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A study on the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) towards cremation as an environmental management measure.

LYNDSEY TANAKA CHINYAMA

B223390B

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DECLARATION

To be compiled by the student

I Lyndsey T. Chinyama (B223390B) do hereby declare that this work-related project is my original work and has not been submitted before. All the information derived from other sources is indicated in the project.

Signature of the student  ……Date: 30/05/2025

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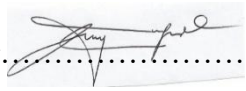
This dissertation is suitable for submission to the faculty and has been checked for conformity with the faculty guidelines.

Signature of the supervisor  ……Date: 30/05/2025

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my father and brother, whose love and encouragement fueled my creativity and perseverance. I also dedicate this project to my supervisor, Mr T. Nyamugure for motivating me to strive excellence.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

KAP: Knowledege Attitude Practice

GIS: Geographic Information Systems

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Science

ABSTRACT

Traditional burial using graves exerts pressure on the land resource as it takes up land that could be used for other competing uses. With population growth and the requisite expansion in agricultural land to provide food, it is necessary to release land that could be used for burial and allot it to agricultural and other land uses. This, coupled with the fact that burial ground is running out (Masona and Gwisai, 2023) calls for alternative methods of corpse disposal that do not compete for land with agriculture such as cremation. However before cremation can be recommended as a practice, it is important to determine the responses of communities towards cremation so as to find out their knowledge, attitudes and practices. Depending on the findings, campaigns can be formulated that target the right group according to the distribution of KAP across socio-demographic attributes. The study employed a cross sectional survey design. A total of one hundred and two questionnaires were administered among residents in the Aerodrome suburb of Bindura. The questionnaire consisted of four sections namely, demographic characteristics, knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) section. Data were analysed using SPSS to generate frequencies for each KAP question. From the frequencies in percentage, a preferred KAP answer was assigned a score of 1 and a non-preferred answer was assigned 0 to come up with an overall score for each of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices. Multinomial logistic regression was used to relate KAP to socio-demographic variables. A total of 102 respondents participated in the study with 51% being male, while 49% were female. 59% of the participants were accounted for by the 18-25 age group. The participant's knowledge score was moderately high at 0.7 or 70%. The attitude score was quite negative at 41%. The practices score was very poor at 0%. The study concludes that knowledge on cremation was relatively fair, attitudes negative and practices almost non-existent. This means the study concludes that in the study area, cremation is not to be adopted as an alternative body disposal method. The study also concludes that the determinants of knowledge and attitudes are age, education and sex. The study recommends awareness campaigns about the fact that burial grounds are running out and encourage people to adopt cremation as an alternative body disposal method. The awareness campaigns should alert people of the dangers of traditional body disposal by burial on water pollution through preserving chemicals. Furthermore it is recommended that the awareness campaigns should be designed to target those of age groups above 18-25, females and those that have not attained tertiary education. This may entail using information media that are more common to ordinary people as opposed to those accessible to educated people.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Traditionally, in most cultures, the disposal of dead bodies was done through burial in graves inspite of their being other options like cremation and donating the body for scientific studies. However, the trend is changing as perceptions evolve and cremation is becoming more perceived as a viable alternative as it does not mete out an opportunity cost of land that characterizes traditional burial especially in the reality that burial ground is running scarce. Besides, burial removes trees that sequester carbon thus exacerbation the greenhouse effect that drives climate change (Keijzer and Kok, 2011). As population continues to grow it is critical that there will be land shortage for food production as a significant acreage will be allocated for burial cemeteries and will result in competing needs between agriculture and cemeteries (Nebhut, 2016).

In Australia, it is extrapolated that in fifty years' time, there is going to be depletion of burial space if alternative ways to traditional burial are not devised or adopted (Institute of sustainable futures, 2021). In Zimbabwe, burial land is also reported to be running out and Harare only a few burial sites are still active after others have been declared full. This alone calls for a paradigm shift in attitudes towards admitting other forms of disposal of dead bodies such as cremation. This shift in attitude towards cremation has the potential to leverage more land that can be used for agricultural purposes (Saad, 2017). Cremation is a process of incinerating dead bodies and according to beliefs in Hinduism, this act serves to purify the body and release the soul in order for it to go to heaven securely (Poudel, 2017)Traditionally in Nepal, cremation was done using fuel wood but with technological advances, it can now be performed using electricity. This shifts from the effects of cremation in causing the destruction of carbon sinks as well as from its effects on releasing greenhouse gases during burning thus making it an environmentally friendly alternative (Poudel, 2017).

