suffer for other reasons (Foster, 2005). An extended family structure, a coping mechanism that has taken care of orphaned and vulnerable children, the elderly, and impoverished members of the family for generations, cares for the great majority of children with no parents in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, due to poverty, these family members are gradually leaving the institutional care system's entire workload. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 had a major effect on children's homes since many of them had to close owing to lockdown procedures, and the ones that were left open had to put in place stringent safety measures to safeguard children as well as employees (Chineka, 2021).

Like other nations impacted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Zimbabwe saw a large number of its economically active population pass away, leaving children in dire need of care and assistance (Powell et al., 2004). In order to address the plight of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare (1999) developed a six-tier system of childcare, welfare, and development. This system includes the following: adoption, community care, formal foster care, adoption through adoption, biological or nuclear family, extended family,

community care, and residential childcare facilities. There are observable gaps in the six-tier system's policy implementation in spite of this policy goal. The dwindling influence of the deeply ingrained African value system known as Ubuntu, which holds that "it takes a village to raise a child", is responsible for some of these disparities (Mugumbate and Chereni, 2019). Orphanage centers were built by well-wishers and charitable groups in response to the increasing crisis of OVCs to cushion the challenge. Powell et al. (2004) report that as of the end of 2004, there were 56 residential schools in Zimbabwe that could accommodate up to 3279 children. Comparably, 3800 children were in care in 2004, 67 of them were in unregistered orphanages. Compared to the 1994 research, which also included the construction of twenty-four additional facilities, it proved that there was a rise of numbers with more than 100% of children in institutional care (Powell et al., 2004).

There are over 100 children's homes in Zimbabwe that care for over 10,000 children, as stated by the Zimbabwe National Council for the Welfare of Children (ZNCWC) (Zinyemba, 2021). The report also found that the biggest number of children's homes are failing to provide for the needs of children entrusted to their care, which is against the law. Chineka (2021) reports that the COVID-19 epidemic pushed to a notable increase in numbers of young people residing in children's homes in Zimbabwe. Mupfumira & Chindedza (2013) claim that as a result of westernization and the AIDS pandemic, marriage customs have altered. In the past, a widow or widower whose husband may have died from the illness would not marry a "sarapavana" or "chimutsamapfiwa". This has improved Zimbabwe's history of children's homes as a result. These diverse groups of eight weeks to eighteen-year-old children and adolescents are receiving residential care.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Children are the most vulnerable members of society, they should receive extra consideration, affection, care, and security Muzingili & Muchinako (2018). Children living in institutional care systems should receive adequate food, clothing, education, shelter, healthcare facilities among other things. Nevertheless, there are situations in which children end up in institutional care systems because they require other forms of care. It is possible for children's rights to be violated in these institutional care systems. According to Chineka (2021), abuse and neglect of children occur in these facilities even in the face of international agreements and national legislation protecting their rights. Inadequate access to healthcare, education, and recreational opportunities are a few examples of these transgressions, along with physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. The violation of these rights hinders the emotional, social and physical growth of the child hence the promotion of children's rights within the institutional care systems needs to be focused on.

1.3 AIM

To examine the promotion of children's rights within the institutional care systems.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the children's rights that are being promoted at St Mary Children's Village.
2. To examine how the care givers are promoting children's rights at St Mary Children's Village.
3. To proffer ways of improving children's rights at St Mary Children's Village.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the specific rights that are promoted in an institutional care system?
2. How are children's rights promoted in an institutional care system?
3. How are the care givers promoting children's rights in institutional care?

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

As long as she has access to the participants, the researcher will be able to do her investigation that is the premise behind this study. Further, the researcher anticipates, or is working under, that there won't be any issues with communication barriers to the study and that the rights of the children living in the institutional care system will be protected and promoted. The researcher is certain that the tools to be used to gather data will produce unquestionable information or results of what is happening on the ground, and they anticipate the research participants contributing to the fullest extent possible.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research project is important to children residing under institutional care systems as they are often vulnerable and at a greater risk of experiencing various forms of abuse, neglect and violations of their rights. By protecting and promoting their rights, it is ensured that they receive the care, support and opportunities they deserve. This study enhances the development and improvement of policies within the institutional care system. It can enable policymakers and stakeholders to identify gaps, address deficiencies and implement effective strategies to safeguard children's rights, ultimately leading to better outcomes for institutionalized children. This study is also important as it helps one to know if the institutionalized children can voice their opinions and if they take part in making decisions that directly impact their lives. It is also important to research if they have a successful transitioning of young adults from institutional care to having an independent life

1.8 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.8.1 CHILD

The UNCRC, which was signed in 1990, stated that a child is a human being under 18 years old. Zimbabwe's Children's Act of 1979, which was updated in 1996, further reinforces this definition. Specifically, Section 2 of the Act states that a child is "a person under the age of eighteen years" (Children's Act, Chapter 5:06). So both the international UNCRC agreement and the national Zimbabwean law align in establishing 18 as the age threshold for a child.

1.8.2 CHILDREN'S HOME

A children's home, sometimes referred to as an orphanage or children's residential facility, is a place that looks after and supports children who cannot live with their biological parents. These establishments strive to give children a loving, secure environment that promotes their social, emotional, and physical health. A children's home is described as "a residential institution that provides care and protection for children who are separated from their families and cannot be placed in a family-based care arrangement" by the UNICEF (UNICEF, 2019).

1.8.3 ORPHAN

Defining an orphan can vary depending on the context, whether it is for epidemiological, legal, or social/cultural purposes (Skinner, 2004). Article 20 of the UNCRC, states that an orphan is a child who has one or both parent's dead and the sole surviving parent cannot provide care for the child.

1.8.4 VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Children in precarious situations are those who's their ability to be safe, their well-being, and development are jeopardized due to many reasons (Subbarao, 2004). Factors that contribute to a child's vulnerability include a lack of proper care, inadequate housing, nutritious food, education, and psychological support. Specific vulnerabilities faced by children are highly dependent on the particular context and environment. This research defines vulnerable children as the children who,

for whatever reason, cannot or do not wish to live with their parents or extended family, effectively having “lost” their caregivers. The children usually get neglected, abandoned, abused, or the parents have inadequate resources to properly look after them. Children who have lost their primary caregivers are likely to experience low quality health services, physical abuse, exploitation, and discrimination (UNICEF, 2004). The research used “orphans and vulnerable children” in one class, as it is evident that is very difficult to differentiate between children who have actually lost both parents and those who, while not technically orphans, are still considered vulnerable.

1.8.5 CHILDREN’S RIGHTS

The basic and essential freedoms and entitlements that are uniquely tailored to and intended for the welfare and protection of young people below the age of majority (Harwin, 2009). According to the Reading and Bissell (2009), these rights are focused on the principle that children are individuals with their own distinct needs, interests, and vulnerabilities, and they should be treated with dignity and respect.

1.9 THE STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1 had the introduction of the research, providing the background information and the objectives. It stated the aims, problem statement, research objectives, justification, and research questions.

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature related to the topic, examining it from global, regional, and local perspectives. It also presented the theoretical framework underlying the research project.

Chapter 3 explained the research methodology, including the methods, design, research instruments, and the tools which were used to analyze the data collected for the project.

Chapter 4 presented the data, analyzed it, and discussed the study’s findings.

Chapter 5 summarized the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The section summary outlined the background, objectives, problem statement, limitations, and justification for the research. It laid the foundation for the rest of the study. The upcoming chapter will review the literature relevant to the subject of this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The literature review will be covered in this chapter. It suggests a place where you can identify the conjectures and earlier studies that influenced the choice of research topic and methodology. A literature review serves several purposes, such as providing readers with information about other studies that are closely related to the one under consideration, providing a framework for enhancing the importance of the project, connecting the research to the real world, and bridging gaps and expanding on previous research. The theoretical framework, relevant studies, and research gaps relative to the advancement of the rights of children inside the institutional care system will be the main topics of this review of the literature.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section will elaborate the theoretical framework which was used by the researcher to carry out her study.

2.2 THE HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) is a conceptual foundation for advancing human progress that is rooted in established international standards of human rights and centered on the promotion and safeguarding of these fundamental liberties and entitlements (Launiala, 2015).

The core basis of the HRBA development model is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948) and other human rights instruments. The Human Rights-Based Approach is characterized by five key tenets: participation, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment, and legality (Launiala, 2015).

2.2.1 Participation

The humans rights based approach emphasizes that people should be allowed to take part or to make decisions that will be affecting their lives as stated by the Murray (2019). This study, while using the Rights based approach, analyzed how the St Mary children's village promotes children's rights by allowing children within their institution to take part in decisions that affect their rights.

2.2.2 Accountability

According to Murray & McGregor (2019), people's rights should be monitored seeing how they are being affected and also to find ways of making corrections when things go wrong. The UNCRC, which emphasizes the inherent rights and dignity of all children, regardless of the backgrounds they come from or circumstances, serves as the foundation for the rights-based approach to institutionalization. Children's best interests are given priority in this method, which guarantees the respect and preservation of their rights to safety, health, education, and social development.

Children's Rights International (2019) states that for the guarantee to protect the child's best interests, the institutionalization of children is a problem that calls for a rights-based response. Administrative barriers, however, should be addressed since they have the ability to reduce the effectiveness of this intervention.

2.2.3 Non-Discrimination and Equality

The HRBA emphasize that discrimination must be stopped, prevented and eliminated as stated by Makanje & Shaba (2004). They further on argue that people who experience the most barriers to realizing their rights should be prioritized. Therefore, in most areas children are the most vulnerable members of society, they should receive extra consideration, affection, care, and security Muzingili & Muchinako (2018), hence the study to promote the rights of children within St Mary Children's village. According to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, article 3, children should not be discriminated regardless of gender, sex, race, language among others.

