

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES



**Exploring the Intersection of Poverty and Gender Inequality in Perpetuating
Child Marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe.**

By

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Peace and Governance in
Partial Fulfilment for the Requirements for the Bachelor of Science Honours
Degree in Peace and Governance**

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Abstract


This study explores the intersection of poverty and gender inequality in perpetuating child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe, through the lens of intersectionality theory. This framework recognizes that individuals experience multiple forms of oppression simultaneously, leading to unique experiences of marginalization. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. The study's methodology includes surveys, interviews and focus group discussions allowing for an in-depth analysis of the experiences of girls and women in Norton. The study analyses the complex relationships between poverty, gender inequality, and child marriage, highlighting how economic deprivation, lack of education, and limited job opportunities for women and girls exacerbate the vulnerability of girls to early marriage. The findings reveal that patriarchal norms and values perpetuate gender inequality, limiting girls' access to education and economic empowerment. The study recommends that policymakers and development practitioners address the root causes of child marriage by implementing poverty reduction strategies, promoting girls' education, and challenging harmful gender norms.

Keywords


Intersectionality, Child Marriage, Poverty, Gender Inequality and Girls' Empowerment.

Declaration Form

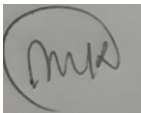
I, B212812B, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own research and study, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgments and references included in the body of the paper, and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

Student's Signature 

Date: 30/09/25

Supervisor's Signature 

Date: 30/09/25

Chairman's Signature 

Date: 14/10/2025

Dedication

To the countless girls and women whose lives have been impacted by child marriage, poverty, and gender inequality. May this research serve as a testament to the power of collective action and advocacy, and may it contribute to a world where all individuals can live with dignity and equality.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the Almighty God who has guided me throughout this academic journey. I would like to thank all those who participated in this study, particularly the community members and leaders in Norton, Zimbabwe, who shared their insights and experiences with me. Special thanks go to the organizations and individuals who facilitated my data collection. My family and friends deserve appreciation for their motivation, encouragement, and love. Finally, I thank my supervisor, for expert guidance, mentorship, and support. Be blessed abundantly.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CSO - Civil Society Organization

MOHCC - Ministry of Health and Child Care

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organizations

UN SDGs - United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

WHO - World Health Organization

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Child marriage is a continuing challenge for girls in Zimbabwe and 32% of approximately 1.9 million girls are married before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2022). This is compounded by poverty manifesting itself in socio economic challenges (pursuant to all indications, approximately 70.4% of Zimbabwe's population of around 15.2 million people, which translates to roughly 10.7 million people living below the poverty line) (World Bank, 2022) and gender inequality (only 13.8% of parliamentary seats are held by women) (IPU, 2022). Empirical studies have drawn correlations between poverty and marriage, particularly regarding child marriage, where the family is seeking economic security by some means while the proceeds from a dowry/bride price opens space for the marriage itself (Maswikwa et al. 2020). Gender inequality prevents girls from accessing education and economic opportunities, thus making them more likely to be married young (Plan International, 2020). The cultural and traditional practices of Zimbabwe create gender inequalities through lobola (bride price), patriarchy, and other regional/tribal variations, (Mwandi et al. 2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the chances of child marriage as girls are vulnerable to marriage due to poor economic circumstances seen in the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of schools (Save the Children, 2022). This study will look closely at the intersectionality of poverty and gender inequality as it relates to the causes of child marriages in Zimbabwe, while additionally helping to develop recommendations for policymakers and action group stakeholders.

1.2 Aim

This study aims to investigate the links between socioeconomic disadvantage and gender if the practice of child marriages persists in Norton, Zimbabwe in light of the complex and contextualized relationship between both elements. The research analyzed the interplay of economic hardship and gendered social, economic, and cultural barriers to child marriage in Norton by drawing upon the experiences of girls and women who have lived experiences related to child marriages. This research aims to generate empirical evidence and policy implications for policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders dealing with a complex problem in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In Zimbabwe, 1 in 3 girls face child marriages, with 33.7% of 3.9 million girls married before their age of 18 (UNICEF, 2020). This perpetuates a cycle of poverty that prevents them from completing an education with associated poverty alleviation and risk of health issues including maternal mortality and morbidity and HIV/AIDS (World Bank, 2017). Despite laws prohibiting child marriages, inequity and injustice are maintained by sporadic enforcement and practice, socio-cultural aspects and economic factors (Human Rights Watch, 2019). The research will address a current gap in the literature on how the intersection of gender inequity and poverty contribute to child marriage.