Some people have raised arguments against cremation in support of traditional burial by claiming that funerals serve ancillary roles such as habituating the bereaved to the reality of grief. However according to a study by Schut, et. al., (2020), grief is neutral to the burial method and will still be experienced whether a corpse is buried or cremated.

Despite the perceived benefits of cremation over traditional burial, the technology does not seem to be much preferred in our country for various reasons including religious beliefs, lack of knowledge and poor attitudes that enact bad practice. This study therefore seeks to contribute to the body of scientific knowledge through investigating the knowledge and attitudes of community members towards cremation.

1.2 Problem statement

Whereas traditional burial produces bad environmental outcomes such as loss of agricultural land and the destruction of carbon sinks and thus could be substituted by cremation, in Zimbabwe and other African countries, the practice seems to have gained very little traction. Thus it is necessary to determine the reasons why this is so through investigation of community members' knowledge and attitudes towards cremation as an alternative to traditional inhumation methods.

1.3 Justification

The information generated from this study is important in providing a baseline information upon which to measure the success of future interventions or campaigns that may be necessary to promote cremation. Furthermore the information can inform policy makers in designing appropriate content for developing awareness campaigns and who to target depending on the relationship between KAP and socio-economic variables.

1.4 Aim

The aim of the study is to carry out a study on the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) towards cremation.

1.5 Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge of residents of Bindura towards cremation

2. To assess the attitudes of residents of Bindura towards cremation

3. To assess the practices of residents of Bindura towards cremation

4. To relate Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of residents of Bindura towards cremation with socio-economic variables.

1.6 Research questions

1. What is the level of knowledge residents of Bindura towards cremation?
2. What are the attitudes of residents of Bindura towards cremation?
3. What are the practices of residents of Bindura towards cremation?
4. How is KAP on cremation related to socio-economic variables of residents of Bindura?

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Cremation is a process of incinerating dead bodies and according to beliefs in Hinduism, this act serves to purify the body and release the soul in order for it to go to heaven securely (Poudel, In England, though cremation was legalized in 1884, the practice only gained traction in 1945 when 7.8% of burials were conducted through cremation. This trend was as a result of the delegation of burial from church to local government, of the responsibility for the disposal of the dead Jupp, 1992). Other contributing factors towards changing attitudes towards cremation include worries over deteriorating sanitary conditions and overcrowding in burial places (Collier, undated). In Cuba during the late war, there were massive death of people to the extent that authorities decided to burn the bodies on p res owing to concerns over worsening sanitary conditions. This highlights that unexpected shocks can have an impact on society's attitudes towards cremation (Stone, 1900) Recently, owing to the Covid-19 scourge, and HIV, there has been an increase in deaths resulting in pressure on burial lands thus necessitating the expansion of cemeteries into land with competing uses, there has been a shift in attitudes towards other forms of burial methods such as cremation (Zondi and Zwane, undated) which has the perceive benefit of low cost and lesser impacts on the environment. This is so because burial of corpses proximal to riverine zones can emanate in pollution of water (Gwisai and Masona, 2023) According to Gwisai and Masona (2023) in most urban centres, burial space is running out as most designated site are fast getting filled up. Besides, burial of corpses in the ground close to rivers has been found to cause contamination of river bodies with embalming chemicals. With the scourge of diseases such and HIV and pandemics there are a lot of deaths that have occurred thus calling for the adoption of unorthodox methods of burial. This demands the employment of alternatives alternative methods of burial that do not entail incurring the opportunity cost of land that could be used for other purposes (Zondi and Zwane, undated). One such intervention would be the cremation of corpses. Although traditional cremation using firewood has its own drawbacks as it entails cutting down of trees and emissions of greenhouse gases during burning and disposal of ash, the advent of the use of electricity during cremation is an opportunity to alleviate such negative effects (Dramola *et. al.,* (2016). The long term outcome in the adoption of cremation will ultimately depend on the knowledge and attitudes of cremation as an intervention.