2.2.4 Empowerment

According to Nampewo & Wolff (2022), the HRBA pursues a dual aim to equip individuals (as the rightful holders of these entitlements) with the means to assert and realize their rights, and to bolster the capacity of those responsible entities (duty-bearers) who are obligated to respect, safeguard, and fulfill the rights of the most impoverished, disadvantaged, marginalized, and vulnerable populations. The Scottish government (2004) states that each young person should be aware of and empowered to exercise their fundamental freedoms, as well as be supported in contributing to the formulation of policies and procedures that impact their wellbeing. The notion of a 'rights-bearer' denotes an individual or collective group that possesses certain legitimate claims and entitlements with respect to specific rights (Shaba 2004). In cases where parents are no longer present,

institutions like St Mary's Children's Village then take on the role of ensuring the child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

2.2.5 Legality

Approaches to protecting children's rights should be based in the legal rights sector, in domestic and international laws (Children's Rights International, 2019). According to Nampewo & Wolff (2022), the government is the entity that bears the ultimate responsibility and obligation to uphold and fulfill these rights, as it is the entity that ratifies international conventions. The state's responsibility arises from this ratification process of international agreements. Additionally, they propose that if a nation has not formally adopted or acceded to a specific international convention, then that state does not hold the same legally enforceable duty as those countries that have signed the conventions, and individuals cannot invoke those unratified conventions to make claims against the non-party state. While private companies, parents, donors, international and local organizations may also play a role, it is the duty of institutions like St Mary's Children's

Village to consider the legal framework of the Zimbabwean Constitution, Children's Act, Orphan Care policies, and the UNCRC when taking legal actions that benefit the child.

2.3 LEGAL FRAMEWORKS RELATED TO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

This section elaborates the suggestions of the Children's Act (Chapter 5:06), The UNCRC and the Africa Charter on the Rights of the Child. These legal frameworks provides suggestions on how best we can deal with issues of mental health problems among youths.

2.3.1 THE UNITED NATIONS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Children's rights are a set of inherent rights recognized by international law. These rights are enshrined in the UNCRC, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989.

The CRC is the most comprehensive and widely ratified international human rights treaty, having been signed worldwide by every country.

As outlined by Paul Hunt (2019), the CRC establishes a set of fundamental rights that all children should receive equally, regardless of factors like race, sex, cultural, national or social origin, disability, or other status. These rights include the right to life, survival and development, education, play, protection from violence, abuse and neglect and the right to take part to make decisions that affect them. According to Hunt (2019), the UNCRC is the most signed human rights treaty globally, and has been instrumental in promoting the rights of children worldwide.

In addition to establishing specific children's rights, the UNCRC also has several guiding principles for the implementation of these rights, as outlined by Paul Hunt (2019). These include the principle of non-discrimination, acting in the best interests of the child, and the child's right to participate. According to Mark (2010), the CRC has been useful in promoting the protection of children's rights globally. This has led to development of national laws and policies aimed at safeguarding the rights of children, and has also been used to hold governments accountable for violations of these rights.

2.3.2 THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD

The principles outlined in the ACRWC provide a framework for ensuring that children in institutional care are protected, supported, and able to access their fundamental rights.

Specifically, Article 3 of the African Charter states that each child is supposed to enjoy the rights and freedoms stated in the Charter, regardless of the child's or their parents'/guardians' race, ethnicity, color, sex, cultural, political opinion, national or social origin, fortune or birth status. This principle emphasizes the importance of ensuring that all children in institutional care are treated equally and without discrimination. Any individual or institution making decisions that affect a

child must prioritize the child's wellbeing and what is in their best interests as the most important factor to consider. This principle underscores the need to prioritize the well-being and development of children in institutional care when making decisions that affect them.

In addition, the ACRWC also recognizes other essential rights for children in institutional care.

Article 11 of the Charter acknowledges the right of every child to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence. This provision emphasizes the critical importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of children in institutional settings, and protecting them from harm.

Furthermore, Article 11(3) of the Charter states that each child has the fundamental right to be educated. This right encompasses access to quality education for all children, including those in institutional care. The Charter underscores the essential role of education in the development and well-being of every child, as it shapes their future opportunities and outcomes. By guaranteeing the educational right for all children, regardless of their circumstances, the Charter aims to promote equality, inclusion, and the overall welfare of children. It is essential for children in institutional care, who may face additional challenges and barriers to accessing education. The Charter's provisions underscore the need to provide the necessary support and resources to ensure that every child, including those in institutional settings, can receive a quality education and reach their full potential.

For children in institutional care, access to healthcare is particularly crucial as they may have unique needs and challenges that require specialized support. By affirming this right for all children, including those in institutional care, the Charter, article 14, highlights the importance of providing comprehensive healthcare services to ensure that every child can thrive and reach their full potential. Ensuring access to healthcare services for children in institutional care is essential to safeguarding their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. It is a fundamental aspect of

promoting the rights and dignity of these children and ensuring that they get the care and support needed for them to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. By recognizing and upholding the right to health for all children, the Charter underscores the importance of prioritizing the well-being of children in institutional care and providing the necessary resources and support to achieve optimal health outcomes.

The significance of family and parental care for children's development is acknowledged in Article 5 of the Charter. It highlights how important it is to encourage family reunification whenever it is feasible and to offer substitute care options that put the needs of the child first. The charter highlights the need of preserving and enhancing family relationships whenever feasible, acknowledging that children flourish best in a loving and caring family context. The section also emphasizes how important it is for families to be reunited, especially when children have been split up from their families due to many reasons, including migration, conflict, or other events. Recognizing the critical role that family plays in the life of each child, it emphasizes the necessity of giving priority to efforts to reconnect children with their families whenever it is for the child's best.

Adding on, Article 5 recognizes that alternative care choices must be offered when family reunification is neither practical nor best for the child. In order to guarantee that the child receives required assistance, care, and protection in a secure and caring environment, these alternative care alternatives should put the child's wellbeing and interests first. The section of the Charter further emphasizes vital roles that families play in children's lives and the significance of making sure they are cared for in environments that promote their overall development and wellbeing. It also highlights the need of family and parental care, as well as the necessity of supporting family reunification and providing alternative care options that prioritize the child's

interests.

The CRC in article 7 recognizes that children should express their views freely in everything that will be affecting them. Children in institutional care should be given opportunities to contribute in making decisions that affect their lives.

2.3.3 THE CHILDREN'S ACT (CHAPTER 5:06) OF ZIMBABWE

The Children's Act (Chapter 5:06) is a comprehensive law that protects the rights and welfare of children which was enacted in 1972 and has been amended several times since then as according to Mpokoti (2002). The act is divided into five parts which are the preliminary, protection, care and removal of children and young persons to other miscellaneous. The Act is an important piece of legislation and it protects the rights and welfare of young persons in Zimbabwe. It is an extensive Law that caters for many issues, and it has been instrumental in improving the lives of many children in Zimbabwe.

Authors, legal experts, and international bodies played an important role in shaping the understanding and implementation of the Act in Zimbabwe. Their work has helped to ensure that the rights of children are protected and that the Act serves as a powerful tool for promoting child welfare in the country. Dambudzo (2012) explores the role of families in protecting children from harm. She argues that families play a crucial role in child protection but that they also face challenges in fulfilling this role hence the importance of the institutional care.

Mpokoti (2002) examines the Act's provisions on the care and protection of children in need, highlighting the responsibilities of parents, guardians, and the government in safeguarding children from neglect, abuse, and exploitation. He further analyzes the legal framework for adoption and fostering in Zimbabwe, emphasizing principles of consent, benefits for the child, and post-adoption

monitoring. Mpokoti (2002) also examines the Act's guarantees of accessibility to education and healthcare services for children, emphasizing the state's obligations to provide these essential services.

Zimbabwe's adherence to the UNCRC is thoroughly evaluated by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2010) in its concluding Observations on the Initial Reports of States Parties, Zimbabwe. The latter focuses on Zimbabwe's implementation of the Act's provisions, identifying areas that need altering and offering suggestions for improvement. Zimbabwe's efforts to improve its child protection system have been greatly aided by the Committee's observations.

However, there are still many challenges when protecting the rights of children. Millions of children around the world are still denied their basic rights, and they are often the first victims of violence and abuse. The institutional care systems therefore contribute in fulfilling the protection of children's rights. Both international and local community will continue to work and make sure that all children enjoy their rights. This will require a joint effort from the governments, civil society, private sector and the researchers as well.

2.4 QUALITY OF CARE AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE

The necessity of creating loving, encouraging, and child-centered environments that support children's overall development and well-being is emphasized by the global perspective on the care's quality and well-being of children in institutional care (Save the Children, 2019). Rights of children are rooted solidly and practically in the fundamental human requirements for survival, growth, and development rather than being abstract and idealistic ambitions (Reading et al., 2009). They go on to say that the quality of care and wellbeing of children living in institutions should address many issues, including children's physical and mental health by making sure they have

access to enough food, medical attention, and mental health services, young people in institutions should also be given opportunities to further their education and develop their skills and talents, children in institutions should be encouraged to engage in positive social interactions with other children, and they should be helped to stay connected to their families and communities.

According to UNICEF (2009), a child-centered approach should direct the care and wellbeing of children in institutional settings. As stated by Nyadombo (2021), this methodology acknowledges children as legitimate owners of rights and prioritizes their welfare in the course of decision-making. It entails granting children autonomy, making sure their opinions are heard, and actively including them in decisions that impact their life (Nyadombo, 2021). It should be acknowledged if these childcare facilities are prioritizing and accounting for the child-centered approach. As a result, the researcher must highlight the fundamentals of St Mary Children's Home's child-centered approach.

The global view emphasizes the need for individualized care plans that take into account the unique needs, abilities, and preferences of each child (Daly, 2020). According to Freeman (2009), there should be adequate staff training given to staff members in order for them to show support and necessary skills to provide appropriate care, respond to the individual needs of children and to create positive relationships based on trust and respect. Daly (2020) further insists that institutions should strive to provide personalized attention, recognizing that children have diverse backgrounds, experiences, and developmental stages. This includes promoting cultural sensitivity, respecting children's identities, and facilitating their participation in decision-making processes hence ensuring physical, emotional and environmental safety of the child.