1.4 Objectives

- (a) To explore and understand how child marriage and poverty are related in Zimbabwe.
- (b) To explore and understand how gender inequality maintains child marriage.

(c) To explore and understand the lived experiences and perceptions of girls and women that have experienced early marriages in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Research Questions.

(a) How early marriages associated with poverty

(b) How does gender inequality impacts child marriage in Zimbabwe?

(c) What do they lived experiences and perceptions of girls and women that have experienced child marriage actually mean?

1.6 Research Assumptions

(a) That economic hardship is a contributor to child marriage in Zimbabwe, such that families that are experiencing economic hardship are likely to have a child marriage as a solution to avoid the burden of one more daughter.

(b) That gender inequality is a contributor of and an institution to child marriage and that gender inequality is an issue that can potentially remove and perhaps solving gender inequality would eventually reduce child marriage in Zimbabwe.

(c) That the lived experiences and perceptions of girls and women that have experienced child marriage as children in Zimbabwe has something meaningful to tell us that can inform strategies to address child marriage.

1.7 Significance of the research

Child marriage is a difficult and complex experience in Zimbabwe that has serious implications for the health, education and livelihoods of girls and women. The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between the intersection of economic pressure and gender inequality as the engine of child marriage in Zimbabwe while, at the same time, seeking to foreground the stories and experiences of the girls and women experiencing this. In developing an understanding of the complexities surrounding child marriage, this research aims to move toward better knowledge, understanding, and awareness of equality; and to contribute to the learning and action to tackling child marriage, poverty, and gender inequality in Zimbabwe. The findings from the research will provide a way to develop effective and appropriate support systems and interventions for girls and women to make decisions about their own lives, as well as provide strong evidence and recommendations to support the work of decision makers, practitioners, and others who aim to contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Girls and Women impacted by child marriage

This study is a vehicle for the voice of girls and women who have lived experience of early marriage, to tell their story and reflect their perspectives. Through listening to the challenges and lived experience of girls and women who are child married we have contributed to understanding more fully the complexities of child marriage and being engaged in work for gender equity and agency. The outcomes of this work will contribute to appropriate stakeholder support systems and interventions that respond to the needs of these young women and girls, and help them make considered decisions about their lives and future.

Policy Makers and Stakeholders

Policymakers and stakeholders are going to be able to learn much from the study we disposition our recommendations for action and discuss policymaker response to child marriage, poverty and gender inequity in Zimbabwe based on evidence. Overall, the outcomes of the study will give policymakers a better understanding of the complexity of child marriage issues and the drivers of this and facilitate better responses. And stakeholders will establish a knowledge base on the subject and assist in determining how best to design and distribute resources and programs for interventions in child marriage and the overlapping socially entrenched interventions. Researchers and Academia

This study contributes to the current knowledge base of early marriage, economic hardship, and gender inequality by filling knowledge gaps and offering fresh thinking around the relationship between early marriage, economic hardship, and gender inequality in Zimbabwe. The study's findings will be a platform for future research development and expansion, and thus allow researchers to gradually expand existing knowledge. The methodological model and strategy developed in this study will be useful as it can be repeated by other scholars as an outline for subsequent research by themselves or others.

International Development Organizations

International development organizations focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will use this research to target SDGs 1, 5, and 8. The findings, recommendations, and methodological process of this study should allow organizations to develop a systematic approach to child marriage; poverty and gender inequality challenges. Moreover, it will also give

organizations with a rich understanding of the complicated web of issues that propel children into marriage, and therefore design programs that address those issues that lead children into marriage and support their achievement of the SDGs.

Local Communities

Local communities in Zimbabwe will benefit from this research as it is an in-depth analysis of the multiple drivers behind early marriage. The results and recommendations from the research will inform community-led initiatives around early marriage, livelihoods, and gender inequality. The evidence generated from the research will also equip communities with insights and tools to develop effective models and interventions to address early marriage and the factors that drive them, to create lasting change and progress.