2.1 People's knowledge about cremation

The knowledge on cremation has been found to be influenced by religious and cultural factors. Among Christians, research shows that most people did not have knowledge about the practice of cremation (Itegi, 2014). In spite of this, those Christians who were knowledgeable about cremation did not believe that the practice would jeorpadise the tenets prerequisite to resurrection. In other words they did not believe that cremation is an impediment for the requirement to go to heaven since it's only the soul and not the body that partakes of resurrection.

A study in Nigeria by Daramola *et. al.,* (2016) revealed that people did not know the impacts of traditional burial in contaminating water with embalming chemicals. In a study in South Africa it came out that most people especially from rural areas did not know the existence of cremation as a burial alternative (Zwane and Zondi, undated)

2.2 People's attitudes towards cremation

The attitudes of people towards cremation are likely to be affected not only by knowledge but by broader socio-cultural variables. Some people shun cremation for a variety of cultural and religious beliefs. Besides religious and cultural belies, people may not cremate the deceased expressly because the deceased will have expressed the desire for traditional burial in their will (Woodthorpe, et. al., 2021). In a study on perceptions towards cremation among psychology students, it emerged that the respondents thought that cremation is bad because it is a form of double killing. However they also perceived that cremation is suitable for deformed and emaciated bodies especially those involved in accidents. Furthermore, they felt that those corpses whose persons died of infectious diseases that can cause a contagion during burial should be quickly cremated (Gutang, et. al., 2023). In Georgia, only half the respondents were amenable to being cremated after death even though the majority had knowledge about the practice of cremation. In the same study 45%, of the respondents were averse to being cremated on death (collier, undated). The determinants of willingness to be cremated were being younger than 65 years, possessing a diploma and being white. Contrary to the belief that cremation is cheaper, the practice was mostly reported to be acceptable among poor people (Collier, undated). Other determinants of negative attitudes towards cremation were lack of knowledge about the practice, effects of religion and traditional beliefs, family and financial conflicts as well as before death promises (Gutang, et. al., 2023)

In respect of traditional beliefs, in Kwazulu natal, Zondi and Zwane ( ) it was unravelled that revealed that most of respondents were of the opinion that on death, the spirit of the dead must ascend to encounter their ancestors and this condition entailed that the body must be intact rather than being incinerated. As such cremation can render the person not recognisable and thus unacceptable in the spiritual domain of ancestors. Furthermore, it is perceived that a dead person spirit must return to protect the family as idlozi. However when the persons is cremated, it is a form of sacrilege that causes the spirit of the deceased to return to the family as an avenging spirit. Those of a Christian extraction belief that when a person is deceased, his spirit must ascend to heaven and as a precondition for resurrection, the body has to be intact on the other hand, in a study by Itegi (2021), the majority of respondents were of the opinion that burning a corpse does not make it adverse for resurrection. There is therefore need for more research and awareness concerning the practice of cremation by churches in order to shift community attitudes towards cremation (Itegi, 2021).

In some African countries where cremation is associated with traditional burial practice rites, the practice is not considered economical as it replicates the costs associated with traditional burial rites. Furthermore those that do not know that cremation can now be attained using modern technology using electricity still think that cremation has averse environmental impacts through cutting trees for coffins as well as through greenhouse gases released during incineration (Itegi, 2021).

In some research, respondents were of the opinion that cremation has the added advantage in reducing the costs of transportation compared to traditional burial where the corpse has to be transported in a hearse thus escalating the costs of burial. Additionally even those well to do would rather prefer to cremate corpses and save the money for other competing uses. Furthermore, cremation is viewed as a way of preserving and living with the remains of their beloved and to divide the ash among many relatives who would widh to keep the memory of their loved ones (Kleese and Kemmis 2021 contrary to the belief that cremation is cheaper, research in the Philippines revealed that some people thought it was an expensive process only reserved for the rich (Gutang, et. al., 2023). In the same study, some participants regarded cremation as a weir process as opposed to traditional burial where one can see the body. In that regard cremation is viewed as a process of double killing in which the physical body is killed twice. Cremation is also negatively viewed as causing the deletion of family and community memory towards the deceased (Saad, 2017). However, some people embrace cremation on

religious grounds where they believe that since Man was created from ash, he must return to the earth as ashes (Gutang, et. al., 2023)

2.3 People's Practices towards Cremation

The adoption of cremation as a disposal method for the dead is influenced by several factors including religion, culture, social status, family and financial disputes, the wishes of the dead, costs as well as cost environmental concerns. In Kenya for instance, cremation is shunned mainly by Christians in the belief that cremation violates the principle that for the dead to be resurrected, the body must not be desecrated through burning (Gutang, et. al., 2023). In some cases, however, there are those cases where cremation is adopted in the belief that since human beings were made from ashes, they must also go to the soil as ashes upon surcease.