Chineka (2021) states that Sub-Saharan Africa's collective issues, cultural circumstances, and national initiatives are reflected in the regional perspective on the standard of care and overall well-

being of children in institutional care. According to Powell & Chinake (2018), the value of family-based child care is being increasingly acknowledged in Sub-Saharan Africa. They further state that transitions from institutional care to family-based care options like adoption, foster care, and family care are being attempted. This change is motivated by the idea that children do best when they are cared for by families because they can get the specialized attention, emotional support, and sense of belonging they need.

Sub-Saharan African nations understand the need to enhance the standard of care provided in institutions for minors who cannot be accommodated in family environments, even as they prioritize the promotion of family-based care as stated by Sloth-Nielsen (2016). He further says the institutions will be working to improve the standards and procedures, and this includes offering enough food, medical attention, education, and psychosocial assistance. This entails educating employees, setting rules, and making sure children are protected both physically and psychologically.

Community involvement in the care and welfare of institutionalized children is valued in Sub-Saharan Africa. Communities are viewed as important collaborators in promoting and overseeing the standard of care provided by institutions. A concerted effort is made to include volunteers, local groups, and leaders of the community in order to offer children in institutional care recreational activities, support, and mentoring. According to Muzingili (2018), community involvement acknowledges the value of cultural sensitivity in delivering high-quality care for children in institutions while also incorporating the community. He goes on to say that efforts are taken to make sure that care procedures are in line with customs, values, and cultural standards. Respecting children's cultural identities, languages, and religious convictions is part of this, as is giving them the chance to express their cultures and take part in local events. Therefore, the

researcher will be researching if it is being applied in all care institutions such as the St Mary children's home.

Locally, Zinyemba (2021) asserts that Zimbabweans' perspectives on the standard of care and wellbeing of children in institutional care place a strong emphasis on the value of creating a loving and supportive surrounding for children's overall growth and well-being. The nation values family-based child care and makes it a priority to keep families together and reunite whenever it can (Zinyemba, 2021). Although it's acknowledged that there might be instances in which institutional care is required, attempts are made to provide alternatives like foster and kinship care. The main goal is to give children a stable, loving, and family-like atmosphere that caters to their unique needs.

In Zimbabwe, institutional care is approached with a focus on what the child needs. This entails actively making children a part in decisions that impact their lives, putting the child's benefits first, and respecting the child's autonomy, rights, and opinions (Chineka, 2021). He further says that establishing an atmosphere that promotes children's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being is advocated for institutions. According to Browne (2017), the provision of needed care and support for children in institutional settings, with an emphasis on the child. This includes making sure that everyone accesses wholesome food, water, medical care, and education. In order for children to flourish and develop, efforts are made to provide a safe and secure atmosphere. In addition, counseling services, recreational activities, and the development of healthy relationships all contribute to the promotion of emotional well-being.

There are still issues even though every nation in the world, including Zimbabwe, is trying to improve the standard of care and general wellbeing of children in institutional care. These include

the requirement for ongoing political cooperation and commitment, as well as capability and resource limitations. A lot of work is being done to address these issues and support alternatives to foster care that put the rights of children first.

2.5 PROTECTION OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS WITHIN INSTITUTIONS

There are specific measures and mechanisms in order to protect the rights of children living in institutional settings and these include legal and policy framework. It focuses on assessing the effectiveness of laws and policies related to the promotion of children’s rights in institutional care.

The importance of protecting children's rights is that it is a globally recognized perspective inside institutions (Logins, 2016). Save the Children (2016) says that people should develop a growing understanding that family-based care solutions should take precedence over institutional care, which can only be used as a last option. The United Nations establishes international norms for defense of children's rights in institutions through the UNCRC and other directives. According to Save the Children (2019), the rights to life and development, as well as to be shielded from abuse, are all highlighted by the UNCRC. Additional recommendations, including UNICEF's Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, offer thorough frameworks for guaranteeing children's rights in many care environments, including institutions.

As outlined by Bissel et al. (2009), the UNCRC has several specific articles that protect children. This includes the right to life (Article 6), the right to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation on physical, sexual, or mental grounds (Article 19), and the right to be shielded from drug exposure (Article 33), sexual exploitation (Article 34), abduction (Article 35), exploitation (Article 36), torture or unlawful detention (Article 37), and armed conflict (Article 15).

To effectively prevent child abuse and neglect in institutional settings, Reading et al. (2009) emphasize the need to establish strong systems for oversight and monitoring of these institutions. Additionally, they state that complaint mechanisms should be made readily available to children in institutional care, allowing them to voice concerns and seek assistance when needed. These measures are crucial for upholding the protection-based rights granted to children under the UNCRC.

The unique difficulties, cultural settings, and initiatives made by the nations in the region are reflected in the regional perspective to defend children's rights in Sub-Saharan Africa's institutions (Nnama-Okechukwu, 2019). He explains how particular difficulties arise when defending children's rights in institutions in countries like Nigeria. These include extreme poverty, scarce resources, shoddy political systems, violent conflicts, and population displacement. These difficulties may increase children's susceptibility and create barriers to efficient child protection in institutional care environments.

Nnama-Okechukwu (2019) gives an insight of how many Sub-Saharan countries recognize the crucialty of family care for children. Efforts are being made to strengthen and support kinship care, foster care, and adoption systems as alternatives to institutional care. The focus is on preserving family ties and preventing unnecessary separation of children from their families.

Sub-Saharan African nations are implementing institutional reforms to strengthen the safeguarding of children's rights (Save the children, 2019). This entails updating legislation and regulations, improving employee education, and setting high standards for institutional care. Freeman (2009) states that the objectives are to guarantee employee responsibility, encourage child-friendly surroundings, and stop abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Additionally, the region has been highlighting how crucial it is to encourage children's active engagement in decisionmaking

processes. Minors are being given the chance to voice their opinions, take part in the planning of their care, and be monitored and evaluated (Freeman, 2009). This methodology acknowledges children as legitimate owners of rights and endeavors to enable them to claim their rights when living in institutional care environments.

Locally, Zimbabwe's legal system, cultural background, and initiatives to address the unique difficulties experienced by children in institutional care influence the country's perspective on the promotion of children's rights within institutions (Muzingili, 2018). A legislative framework was established in Zimbabwe to safeguard children's rights in institutions. Muzingili (2018) states that the main piece of legislation outlining children's rights and obligations in Zimbabwe is the Act of 2020. It includes the UNCRC's tenets and places special emphasis on the child's benefits, safety from abuse, access to education, and ability to make decisions that will impact their life.

Kaseke (1991) notes that Zimbabwe acknowledges the significance of educating people about children's rights and protection. A lot of work goes into educating the public, experts, and caregivers about the rights of children living in institutions and this work is usually done by the Social workers (Kaseke, 1991). This covers educational initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and the distribution of data regarding child protection regulations and policies. He further on explains that to improve the promotion of children's rights within institutions and to fortify child protection systems, Zimbabwe collaborates with regional, non-governmental, and international organizations. To promote the practice of child protection policies and practices, this collaboration entails resource mobilization, capacity-building activities, and technical assistance.

Zimbabwe encourages family preservation and reunification wherever feasible because it understands the value of providing family-based care for children (Nyadombo and Zinyemba,

2021). Both authors continue to argue that as alternatives to institutional care, the nation has given priority to community-based care models like foster care and kinship care. According to Chikoko (2023), in an attempt to avoid needless separation, families are supported in caring for their children and Zimbabwean institutions also highlights the part that communities play in defending children's rights in institutional settings. Support and supervision are given by community entities like local groups and traditional authorities. In order to guarantee that children in institutions are safeguarded and cared for in accordance with cultural norms and values, these frameworks are essential (Chikoko, 2023).

While Zimbabwe has made strides in safeguarding children's rights within institutions, there are still issues to be addressed, such as a lack of funding, a capacity problem, and the requirement for continual monitoring and assessment. To guarantee the successful promotion of children's rights in Zimbabwean institutional care, ongoing efforts and partnerships are required.

2.6 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN

Children should be included as active participants and stakeholders in decisions that impact their life, according to the global perspective on stakeholder engagement and participation (UNCRC).

When it comes to decisions affecting their care and welfare, children ought to be included. According to UNCRC, it is crucial to make sure that children in institutions have meaningful opportunity to voice their thoughts on issues that impact their life. Kolhi (2012), mentions that the cooperation between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, and families is encouraged in order to ensure efficient and well-coordinated care for children residing in institutions. Kolhi (2012) further postulates that it affirms that children are entitled to express their thoughts, have their viewpoints considered, and take part in the procedures that lead to decisions that affect them. According to Berrick (2012), the environments that support

the meaningful participation of all children, including those from underrepresented groups, those with impairments, and children from a variety of cultural backgrounds, are worked to establish. This entails utilizing child-friendly communication techniques, giving out ageappropriate information, and taking down obstacles to involvement (Skiveness, 2012). The global view also recognizes the need to empower children and build their capacities to effectively participate in decision-making processes. This involves providing children with information, knowledge, and skills to understand their rights, express their views, and engage in constructive dialogue. Capacity-building initiatives aim to enhance children's confidence, critical thinking, and advocacy skills.

Children's participation and stakeholder engagement necessitate cooperation between a range of actors, including families, communities, governments, and civil society groups as according to Kolhi (2012). According to Rathburn et al (1958) the significance of multi-stakeholder collaboration in fostering an environment that supports children's engagement is clearly emphasized. UNICEF (2011), clearly stated that working together makes it possible to guarantee that children's opinions are considered when developing policies, programs, and services, and that their rights are upheld. Rathburn et al (1958) asserts that the international perspective on stakeholder engagement and children's participation is based on international frameworks such as the UNCRC. They further explain that governments are urged to create and put into effect legislative and policy frameworks that distinctly acknowledge and uphold the rights of children to contribute in society. These frameworks delineate the obligations of stakeholders and offer direction on guaranteeing substantial and comprehensive involvement.

Sharma (2002) states that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the regional perspective on stakeholder engagement and participation of children acknowledges the significance of cultural context.

According to Chineka (2021), involving communities, families, and traditional leaders in decision-making processes that impact children is an endeavor. This strategy is there so that children's views are considered in the context of their cultural and social lives and that community members actively support and encourage children's involvement, especially in institutional settings.

The regional perspective places a strong emphasis on designing child-friendly environments and utilizing child-friendly techniques to encourage children's involvement (Hulshof, 2019). This involves creating inclusive, safe spaces where children feel free to voice their opinions. Using art, storytelling, play, and other interactive techniques that are appropriate for children's age, language, and cultural background are examples of child-friendly practices. According to Hulshof (2019), Sub-Saharan Africa acknowledges and endorses child-led networks and organizations as crucial venues for children's engagement. These groups offer venues for children to gather together, exchange stories, and stand up for their rights as a group. They are essential in raising the voices of children, promoting legislative changes, and keeping responsible parties responsible.

According to Boshoff (2020), countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have taken a holistic, HRBA to facilitating children's participation. This approach recognizes that children have the fundamental right to be heard, express their views, and take part in making decisions that impact their lives. Boshoff explains that this rights-based approach to children's participation extends beyond specific issues or sectors, encompassing all aspects of children's lives, including education, health, protection, and social welfare. This comprehensive approach is used in countries like South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, and many others across the region. Kaseke (1991) further notes that the implementation of this rights-based approach to children's participation involves monitoring and

evaluation processes. Monitoring helps assess the quality, inclusivity, and overall impact of children's participation, while evaluation contributes to ongoing learning and improvement of related practices. Kaseke (1991), emphasizes that independent monitoring mechanisms and participatory evaluation methods involving children themselves are encouraged to ensure accountability and meaningful participation.

Sub-Saharan Africa approaches children's participation from a rights-based, holistic perspective. The United Nations Children's Fund (2018), acknowledges that children have the right to speak up, share what will be in their minds, and get involved in decisions that have an impact on them. Berrick (2012) further postulates that this method covers all facts of children's lives, including social welfare, and protection, going beyond particular problems and industries. In order to gauge progress, monitoring and assessment are also carried out while the rights-based approach is being implemented. Berrick (2012) further says monitoring procedures aid in evaluating the effectiveness, impact, and inclusivity of children's participation, and evaluation aids in practice improvement and learning. It is recommended to use child-involved participatory evaluation techniques and independent monitoring systems.

Zimbabwe is aware of how critical it is to give children more authority and develop their ability to engage in society. Muzingili (2021) states that children are given the knowledge, abilities, and opportunities they need to comprehend their rights, voice their opinions with confidence, and participate in insightful conversation. He further mentions that children, parents, caregivers, teachers, and other pertinent stakeholders are the focus of capacity-building initiatives, which aim to improve their comprehension of children's participation and their roles in facilitating it.

Zimbabwe highlights the necessity of accountability and monitoring systems to guarantee the successful execution of programs aimed at involving children (Powell & Chinake, 2018). This

entails keeping an eye on the quality of the child's involvement, assessing the effectiveness of participatory methods, and holding adults in positions of authority responsible for protecting the children's right to participate, they state. Powell and Chinake (2018) state that it is recommended that the government create and execute policies that clearly identify and safeguard the rights of minors to participate in society. Laws are implemented to make sure that global norms are followed and to set up procedures for children to get involved at different levels.

Zimbabweans are dedicated to upholding children's rights, giving them agency, and enabling them to actively contribute in decisions that impact their lives. This is reflected in their perspective on stakeholder engagement and child participation. There is a continuous endeavor to enhance and broaden programs that enable children to participate in Zimbabwean society in a meaningful and inclusive manner.

2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The above chapter covered the key objectives, as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that underpin the current research. The literature review also incorporated relevant prior research by other scholars on the topic under investigation, along with related studies and the knowledge gap that the present study aims to address. The following chapter will focus on the research methodology used in this project.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter reviewed the relevant literature, covering the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, related studies, and the identified research gap. This current chapter concentrates on the methodology used in the study. Research methodology denotes the systematic and scientific process of problem-solving (Kothari, 2004). The methodology chapter details the research design, approach, sampling methods, data collection tools, analysis procedures, ethical considerations, delimitations and limitations of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

The qualitative approach is a methodological approach that aims to explore and have an in-depth understanding of the subjective experiences, perspectives, and meanings held by individuals or groups (Creswell, 2021). This approach focuses on gathering rich, detailed data to provide insights into complex social phenomena. In the context of promoting children's rights within institutional care settings, qualitative research plays a critical role. It allows researchers to uncover the lived experiences of children in these environments, as well as the various factors that influence the promotion or violation of their rights. The qualitative approach enables researchers to capture the nuances and complexities inherent in these experiences, which is essential for developing a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

An overall plan or strategy that a researcher employs to tackle their research questions or objectives is a research design. In this case, the study utilized a case study design, which involves an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group, and organization (Creswell, 2021). With the aim of promoting children's rights in institutional care settings, the research design played a crucial role in making sure that the study effectively investigated and addressed the relevant issues at hand. As Creswell (2021) explains, the research design serves as a detailed plan for conducting a study in a

way that has full control over factors that could compromise the validity of the findings. By employing a case study design, the researcher was able to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics and experiences within the institutional care system, which is essential for developing effective strategies to uphold children's rights in these settings.

3.3 STUDY SETTING

The researcher's study area, the St Mary children's home in Chitungwiza is where all the necessary information that the researcher was looking for was fully presented. The target population, at ST MARY children's home, is where the researcher got in-depth information on the promotion of the rights of children within the institutional care system.

3.4 TARGET POPULATION

A population is defined by Leedy and Omrod (2005) as a group that the research aims to learn more about and make inferences about. According to Beins and McCarthy (2012), the study population refers to the full set of potential elements, subjects, or observations that are relevant to the phenomenon of interest being investigated by the researcher. The target population of this study are the people who lived at St Mary village in Chitungwiza for more than 3 years. The key informants, people with more knowledge about the topic were also targeted and these include the owner of St Mary Children's home and social workers.

3.5 SAMPLING

Sampling, as defined by Myers (2010), is the process of selecting individuals or items from a bigger population in order to conduct research or draw conclusions about the population as a whole. The sample size refers to the portion or sub-part of the total population that is studied (Thakur, 2009).

3.5.1 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Purposive sampling, as described by Yin (1984), is a non-random sampling technique where the researcher intentionally selects the research participants. Saunders et al. (2009) further explain that purposive sampling allows the researcher to choose cases that will best address the research questions and achieve the desired objectives. In this study, the researcher selected participants who possessed characteristics that were aligned with the focus of the research. The researcher chose participants who have spent more than three (3) years in the St Mary children's village. The caregivers are only 5 at St Mary Children's home hence the researcher interviewed all of them. These participants were able to provide concrete information on the promotion of children's rights within St Mary children's village.

3.6 SAMPLE SIZE

Theoretical sampling was used, whereby participants were chosen according on their ability to provide rich and diverse information which is in relation to the study objectives helped the researcher to have a reliable sample size (Robinson, 2014). In this context, the researcher used 20 children participants who have lived in St Mary children's home for more than three (3) years.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Creswell (2014) and Kothari (2018) state that data collection methods are methods used to gather data for analysis. This study used different data collection methods which include in-depth interviews as shown in Appendix C and D for both key informants, the people who have more knowledge about the study and the children, focus group discussions with the questions indicated in Appendix E whereby the researcher and the participants sat and discussed as a group and the observation method whereby the researcher would take note of the proceedings at the children's village. These methods were very important as they assisted the researcher to have in depth information on the promotion of children's right within the institutional care system. The use of

interviews is also another technique mentioned by Yin (2014), which can be used to collect in depth information from the Orphans and vulnerable children at St Mary children's home and it can be done in-person or online. The tools to be used include open-ended, closed-ended and probing questions. The researcher, in this study, used observations as one of her data collection techniques. According to Creswell (2014), observation involve collecting data by observing behaviors or the environment. The researcher will observe the children at St Mary children's home seeing how they behave and live within their environment hence collecting information.

3.8 LIMITATIONS

3.8.1 Fearing to share their personal information

Due to unknown reasons, the participants might have failed to tell the researcher all the needed information. The researcher needed to be as friendly as possible in order for the participants to feel free to share information about their lives.

3.8.2 Time

While conducting the study, the researcher is also completing other demanding academic requirements, like pursuing additional modules. Consequently, the research for this study was conducted during the weekends, during lunch breaks, and at night.

3.9 DELIMITATIONS

The study is focused in Chitungwiza at St Mary children's village, which is the best area for the researcher to gather data from. This is because the St Mary children's village is one of the most accessible institution in Chitungwiza where children are institutionalized.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When conducting research, Creswell and Myers (2018) state that it is important to consider ethical principles and guidelines to make sure that the project is done in a responsible and respectful manner. During this study, the researcher will consider all the environmental and social factors around the participants to make sure that their rights are not violated. The researcher will follow the following ethical considerations throughout her research study in order for the research to be respectfully done.

3.10.1 Informed Consent

Obtaining informed consent is crucial when involving children in research. It is important to ensure that the children and their guardians at the institution fully understand the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of the study. The researcher will inform the participants that she will be conducting a study for academic purposes to avoid violation of their rights by invading into their private lives without telling them. It is important to use the appropriate language and methods to explain the study to children, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of what their participation entails.

3.10.2 Privacy and Confidentiality

Respecting the privacy and confidentiality of the participants is essential in doing a research study. The researcher should know that when working with children, it becomes even more critical to protect their identities and personal information. The researcher will take measures to ensure that any data collected is kept confidential and stored securely. The researcher will inform the participants that identifying information will be anonymized to prevent any potential harm or

stigmatization to the participants. However, the participants will be informed that the collected information will be used for academic purposes.

3.10.3 Minimizing Harm

When conducting this study, the researcher must minimize any potential harm or distress that may arise from participating in the study. This includes that the researcher will carefully consider the nature of questions to ask, avoiding sensitive topics, and ensuring that appropriate support systems are in place for participants who may require assistance during or after the study. It is important to prioritize the well-being of the children involved and ensure that their physical, emotional, and psychological welfare is not compromised.