In Zimbabwe, besides its perceived environmental benefits, the adoption of cremation is still very low among the black citizens with only some whites having adopted the practice (Gwisai and Masona, 2023) the reasons for not adopting traditional beliefs and culture that entails rites such as "kurowa guva" or bringing back the spirit of the dead. They also believe that when a person is dead, their spirit must rise to meet their ancestors and the whole process requires that the body of the dead person must be intact. If the person is cremated, it is also felt that their spirit will come back to haunt the family.

In some cases it is felt that cremation can result in the release of mercury which is used in the amalgam that is used in the filling of dental cavities.

According to Guatang (2023) in spite of cremation being a recent technology in the US, its adoption has been on the increase with about 58% being cremated in year 2021 and the practice is anticipated to rise above 60% in 2025. The same authors cites that the practice of cremation has also been gaining ground in Asia where in 2018 99% of corpses were cremated in China, followed by 77% in India. This is against the backdrop that in 2013 only 56% of corpses were cremated. Several factors affect people's adoption of cremation and these include religion where people believe that when a person is dead they will have life after death and thus the burning of a corpse will pre-empt its acceptance in heaven after death. This is because of the dogma that has been indoctrinated by especially Christians and Muslims that the physical act of resurrection entails a complete body

In the Philippines, the adoption of cremation as a corpse disposal method has gained traction with the onset of the Covid pandemic. This is so because Covid protocols prohibited the gathering of people for fear of contagion (Cordova, 2021).

In Kenya, embracing cremation is being hampered by religious beliefs especially among Christians due to the belief that cremation violates the principle of resurrection (Kalavulavu and Achar, 2023)

In the Philippines, the practice of cremating bodies became very popular since the onset of Covid 19 with protocols banning the gathering of people beyond a certain threshold (Cordova, 2021). In Zimbabwe, the practice of cremation has not been widely embraced in spite of its environmental benefits of averting pollution to water bodies and releasing land to other more beneficial land uses (Gwisai and Masona, 2023). Also according to Ngubane (2019) in among the Zulu communities, people still prefer inhumation or burial as a method of disposing the dead.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Description of the study area

The study was carried out in the Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Science or Astra Campus of Bindura University of Science Education. The University is situated approximately 87 Km from Harare. Bindura has one provincial hospital and several clinics in its surrounding suburbs. The town lies on the coordinates: 17.3251°S 31.3326°E.