3.10.4 Voluntary Participation

The researcher will inform the participants that participation in research should always be voluntary, especially when involving vulnerable populations such as children. The researcher should not give pressure to the participants for them to participate in the study. The researcher will provide clear information about the study and will allow participants to freely decide whether they want to take part or withdraw at any time without facing any negative consequences.

3.10.5 The Ministry of Public Affairs, Labor and Social Welfare's (MPALSW) Approval

Prior to conducting any research involving human participants, including children, it is imperative for the researcher to obtain approval from an independent ethics committee or MPALSW. In the context of this study, the MPALSW reviewed the research proposal to ensure that it aligns with the established ethical standards and guidelines. The researcher must adhere to the recommendations

and requirements set forth by the MPALSW throughout the duration of the study. This step of securing MPALSW approval is a crucial safeguard to protect the rights and well-being of the research participants, particularly in studies involving vulnerable populations such as children in institutional care. The MPALSW reviewed and oversighted help to mitigate potential risks and ensured that the research is designed and carried out in an ethical manner, prioritizing the interests and safety of the participants.

3.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In summary, the organized and methodical approach used to carry out this study was thoroughly described in this chapter. From the target population, sample strategies, methods of collecting, methods of analysis, and research design. It also examined crucial ethical issues that should be looked at when conducting the study. These all made it feasible to collect the pertinent data and figure out how to handle it. As such, this data will be presented and interpreted in accordance with the goals in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed about the methodology which was used to collect the data to be presented in this chapter. The chapter's aim is to chronicle the findings and to analyze data on the research study pertaining to the identification and upholding of children's rights within St Mary Children's home. Conclusions are drawn from the findings based on Five (5) care givers and fifteen (15) children who participated in the research.

4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS WITHIN ST MARY CHILDREN’S HOME

According to the Constitution of Zimbabwe, a child is defined as any boy or girl under the age of 18 years old (Section 81(1)). The constitution further provides for the freedom and protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation. The institution, St. Mary Children’s Home, recognizes that children’s rights are a subset of human rights. Muswere (2023) explains that in international human rights law, children’s rights have been broadly categorized into three main groups which include provision or socio-economic rights, protection rights and participation or empowerment rights. A key informant noted that:

“Children’s rights are a subcategory of human rights that focus specifically on the rights of minors to special protection and care.”

Participant 1 noted that:

“Kodzera dzevana mitemo inochengetedza vana vadiki avo vari pasi pemakore 18.”

(Children’s rights are laws that protect children or minors, those below the age of 18)

From the above findings, the researcher found out that most children at St Mary children’s home knew about children’s rights and even their caregivers were well versed about what children rights are. The researcher observed that most responses indicated that the staff members adopted the human rights based approach and they usually teach these children about their rights. Therefore, this shows St Mary children’s home treats the institutionalized children as children who are in a real family setup teaching them what biological parents teach their children so that they will not face discrimination or violation if they do not know their rights. This indicates that The Children’s Act (Chapter 5:06) and the ACRWC provisions that state that it is also a children’s right for them to know their rights are being practiced and followed. Therefore, the results depict that the

identification and practice of children's rights at St Mary children's home, Chitungwiza is being done hence the promotion of children's rights within the institution.

4.1.1 THE PROTECTION RIGHTS

The protections are set out in section 19 of the Constitution, and state "that the State must adopt policies and measures to ensure that in matters relating to children, the best interests of the children concerned are paramount" (Child Rights Barometer, 2018). Children have the right to be kept away from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. Participant 3 who is 15years old mentioned that:

"Gogo, always warns us to close the gate every time we get in and out of the house. Gogo is always telling us to dress properly so that we do not attract unpleasant comments from people as we will be walking up and down the road"

Participant 2 went on adding that:

"Gogo does not allow the infants to play outside the gate especially after an incident when one child fell off someone else's bicycle and he was injured. Instead of being helped to get up, other children started laughing and teasing him which destroyed his selfesteem"

Chitungwiza is a town with a significant population, and it has been reported to have high rates of child theft, sexual assaults, and other forms of child mistreatment. Due to these troubling circumstances, the researcher identified child protection as a crucial factor that should be prioritized in institutions like St. Mary Children's Home. Based on the research findings, it is evident that the institution and its staff members are making considerable efforts to keep the children in their care protected from abuse, neglect and violence. These findings demonstrate that in the case of St. Mary Children's Home in Chitungwiza, the institution adheres to the principles outlined in the ACRWC, which recognizes the right of institutionalized children to receive appropriate protection.

Specifically, Article 11 of the Charter explicitly states that every child should be protected from abuse, neglect, and violence. This provision highlights that it is important to ensure that children in institutional care settings are kept safe and free from harm, which is clearly a priority for the St. Mary's Children's Home as evidenced by the researcher's observations.

4.1.2 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS

The researcher observed that St Mary Children's home promotes the socioeconomic rights of the children that are living in the institution. The children go to school from as early as four (4) years old until they reach tertiary education, healthcare services are provided, they visit different places for recreational and leisure purposes and their meals constitute a balanced diet hence access to good nutrition.

4.1.2.1 Right to education

During an in-depth interview, the owner of the children's home who is also the manager mentioned that most children attend school at Isheanesu Secondary school which is a school that has affordable school fees and that is also willing to have their fees paid using different payment plans or installments. She further mentioned that she makes sure that every child goes to school despite the funding challenges that they sometimes face. She stated that;

“Due to lack of funding, we find it hard to send our children to any school that does not understand the financial challenges that we face and this makes us take our children to Isheanesu secondary school. Some of our children who go other schools may end up being send back home in the middle of the term due to school fees arrears.”

During FGDs, one participant mentioned that:

“Zvinhu zvinorwadza pamoyo kuti unomuka makuseni wogadzirira kuenda kuchikoro kwekuti uchingopinda muclass unobvawadzingirwa kuti schools fees yese haisati yapera kubhadharwa. Kakawanda ndichiedza kudzokera kuclass asi ndakapedzisira ndavekuzivikanwa kuti ndizvo zvandiri kuita. Parizvino ndakungoita shungu dzekuti Gogo vatiwanirewo fees kune vanombotipawo kuitira kuti tisadzingwe chikoro.” (It is heartbreaking to wake up in the morning and prepare to go to school where upon arrival you will be immediately sent back home due to fees arrears. In many occasions I would try to go back to class but later the teachers got the trick and stopped me. Currently I am just hoping that Gogo will find the school fees for us especially from those donors that usually donate for us.)

From the above statements, it shows that the children’s home is facing some financial constraints in meeting the school fees demands.

In 2001, the Zimbabwean government introduced the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) as an intervention to mitigate the negative consequences faced by orphaned children. The program aims to prevent vulnerable children from dropping out of school by providing support for their school fees and examination costs. However, according to Dr. Douglas Mombeshora in the Financial Statement Review (2011), the efforts by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare to enhance child welfare and improve health service delivery have been adversely affected by the Treasury’s unsustainable budgetary allocation.

“As a Ministry, we are trying to juggle a very limited budgetary allocation yet the areas that we are supposed to cover are vast”

This demonstrates that the government's support in providing to the children's homes through the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare financially is not enough. For St Mary children's home it is difficult for them to meet every demand of each child in time even if they want to. These financial shortages would at times lead to delayed fees payments or shortage of medical bills hence leading to children being sent back home because of fees arrears or for them to get home remedies as a way of treatment respectively. According to Kabonga (2023), in order for orphanages to effectively provide education and medical treatment for the children, they must have access to products and services that can increase or generate income for the institution's funding to be adequate or enough.

Based on the conducted interviews, the researcher observed that the administration at the institution is facing challenges in securing school placements for the children due to their lack of birth certificates. The staff members reported that the DSD is taking an unreasonably long time to process both the birth certificates and the national identity cards for the children in their care. This administrative delay poses a significant obstacle for the staff, as they need to find appropriate school placements for the children in a timely manner. The prolonged process of obtaining the necessary identification documents ultimately deprives the children of their fundamental right to education, which is a crucial component of their overall development and well-being. The institution's struggle to enroll the children in school due to the delays in obtaining birth certificates and identity cards highlights the systemic barriers that can hinder the realization of children's rights, even within a well-intentioned institutional care setting. This is exemplified by 5 children who experienced delays in getting placed in primary schools. One of the 5 participants stated that:

“Zvinhu zvakaoma kunonoka kuenda kuchikoro nenyaya yekuti unenge usina birth certificate. Ini ndakazopinda grade 1 zvikoro zvavhurwa izvo zvakaita kuti vainge vatangirana kudzidza andiseke nekuti ndaiinzi ndainge ndakapusa nenyaya yekusaziva

zvaiitika zvainge zvadzidziswa vamwe. Pandakaona zvichiitika kune vamwe vangu vandinogara navo pano ndakazongovashingisa kuti chakakosha ndechekuti nzvimbo yechikoro unenge wave nayo. (It is painful to accept that we get delayed to get admission in schools because of not having birth certificates. When I was young, I got admission into a school for grade 1 whereby other children had already started learning, where other children would laugh at me telling me I was dumb just because I came in late. When I saw the same happening to my fellow brothers and sisters that I live with here, I just assured them that the most important thing is that they had been accepted to learn at those schools.)

From the above statement, the researcher discovered that the children are being affected with the issue that they do not get their birth certificates taken earlier or that they do not know their backgrounds, where they come from or who their parents were. This showed to have been causing low self-esteem to the children since it is a violation of their rights. Expanding on the previous point, Wilson (2004) notes that institutions face challenges when trying to register the children for them to get admitted in schools. This is because some of the children do not have birth certificates or any other form of official documents that can be used to identify them, and there is a lack of information available regarding their family backgrounds and personal histories. St Mary children's village works tirelessly to make sure that all children have their birth certificates in order for them to know their identity since it is their right.