Map of study area

The map of the study area is shown in Fig. 1 below

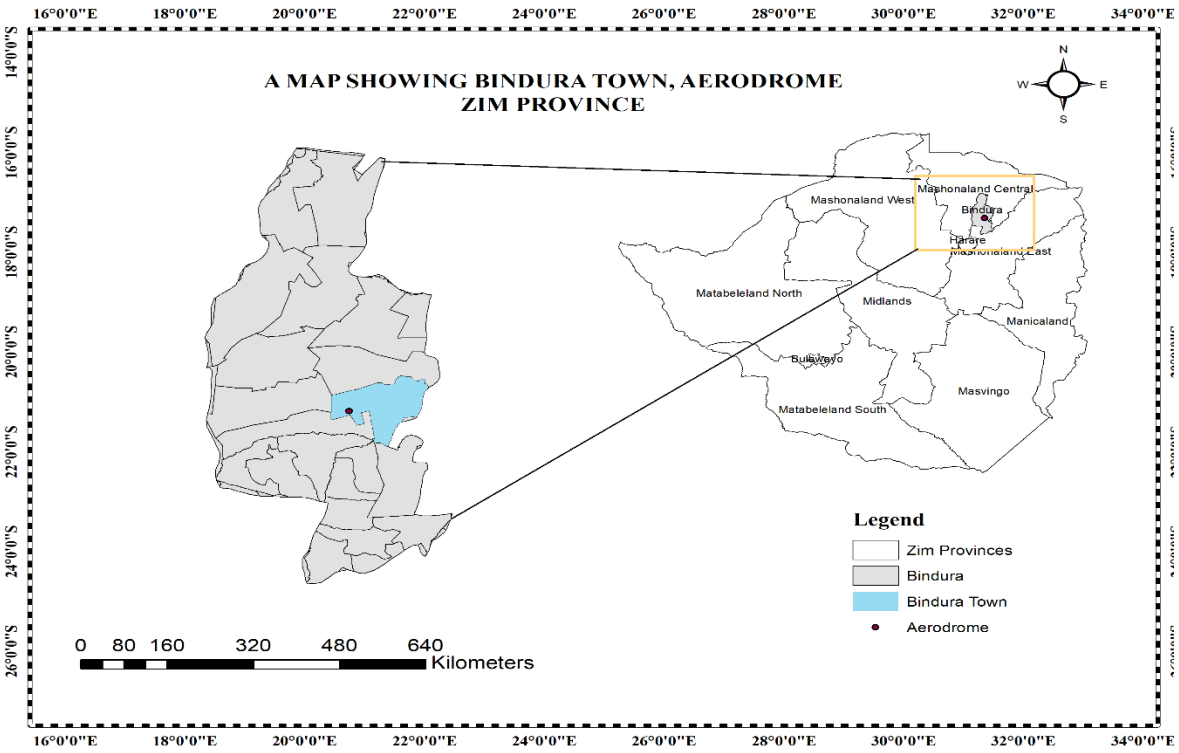

Fig1. Map of study area

3.2 Research design

The study made use of a cross sectional descriptive survey design in which data are collected in a snapshot of time without any longitudinal follow up studies.

3.3 Sampling

A multi-stage sampling method was made use of to select respondents by first of all stratifying them into students, academic staff and non-academic staff. Then convenience sampling was done in each stratum to select the requisite number of respondents according to the sample size.

In each stratum the following Slovin's formula was used to determine the sample size:

$n = N/ (1+Ne^2)$

n= expected sample size

N= population size

e = level of precision (0.05) at 95% confidence level

3.4 Data analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS to generate frequencies for each KAP question. From the frequencies in percentage, a preferred KAP answer was assigned a score of 1 and a non-preferred answer was assigned 0 to come up with an overall score for each of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices. Multinomial logistic regression was used to relate KAP to socio-demographic variables.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

4.1 Socio-demographics

Table 4.1 Socio-demographics

Sex

Male	**58**	**51%**
Female	**44**	**49**%

Age

18-25 Years	**60**	**58.8%**
26-33 Years	**10**	**9.8%**
34-41 Years	**12**	**11.7%**
42-49 Years	**10**	**9.8%**
50+ Years30	**10**	**9.8%**

Education Level

Primary	**10**	**10%**
Secondary	**60**	**59%**
Tertiary	**32**	**31%**

The respondents consisted of approximately 51 % male and 49% female. The majority(44.8%) of respondents fell in the 18-25 years age group and the least (11.9) represented age group was the 42 to 49 and 50+ age group. Most (47.8%) of the respondents occupied the status of student followed by academic (25.4%) and lastly non-academic (19.4%

4.2 Knowledge

The respondents' knowledge pertaining to the practice of cremation is shown in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Peoples responses to knowledge questions

Criterion	Preferred answer	%	Score
Have you heard of cremation?	Yes	90	0.90
Does cremation have any negative environmental impacts?	Yes	60	0.60
Can cremation be done using fuelwood?	Yes	40	0.40
Can cremation be done using electricity?	Yes	48	0.48
Has cremation been ever done in Zimbabwe?	Yes	46	0.46
Is burial space running out in Zimbabwe?	Yes	39	0.39
Does burial of corpses in graves cause pollution of rivers and wells with chemicals used in the preservation of corpses?	Yes	46	0.46
Total Score			3.69
Mean Score			0.52

According to table 4.2 above, knowledge about cremation was relatively fair with a mean score of 0.52 out of a possible score of 7. Knowledge was highest for the existence of cremation as an alternative burial option and it was least concerning the running out of burial places in Zimbabwe. The majority of people (54%) did not know that the burial of corpses in graves has implications on water pollution.

4.3 Attitude

The respondents' responses towards attitude on cremation are shown in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Peoples responses to attitude questions

Criterion	Preferred answer	%	Score

Are you willing to be cremated when you die?	Yes	28	0.28
I would not have my body cremated because when my body reaches the ancestors it must be unburnt.	No	30	0.30
I would not have my body burnt because when it reaches heaven it must be unburnt	No	30	0.30
Do you think cremation saves land for other purposes?	Yes	70	0.70
Do you think traditional burial pollutes water bodies?	Yes	46	0.46
Do you think cremation pollutes the air?	Yes	50	0.50
Do you think a cremated person's spirit is not accepted in heaven?	No	48	0.48
Do you think a cremated person is acceptable to ancestors?	Yes	28	0.28
Total score			**3.3**
Mean score			**0.41**

According to table 4.3 above, mean positive attitude score towards cremation was only 0.41 (3.3/8). This translates into 41% positive attitudes. Positive attitudes were mainly concerning the view of cremation as resulting in saving land for other competing land uses. Only a very minor fraction of the respondents were of the opinion that a cremated person's corpse would not be admissible to their ancestors. Half the respondents also thought that cremation pollutes the air.

4.4 Practice

The people's responses towards the practice of cremation are shown in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Peoples responses to Practice questions

Criterion	Preferred answer	%	Score
Has anyone among your family been cremated?	Yes	0	0

From the table above, the adoption of cremation among respondents was very poor at 0% suggesting an aversion towards the practice of cremation among the respondents.

4.5 Relationship between KAP and socio-demographic variables

Table 4.5 Association between KAP elements and socio-demographic variables

KAP Element	**Outcome on demographic variable**	χ^2	p-value
Willingness to be cremated on death	[Sex] More men than women	6.85	0.023
Can cremation pollute the air	Age [18-25 dominant]	18.56	0.001
A cremated person's soul is not acceptable to ancestors	Age [18-25 dominant]	14.65	0.048
Cremation can be done using electricity	Sex [Males more knowledgeable] Education [Tertiary education respondents more knowledgeable]	7.58 7.45	0.021 0.003
Places for burial are running out	Sex [Females more knowledgeable]	10.15	0.004
Cremation can be accomplished using fuel wood	Education [Tertiary education respondents more knowledgeable]	10.50	0.04
The burial of corpses in graves can cause the pollution of rivers and other water bodies with chemicals that are used for the preservation of corpses	Education **[**Tertiary education respondents more knowledgeable	11.15	0.021
Cremation can pollute the air	Education [Tertiary education respondents more knowledgeable]	9.48	0.043

From table 4.5 above it can be revealed that Sex, Age and Education were the determinants of knowledge and attitudes.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Knowledge

The results indicate that respondents had a fair knowledge concerning the possibility of cremation as an alternative method to dispose corpses to substitute traditional burial using graves, a finding that contradicted the findings of Itegi (2014) in Kenya where respondents were mostly ignorant of. This may be because the studies were carried in periods that were far apart. It is possible that respondents in this study had gained more knowledge in between because of the proliferation of social media platforms where information is readily accessible. Another possibility may be the differences in literacy levels among citizens of Kenya and those in Zimbabwe where literacy levels are reported to be among the highest on the continent.

However, the majority of respondents, especially women did not know that cremation can be achieved through using electricity. They also did not have knowledge that cremation can be done using firewood. This may be because among all the respondents, none have had a relative cremated. Also where cremation is performed, it is done privately by funeral parlours. Furthermore in cases where infants die and get incinerated, the practice is not done in attendance of the relatives.

The study also revealed that the majority believed that cremation causes pollution of air. This may be because they associate cremation with the use of firewood that causes emissions of carbon dioxide. However, this may not be the case anymore with the adoption of electricity use in the cremation of bodies. The use of firewood would be perceived as having no value in protecting the environment since trees have to be cut to fund the cremation process.

The majority of respondents did not know that burial places were running out in Zimbabwe as revealed by Gwisai and Masona (2023). This unawareness may be due to the fact that most people still get buried to their rural homes were land is still relatively available without realising that the use of such land for burial imposes an opportunity cost on competing uses.

About half of the respondents were aware that the burial of corpses in the ground can lead to pollution of water bodies. This contradicts findings by Dramola, et al., (2016) where the majority of respondents did not know the effects of burial on pollution of water bodies. In the current study, this knowledge was not quite high because processes of embalming bodies involve the use of chemicals whose activities are nbeyond the grasp of ordinary people. It is

also possible that because the chemicals are applied in private by funeral parlours, people may not even be aware of their usage.