4.1.2.2 Right to healthcare

St Mary children's home staff members ensure that children receive necessary medical attention and have access to healthcare facilities. The orphanage has first aid kits that they use when the children get injured or when they are having minor illnesses. A seven (7) year old girl noted that:

'Gogo vangu havambondisiye ndichirara nechironda chinenge chisina kuiswa mushonga. Gogo vanondipa mushonga wekuzora newekunwa ndikasapora vanoenda neni kuchipatara' (Gogo always makes sure that I never go to sleep without putting treatment on any of my wounds. She makes sure that I put medicine on the wound and will take some tablets and if the pain continues, she will then take me to the clinic or hospital.)

In an in-depth interview a key informant participant noted that:

“It is the duty of the institution to ensure that all children are not suffering from any diseases or that they do not have any serious wounds. It is the institution's policy that every staff has a first aid kit in case any child gets harmed doing whatever it is that they will be doing especially when playing. We also allow our children to get vaccines that will be given at school after the announcements of possible illnesses that will be spreading. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic, we encouraged every child to get vaccinated without forcing them as a healthcare measure of trying to protect them hence we had zero cases of Covid-19 infections. The policy of having the first aid kit for every staff member has helped us, as an institution to prevent serious cases of illnesses within the institution hence effectively helping us to promote the children's rights to healthcare services. However, the lack of funding is a total setback for the whole institution as we sometimes fail to buy some medicines that are essential for the children's wellbeing.”

The responses indicate that the St Mary children's home adheres to Section 76 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees that every citizen and permanent resident, including those living

with chronic illnesses, should access basic healthcare and reproductive health services. Additionally, no one should be denied emergency medical treatment in any healthcare facility. Furthermore, Article 14 of the ACRWC affirms that every child should enjoy the best attainable state of physical, mental, and spiritual health. Therefore, this means that children in institutional care should have access to healthcare services and facilities to support their overall well-being that is the right of each child to attain the best enjoyable state of physical, mental, and spiritual health. However, due to financial constraints it is difficult for the institution to maintain the quality of healthcare services that they offer to their children.

4.1.2.3 Right to recreation and leisure

Participants mentioned that the institution, St Mary children's home, has a well-organized year calendar that allows the children to go out for different recreational trips and provision of other activities for their leisure time.

From the in-depth interview with the institutional social worker, she stated:

“As an institution, we found it necessary for child's development to take them to different recreational areas and also doing parties for their benefit as it is also their right to experience leisure time. We usually organize Christmas lunches and dinners which are always held as a way to celebrate the holiday. The last Christmas lunch was held on the 25th of December 2023 when all the children were available making it a moment that was refreshing and memorable to the children.”

A seventeen year old participant expressed his gratitude and said;

“We thank the manager for loving us and making sure that we are exposed to many happy moments that at some point we forget that we are at an orphanage but rather in the best

family setup whereby we are from different parents but same home. What the manager organizes for us is more than what other people living with their biological experience and I am very much grateful for that. I started living at St Mary children's home when I was 10years old and not a single year has passed without Gogo organizing a Christmas party for us or a vocational trip every year."

From the above statements, it is evident that the children at St Mary children's home are happy to the way they are treated. It shows that their right to be exposed to leisure moments is being promoted.

The manager added to her statements that:

"As an institution we went to Imbashiri and Lake Chivero for a recreational trip. This trip was sponsored by a Nigerian well-wisher who also took along his two (2) children amongst the St Mary children's home children. The children had the opportunity to visit the Lake and also to see different types of birds."

In support of the manager's statement, a participant mentioned that:

"We saw different types of birds. I was fascinated with some birds that could speak. The Nigerians provided food for us which were takeaways from a restaurant even though we had cooked our food to avoid buying food due to financial constrains that we face sometimes."

Based on the responses from the participants, it is clear that the caregivers at St. Mary Children's Home provide the children in their care with access to recreational and leisure activities, thereby promoting the children's rights. According to Packer (2021), recreational trips and activities can have significant benefits, such as reducing emotional exhaustion and burnout among caregivers,

decreasing absenteeism, increasing engagement in work or other pursuits, and enhancing the overall health, well-being, life satisfaction, and quality of life of the individuals involved. Furthermore, the ACRWC states that parties or organizations should recognize the child's right to experience recreational activities appropriate for their age. The charter also emphasizes the benefits of promoting and respecting the child's right to take part freely in culture and other artistic activities, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for such recreational, cultural, artistic, and leisure pursuits. By providing the children in their care with access to these types of activities, the caregivers at St. Mary Children's Home are actively upholding and promoting the children's rights in alignment with the principles outlined in the African Charter.

From the above statement that they carried their own cooked food as way to minimize expenses is a way that shows that the caregivers teach their children to be responsible at the same time without violating their rights. By so doing, this means that St Mary children's home, Chitungwiza promotes the rights of institutionalized children.

4.1.3 THE PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

Since every child has a right to take part in making decisions that will be affecting their personal lives, St Mary children's home gives its children great chances to take part in decision making. Children are asked to make some decisions that affect their lives as a way of helping them to be independent thinkers. One staff participant during a key informant interview mentioned that;

“Letting these children participate in decision making is one best way of teaching them to be responsible citizens without violating their rights. It also helps them to know that they are equally important as every child who is out there and who is living with their parents. Adding on, letting these children to take part in decision is one easy way that can help us

as St Mary children's home staff to know what these children want and what they feel is good for them."

A fifteen year old girl participant said that:

"Zvinhu zvakangonaka kana uchiziva kuti vanhu vauri kugara navo varikukuchengeta vanotangawo vanzwa mafungiro ako vasati vaita zvinenge zvichida kuitwa. Ini pandakatsvagirwa nzvimbo yechikoro, ndakataura naGogo ndikavaudza chikoro chandaida kuenda vakanditsvagira ikoko. Izvi zvinhu zvakafadza moyo wangu, naizvozvo ndinovatenda. Ndinobvumirwa zvekare kuenda kudzimba dzeshamwari dzangu asi kana ndichinge ndapedza mabasa angu epamba neekuchikoro." (It is a good thing knowing that the people you are living with value your opinion before anything else is done. When I wanted to get into secondary school I told Gogo that I wanted to choose the school I wanted to attend and she agreed and did likewise. I am even allowed to go out at my friend's house to play after when I am done with my chores and homework from school.)

Therefore, from the above statements, it is evident that the staff at St Mary children's home allow their children to express how they feel before putting a final saying of what will be going on in their lives. According to Murray (2019), the Human Rights based approach emphasizes that people must be allowed to take part in making decisions that will affecting their rights. This shows that at St Mary, children's rights are promoted in every way following the HRBA tenets. From the researcher's observation, participants seemed confident with how the promotion of children's rights is done at St Mary children's home and even the children were so participative during the FGDs and in-depth interviews. The researcher could vividly notice how the participants were so confident and that they were not afraid to share their views. Article 7 of the ACRWC recognizes

that children have a right to express freely their views in everything that will be affecting them. Children in institutional care should be given some chances to be a part of making the decisions especially on those decisions that will be directly affecting their lives.

4.1 WAYS TO IMPROVE THE PROMOTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

St Mary children's home endeavors to promote children's rights in every possible way. However, the institution faces certain factors that hinder them from fully realizing the rights of the children under their care. There is a need to increase the institution's funding, as many children's rights require financial backing in order to be fully promoted, such as their rights to education, healthcare, proper nutrition, and recreational or leisure experiences. There is also need for more education to both the caregivers and the children for them to know more about children's rights.

4.2.1 Increasing funding/sources of income

St Mary Institutional Care Home usually gets donations which can either be cash or any other things which contribute to almost half of their funding. They do not just rely on the donations, but they also have other projects that generate income for instance vegetable selling. From the FGD, one participant said:

"The institution keeps chicken layers, broilers and other different chicken breeds such as the Black Australorp and the White Sussex for our consumption as well as for sale. All these sales contribute a lot to the funds that are used for the day to day running of the orphanage despite what we also get from the government."

The manager added that:

"St Mary children's home has 2 hectares of land where horticulture projects are done and the planting of various crops for sale and some for the children. For instance, last rainy

season, 20bags of maize were harvested as well as 10buckets of sweet potatoes, therefore, being able to raise enough money to pay fees after we sell these products that we would have harvested. There are various donors who donate to the institution such as individuals, companies, organisations and churches. Most of the donors who contribute to the institution are well-wishers who do not want to reveal their status. All these income generating projects and donations are important in making the promotion of children's rights easier for us as an institution."

The poultry project being carried out at St Mary children's home is an income generating project which is on other hand being used by the staff members at the orphanage to teach the children to be responsible at the same time without violating their rights. A 7 year old participant mentioned that:

"Handitombode kuudzwa kuti kuti ndinhonge mazai nekuti zvinhu zvandinoita pese pandinobva kuchikoro." (I do not need to be told to pick eggs and I do this everytime when I come back from school.)

She demonstrated how she looks and pick the eggs and label them if there is need. The researcher observed that the orphanage has an incubator and every child can operate it very well.

The manager, said;

"It is important that we teach these children to be responsible and to be entrepreneurs without violating their rights because one day they will leave the orphanage and they should be able to be self-sustainable and to have a good living. Teaching everyone to be able to rear different chicken breeds and growing different crops will eventually help them to survive even after leaving the orphanage. Chicken rearing is useful also in raising the

income of the children's home making it easier for the institution to run. Teaching these children also helps the businesses to be run by whoever is available hence the continuous inflow of funds."

The researcher, from the above statements, deduced that the institution raises its own funding as a way to improve the promotion of children's rights. From the HRBA point of view, the institution allows the children to be empowered through teaching them poultry production without violating their rights. The caregivers teach the children to run these businesses, which are selling farm produce and poultry projects of different chicken breeds, so that they will later in life become self-sustainable and also that money will always keep coming in just as how business partners run their businesses. However, the institution needs more land and more capital to increase their financial earnings.

4.2.2 Human rights education to both the children and the staff

The researcher learned from observation that advancing children's rights is essential to creating an equitable and just society. Teaching human rights to children and staff at orphanages is a powerful way to achieve this. Nyathi (2022) claims that this educational initiative, which tries to teach human rights ideals and foster a culture of respect and dignity, can have a substantial impact on the lives of children in orphanages. He goes on to say that because rights education helps children in orphanages understand their inherent rights, it is very beneficial to them.

Children who have not received parental supervision are sometimes more vulnerable and difficult to manage. They could be more open to mistreatment, exploitation, and neglect if they were unaware that they had rights. Children who are informed of their rights, which include the rights to

participation, health, education, and protection, are empowered to advocate for themselves and make informed decisions, as stated in Section 81 of the Zimbabwean Constitution. Children who receive a right education also have more self-esteem and confidence. It aids with pupils' understanding and appreciation of the importance of respect, empathy, and equality. Children brought up with a rights-based upbringing acquire the ability to advocate for themselves as well as a sense of fairness and inclusion in the institution (McGregor, 2019).

Human rights education for orphanage staff is equally important. Workers have a big influence on children's lives and are responsible for their care and wellbeing, according to Children's Rights International (2019). It also demonstrates that personnel with expertise and aptitude in human rights are better equipped to comprehend and uphold the rights of the children entrusted to their care. There are various ways to educate employees about their rights, including as exposing them to moral concepts, child safety procedures, and international human rights standards (Muzingili & Muchinako, 2018). It makes it possible for them to spot and handle incidents of exploitation, abuse, or neglect swiftly. They can learn appropriate communication techniques, conflict resolution strategies, and constructive discipline techniques that respect children's rights.

According to Nampewo & Wolff (2022), workers who obtain human rights education also act as activists and good role models for the younger generation. They are able to provide a safe, nurturing environment that respects the autonomy and dignity of every child. According to the human rights-based theory, by taking a child-centered approach, human rights education can give children the confidence to express their opinions, participate in decision-making, and help the orphanage community flourish.

The researcher also came to the conclusion that the orphanage's daily routine and operations needed to include human rights education. It can be incorporated into curricula, recreational activities, and

staff training sessions. Interactive and age-appropriate techniques like storytelling, group discussions, and art projects can effectively engage children. Through role-playing and conversation, this can assist the kids in learning about their rights. Collaboration with outside groups, human rights experts, and child protective authorities can improve the effectiveness of human rights education in orphanages (Muzingili & Muchinako, 2018).

The greatest strategy to promote children's rights inside institutional care systems, according to the HRBA, is to teach human rights to both the children and the staff working in orphanages.

This will help to create an environment that supports children's rights, empowerment, and wellness. This comprehensive approach not only equips the next generation with the skills and information necessary to succeed in life, but it also raises a generation that values and respects human rights. In the end, it contributes to the creation of a society that is more inclusive, equal, and where each child's rights are upheld, claim Murray & McGregor (2019).

4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The researcher has presented the data collected through interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. The findings have been analyzed and discussed. The study has revealed that the St Mary Children's Home is making substantial efforts to promote and protect the rights of the children within the institution. It has uncovered the specific children's rights that are being promoted and how the institution is going about this. The study also showed how the staff members are teaching the children responsibility while still preserving their rights. While a few challenges emerged, particularly around funding, the institution has undertaken various projects to sustain the home and continue promoting the children's rights.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In this last chapter, the study's summary, findings, and ramifications are thoroughly discussed. In particular, this chapter begins with a summary of the study. The relationship between the three study objectives and the relevant research findings is then used to develop conclusions. This chapter then discusses the study's findings; specifically, it discusses the findings' implications for social work practice and recommendations.

5.1 SUMMARY

The study explored the promotion of children's rights within the institutional care systems, a case study of St Mary children's home in Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe. The three objectives of the study centered on identifying the children's rights that are being promoted at the children's home, to examine how the caregivers are promoting these identified children's rights and to proffer ways of improving the children's rights promotion at St Mary children's home. The rights based approach was the anchor theoretical framework underpinning the study. Extensive literature related to the study was reviewed pointing out the research gaps covered by the present study. The study adopted a qualitative approach premised on a narrative design. Purposive sampling technique was applied for the selection of 15 out of 17 child participants who have more than 3 years of living experience in the St Mary children's home. St Mary children's home only has 5 care givers hence the researcher interviewed them all. Data were gathered using one on one indepth interviews for both the children and the caregivers. FGDs with the children were applied to gather the findings from

the participants. The observation method was also used. Informed by the three objectives, the following sub-sections summarized the study findings:

5.1.1 Promotion of children's rights in institutions

The project discovered the magnitude of children's rights that are known and being promoted at St Mary children's home in Chitungwiza. Most of the participants knew what children's rights were and they could name them one by one indicating how each right is addressed at the institution. The children who are grown could group the children's rights into socio-economic rights, protection rights and participation rights. The participants also demonstrated how these rights are taught to them by the care givers.

5.1.2 Ways of how care givers are promoting children's rights in institutions.

The findings have it that the care givers at St Mary children's homes do a lot of work to make sure that that children's rights are promoted within the institution. The caregivers teach and give illustrations of what children's rights are. St Mary children's home has a lot of projects that are done to increase the funding that the children's home need. The children at St Mary are taught chicken rearing and vegetable gardening as a way of being self-sustainable and promoting their rights to food. Through these projects, the care givers at St Mary teach their children that they have rights to protection, education and health among others hence they have a responsibility to be loyal to the agricultural businesses or projects that are being done at the institution.

The care givers also promote children's rights at St Mary children's home by letting the children to participate in decision making especially on decisions that directly affect their lives. Therefore, this shows that St Mary children's home follows the tenets of the human rights based approach which include allowing children to participate in decision making and empowering the children as

well. As children they are guided and assisted when making decision but primarily they have the final say over their lives unless it is harmful for them.

The children at St Mary children's home have care givers that promote their rights by taking them to different places for recreational and leisure purposes. The children were delighted that their Manager who is also the establisher of St Mary treats them like her very own children.

St Mary children's home care givers promote children's rights in different ways following the provisions and protocols of the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Section 81), the Children's Act (Chapter 5:06) and the Africa Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child because they have rights to food, education, shelter, healthcare services, participating in decisions that affect their lives and recreational and leisure activities among others.

5.1.3 Ways of improving children's rights in institutions

The study discovered that in order for the children's home to effectively promote children's rights there is the need to find ways to increase their funding and also to start human rights education to both the children and the care givers. The institution runs a number of projects which include poultry production and selling agricultural products such as vegetables, maize and sweet potatoes. There is need to increase the plants that they grow and animal husbandry should grow as well in order for them to be able to produce enough food for both consumption and selling.

Human rights education will allow both the staff and the children within the institution to familiarize with human rights more specifically. Children's rights education enlightens the caregivers on how they should treat the children and it helps the children know how they should be treated with those around them.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Identifying the children's rights within St Mary Children's home

From the discussions above, it is evident that the institution teaches the children more about their rights and also their responsibilities. The children have rights to food, education, shelter, healthcare and recreational services.

5.2.2 How care givers promote the identified children's rights

It is important to note that the care givers at St Mary Children's home teach their children telling them how important it is for them to know their rights. The caregivers make sure that the children go to school, have their meals in time, receive proper health care services and also that they visit different places for leisure and recreational services.

The care givers also make sure that they teach the children to be responsible without violating their rights. This is done by teaching them to do poultry production so that they will become independent when they leave the institution.

5.2.3 Improving the promotion of children's rights

The researcher discovered that it is important to introduce rights education for both the staff and the children in order to improve children's rights promotion. There is also the need to improve the sources of income for the institution. The government and other organizations should also provide more funding for the improvement of children's rights within St Mary Children's home.

5.3 Implications to Social Work

On the basis of the research findings and conclusions discussed above, and in light of social work theory and policy, the study highlights the following implications of the study to social work practice:

- Social workers, with the help of the DSD, ought to advocate for laws that enhance social inclusion by providing monetary, material, and psychological assistance to children residing in institutional care systems. To develop and implement better child rights promotion within children's homes, cultivate and harness a symbiotic relationship between government line ministries (e.g., the Ministry of Health and Child Care and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development) and development partners (e.g., PVOs).
- Another implication of this study is that social work professionals should prioritize the best interests of the child, ensuring that their rights are respected and protected (child-centered approach). Social workers should monitor how the institutions put forward children's rights and also teaching the care givers that the child-centered approach can improve how the children see themselves and being able to speak up for themselves. Social workers must monitor the treatment and care of children in institutions, holding perpetrators accountable for any rights violations.
- More so, as a consequence of this study, social workers should play a critical role in promoting the rights and well-being of children within the institutional care system. They should empower children to exercise their rights, providing education and support to enable them to speak up and make informed decisions. They should also do some trainings and capacity building activities to understand and promote children's rights effectively.

5.4 Recommendations

In relation to objective one which sort to identify the children's rights that are being promoted at St Mary Children's Home, it is recommended that:

- There is need to introduce some guidance and counselling lessons in these children's homes that teach the children about their rights.

- Lessons on children's rights should be done to children from as little as four (4) years and to the care givers as well.

In relation to examining how caregivers are promoting children's rights within St Mary children's home which is objective two, it is recommended that:

- The DSD, in order to promote children's rights, they should work hand in hand with the Children's home to provide for the children's fundamental necessities, especially the issuing of national identity cards and the birth certificates.
- It is necessary to hire and train additional staff members and caretakers..

Regarding the third objective, which was to suggest ways of improving the promotion of children's rights at the St Mary children's home, the following recommendations are made:

- There is a need for government intervention to support and strengthen the projects being undertaken by the children's home, as a means of generating income to improve living standards.
- The institutions must write some proposals looking for funding to various companies to solicit both financial and in-kind donations.
- The government, with the use of the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, they should be responsible for making sure that children in children's homes should receive adequate and timely resources.
- There is need of the allocation of more land to enable them to do more viable self-sustaining projects.
- There is a need for capacity building initiatives to facilitate development within the institution.