Less than half (49%) were aware that cremation has ever been carried out in Zimbabwe. This may also be due to the fact that the practice of cremation is not yet widespread in Zimbabwe especially among the black citizens and Christians save for those religions whose traditional disposal of corpses is via cremation (Hadder, 2013)

5.2 Attitudes

The study revealed that respondents' attitudes towards cremation were fundamentally negative as only 28% indicated a willingness to be cremated after death. This is in contrast with a study in Georgia where half of the respondents indicated a willingness to be cremated in the event of death. The differences in willingness may be due to differences in religious and cultural beliefs (Zwane and Zondi, 2020). Only 28% of respondents did not fear that cremation could despoil their bodies resulting in their spirits being unacceptable to the ancestors after death. Among the shona people carry out many rituals that require a grave. These rituals include "Kurova guva" (Bringing back the spirit of the dead home). Thus the fear of being burnt may be caused by the fear of not having such rituals conducted so that the spirit of the dead may be united to his ancestors. Some cultures believe that if a person is cremated, the absence of rituals that require a grave will cause the spirit of the dead person to come back as an avenging spirit that will cause harm to the family (Zwane and Zondi, 2020).

On religious grounds, about only 48% were not concerned that if they are disposed of through cremation, their bodies will not be accepted in heaven. This fear is related to the expectation of physical resurrection that requires a full body. This finding is contrary to those by Itegi (2021) where the majority of the respondents did not believe that cremating a body will violate the principles embedded in the concept of resurrection.

5.3 Practice

In terms of practice, only none of the respondents attest to having had a family member or relative who has been cremated. This can be explained by the fact that most people in Zimbabwe are bound by religious and cultural beliefs that negate the adoption of cremation. Fears of the impossibility of resurrection that needs a physical body and the fear that proper rituals require a grave may be responsible for the poor practice of cremation among the respondents. The finding that most people are not yet ready to adopt cremation was corroborated by Ngubane (2019) and Gwisai and Masona (2023) who revealed that most people

still preferred inhumation or burial over cremation, despite the latter's advantages. The practice of cremation may be low among the respondents may be due to their largely Christian religious extraction which conflict with evolving cultural practice that are moving towards embracing cremation (Kavulavu and Achar, 2023).

5.4 Relationship between KAP and socio-demographic variables

In terms of relationship between KAP on cremation and socio-demographic variables, men were more knowledgeable than women that cremation can be achieved using electricity. This can be due to the fact that men have many platforms like drinking places where they discuss many issues compared to women. Also it is possible that men are more interested in the use of new technologies compared to women. Again in some cultures women are not allowed to attend cremation rites.

Concerning the willingness to be cremated, significantly more men than women were willing. This may be due to the fact that more women go to church compared to men thus women may be hindered to accept cremation because of their religious orientation. Again most men are heads of households and are responsible for bearing the costs of burial thus they would rather choose cremation to avert the costs of burial. Also more men than women were of the opinion that burial in graves causes pollution of water bodies.

With regards to the opinion that cremation pollutes the air, the 18-25 age group was significantly more of that opinion than all other age groups. This can be due to the fact that this age group consists of mostly students who are aware of pollution issues compared to other groups that may be dominated by non-academics who may not be familiar with environmental issues. Furthermore, the 18-25 age group had the most number of respondents in the study.

The knowledge that cremation can be done using firewood and that cremation can pollute the air was higher for people who attained tertiary education than those who attained secondary and primary levels of education. This may be due to the fact that people with tertiary education have been more exposed to environmental issues compared to those who did primary and secondary education only.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that knowledge on cremation was relatively fair, attitudes negative and practices almost non-existent. This means the study concludes that in the study area, cremation is not to be adopted as an alternative body disposal method. The study also concludes that the determinants of knowledge and attitudes are age, education and sex.

6.2 Recommendations

The study recommends awareness campaigns about the fact that burial grounds are running out and encourage people to adopt cremation as an alternative body disposal method. The awareness campaigns should alert people of the dangers of traditional body disposal by burial on water pollution through preserving chemicals. Furthermore it is recommended that the awareness campaigns should be designed to target those of age groups above 18-25, females and those that have not attained tertiary education. This may entail using information media that are more common to ordinary people as opposed to those accessible to educated people.

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