5.5 Chapter Summary

The study's fifth and final chapter included recommendations for further reading as well as a summary and conclusion of the investigation. A synthesis of the entire study was given in the summary, covering everything from the goals to the theoretical framework, literature evaluation, methods, and study outcomes. The study's conclusions addressed the research findings in relation to the goals and body of literature to demonstrate if the study was successful in accomplishing its stated purpose. As a result, the study's suggestions, implications for social work and recommendations were all explored.

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APPENDICES:

Appendix a: Letter from Bindura University of Science Education

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

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



BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

Date: 22 November 2023

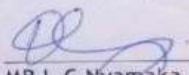
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to introduce the bearer, ASHLEY TARUWINGA, Student Registration Number B2008268, who is a BSc SOCIAL WORK student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area/institution.

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

Yours faithfully



MR L.C Nyamaka
Acting Chairperson - Social Work

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
SOCIAL WORK CHAIRPERSON

22 NOV 2023

FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 1020, BINDURA, ZIMBABWE

Appendix b: Letter of approval for research

Official communications should
Not be addressed to individuals

Telephone: Harare 790872/7
Telegrams "SECLAB"
Private Bag 7707/7750



ZIMBABWE

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL
WELFARE
Compensation House

Cnr Fourth Street and Central Avenue
HARARE

06 March 2024

Ashley B. Taruwinga (B200826B)
Bindura University of Science Education

**REF: LETTER OF APPROVAL TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY
TITLED "THE PROMOTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WITHIN
THE INSTITUTIONAL CARE SYSTEM. A CASE STUDY OF ST MARY
CHILDREN'S HOME.**

Receipt of your letter with the above mentioned matter is acknowledged.

Please be advised that permission is hereby granted for you to carry out research
titled **"The promotion of Children's Rights within the Institutional Care
system"**.

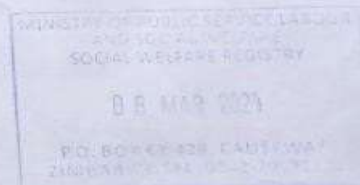
Permission is granted **STRICTLY** on condition that the research is for academic
purposes only in pursuit of your Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Social
Work Honours Degree. The data collected should not be shared to third party (3rd).

You are requested to submit a copy of your final research documents to the
Department of Social Development upon completion as your research has a bearing
on the Department's mandate.

T. Zimhunga

Director Social Development.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE



Appendix c: PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEW GUIDE (Children).

My name is Ashley Taruwinga and I am a fourth year student studying at Bindura University doing Social Work. As part of the degree program, the student is required to conduct an

individual research project on the topic “The promotion of children’s rights within the institutional care system. A case study of St Mary Children’s village, Chitungwiza.” I am committed to ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of all participants involved in this research, and I am dedicated to conducting this study with the utmost respect for the rights and well-being of the children within the care system.

The findings of this research are anticipated to provide insights to the promotion of children’s rights within the St Mary Children’s village in Chitungwiza. Your taking part in the study is voluntary, the data you provide will be kept confidential and you are allowed to withdraw at any time if you so wish. There will be no payment offered for taking part in the study.

Start time:

Finishing Time:

Date:

QUESTIONS

Section A: Biographic Information (Pseudo names) Participant

.....

Age

Gender

Number of years lived in St Mary children’s village

Section B: To identify the children's rights that are being promoted in St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. What do you think children's rights are?**
- 2. Can you name any children's rights you know?**
- 3. Do you have access to education, recreational or healthcare in the care system here at St Mary children's village? How do you feel about the quality of these services?**
- 4. How are these services contributing to the physical, emotional and social growth to you as an individual?**
- 5. Are the religious rights promoted as well at St Mary children's village?**

Section C: To examine how the care givers are promoting children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. Do you think all your rights as children are being promoted here at St Mary children's village?**
- 2. How do your caregivers promote children's rights here at St Mary children's village?**
- 3. What are the main activities that are provided by the care givers that promote your right to recreational services?**
- 4. Do the care givers accept you to take part in decision making processes? If so, what was your experience?**

Section D: To proffer ways of improving children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

1. Do you think there is need to enhance how St Mary children's village promotes children's rights? If so, why?
2. What do you think can be done to make sure that all children's rights are promoted?
3. If you are to take part in decision making processes, what do you think needs to be improved?
4. What ways do you think are important for you to access better educational and healthcare facilities?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION!!!

Appendix d: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is Ashley Taruwinga and I am a fourth year student studying at Bindura University doing Social Work. As part of the degree program, the student is required to conduct an individual research project on the topic "The promotion of children's rights within the institutional care system. A case study of St Mary Children's village, Chitungwiza." I am committed to ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of all participants involved in this research, and I am dedicated to conducting this study with the utmost respect for the rights and well-being of the children within the care system.

The findings of this research are anticipated to provide insights to the promotion of children's rights within the St Mary Children's village in Chitungwiza. Your taking part in the study is voluntary, the data you provide will be kept confidential and you are allowed to withdraw at any time if you so wish. There will be no payment offered for taking part in the study.

Start time:

Finishing Time:

Date:

Section A: Biographic Information (Pseudo names)

Participant

Age

Marital status,..

Religious Affiliation

How long they have worked at St Mary children's village.....

Section B: To identify the children's rights that are being promoted in St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. In your own perspective, what are children's rights?**
- 2. What are the importance of these rights to the wellbeing of the children at St Mary children's village?**
- 3. Do you educate these children to know their rights?**
- 4. How do you teach them to be responsible without violating their rights?**

Section C: To examine how the care givers are promoting children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. . Can you describe any programs or activities that are in place to promote the personal development and well-being of children in our care?**
- 2. How do we address the cultural and religious rights of children in our care? Can you provide an example of how these rights are respected and supported?**
- 3. .What role do social workers or advocates play in supporting and promoting the rights of children in our care?**
- 4. In what ways do we involve children in decision-making processes that affect their lives within the institution?**

Section D: To proffer ways of improving children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. What do you think could be done to better promote children's rights in the care system?**
- 2. What are the measures that have been put in place to improve children's rights here at St Mary children's village?**
- 3. Have there been any efforts to involve children in advocating for changes within the care system? If so, what has been the impact of these efforts?**
- 4. What are your views in engaging the children in decision making and do you think it will improve the promotion of children's rights within St Mary children's village?**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!!!

Appendix e: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome everyone to this focus group discussion on the promotion of children’s rights within St Mary children’s village. My name is Ashley Taruwinga and I am a fourth year student studying at Bindura University doing Social Work. As part of the degree program, the student is required to conduct an individual research project on the topic “The promotion of children’s rights within the institutional care system. A case study of St Mary Children’s village, Chitungwiza.” I am committed to ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of all participants involved in this research, and I am dedicated to conducting this study with the utmost respect for the rights and well-being of the children within the care system.

The findings of this research are anticipated to provide insights to the promotion of children’s rights within the St Mary Children’s village in Chitungwiza. Your taking part in the study is voluntary, the data you provide will be kept confidential and you are allowed to withdraw at any time if you so wish. There will be no payment offered for taking part in the study.

Section A: To identify the children’s rights that are being promoted in St Mary children’s village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. Has everyone here ever heard about children’s rights? If so can we indicate by raising our hands**
- 2. From your own understanding, what are children’s rights?**
- 3. Can we name any children's rights we know?**
- 4. What are the qualities of the services of the rights being promoted here at St Mary children’s village?**

Section B: To examine how the care givers are promoting children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. How often are the children exposed to recreational services as part of their rights?**
- 2. What activities are done to promote the growth and wellbeing of children?**
- 3. Which religious affiliation do these children belong to? If they are different how, how do you manage?**
- 4. When do you release these children from the St Mary institution?**
- 5. Have you ever experienced any incidences of those children that run away from the institution? If so, what were there reasons?**

Section C: To proffer ways of improving children's rights at St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

- 1. What do you think could be done to better promote children's rights in the care system?**
- 2. What are the measures that have been put in place to improve children's rights here at St Mary children's village?**
- 3. How are children's lives changed after some services are offered? For example, education and recreational services?**
- 4. Does engaging the children in decision making help in their wellbeing and do you think it will improve the promotion of children's rights within St Mary children's village?**

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!!!

Appendix f: RESEARCHER'S OBSERVATION GUIDE

The goal of the study is to look into how the institutional care system at St Mary Children's Village in Chitungwiza promotes children's rights. This observation guide is intended to assist in observing and documenting data regarding the advancement of children's rights in the context of institutional care. An analysis of St Mary children's village in Chitungwiza.

OBSERVATION PROMPTS

- 1. What are the children's rights being promoted and upheld at St Mary children's village?**
- 2. Do the children know their rights?**
- 3. What recreational activities are done in favor of the children?**
- 4. Which religious affiliation do these children belong to as an institution?**
- 5. How does the institution secure the safety of these children?**
- 6. How these children are taught to be responsible without the violation of their rights?**
- 7. How the policies like the rights based approach are being followed?**
- 8. Whether there is need for introducing different policies that promote and protect the rights of these children?**
- 9. Level of education that most children reach?**
- 10. If there are possibilities of children running away and the reasons for doing so?**

Additional

notes:

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APPENDIX g: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Dear Participant

This consent form is being used to gather information about your thoughts and experiences related to the advancement of children's rights at St Mary Children's Village. The information gathered will only be utilized for study. Additionally, all private information will be kept confidential. Before deciding to take part in the research, the participant is free to discuss it with whoever makes them feel more comfortable. It is optional to participate. Participants may therefore leave the interview at any time. The participant is welcome to ask

questions if there are any terms they are unclear on, and I would be happy to explain. For this reason, I humbly ask that you please spend a few minutes answering the following questions as honestly and freely as you can in order to assist me in doing my research. I sincerely appreciate your assistance and collaboration.

Informed Consent Statement

Iconsent to participate in the research entitled
“The promotion of children's rights within the institutional care system. A case study of St Mary Children's village, Chitungwiza. I have been informed about the research the researcher is conducting, and I willingly consent. I am aware that my decision to decline participation or to withdraw will be respected, and that my answers and identity will be kept confidential.

Participant signature Date/...../.....

(Pseudonym signature)

Researcher's Signature..... Date/...../.....

Thank you!!