Government of Zimbabwe

The Government of Zimbabwe will benefit from this research because it offers an evidence-based understanding and recommendations for the government to utilize in shaping national policies and programs to address child marriage and gender equality. The findings of study will assist the Government with their understanding of the complex factors that are at play in driving child marriage and in turn, shape appropriate strategies and interventions. The research will also provide the government with a more comprehensive understanding of the issues, that can then inform where to direct resources and how programs will be developed to address child marriage and the factors that drive it more holistically.

1.8 Limitations of the research

While the researcher is aware of barriers to accessing sensitive data aggravated by the socially stigmatized phenomena of child marriages, the researcher may be able to surmount some

of the barriers through their own rapport with participants and their use of local vernacular. A few participants would also under-report and/or decline sharing data out of fear of judgement and/or retaliation from their social network (or community). The researcher intends to reduce some of the risk, by stressing the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants' responses.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

The research into economic misfortunes and gender disparities in sustaining early marriages were limited in terms of context, to a population of Norton Town, Zimbabwe. This cyclical thinking excluded alternative contexts; the literature on rights to early marriages often cite stipulated institutional arrangements and care for a child after marriage under law or customary law; this study also did not consider the local context in constructing a social safety net for sustaining early marriages.

1.10 Definition of key terms

- a) Child marriage can be defined as a situation where a person marries while under 18, either to an adult or another child, either formally or informally (UNICEF, 2022).
- b) Poverty refers to the lack of enough money to purchase the basic needs of life like food, clean water, shelter and health - WHO (2022).
- c) Gender inequality means men and women do not have equal access to the same power, resources and opportunities - equity is starkly lacking women experience higher levels of discrimination (UN Women, 2020).

1.11 The chapter outline

The study will be organized into five chapters.

Chapter one - Introduction

The chapter will present the research background, statement of the problem, aims and objectives of the study, research questions, delimitations and limitations of the study, and significance of the study.

Chapter two - Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter two focuses on giving a rationale for the research project, principles and framework which the research project has been constructed around.

Chapter three - Research Design and Methodology

Chapter three delineates the research methodology and the basic research plan. Included there was discussion on the research design, sampling methods, sampling techniques, data collection methods and analysis methods.

Chapter four - Data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings

The chapter deals with the data presentation, analysis and statistics of child marriages in Norton.

Chapter five - Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Areas for Further Research

The chapter provided summary of the research, conclusions, recommendations to stakeholders, based on the findings of the study and finally suggested areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This phase of the study examines the relationship between poverty, gender inequality and other contributing factors to child marriages in Zimbabwe. The study is undergirded by the notions in Intersectionality Theory, in which provides space to considerations of the multiple intersections that continues to trigger child marriage. The stories we hope to tell are richer through elaborating how gender inequality, poverty, and child marriage become interdependent. Interestingly, the body of literature reveals other practical lenses (Feminist Theory and Poverty Theory) to have a better theoretical grasp on understanding child marriage. Feminist Theory (UN Women 2020) specifically addresses the gendered nature, and claims space to highlighting the dynamic nature of child marriage, while the Poverty Theory (World Bank, 2022) hypothesizes that the economic status entails and 'shames' families into marrying their daughters, as they are believed to disrupt survival agenda in regress economic conditions. Ultimately, the study does not ignore any of the perspectives through the practical lens of Intersectionality Theory and seeks to enhance understanding of child marriage in Zimbabwe and the contours of its foundations.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

Poverty and gender inequalities intersect to perpetuate child marriage in Norton, Zimbabwe. The literature review employed the Intersectionality Theory (Crenshaw, 1989) to consider the extent to which each of these intersecting frameworks influence child marriage outcomes. The Intersectionality Theory applies here to respect that individuals possess multiple

identities (e.g., gender, socio-economic status, geographical location) which intersect in unique ways to create specific experiences of discrimination, marginalization, and disadvantage (Crenshaw, 1989). In relation to child marriage outcomes, the Intersectionality Theory allows for the consideration of the ways in which poverty and gender inequities work together to produce an intersectionality of child marriage.

For example, in Norton, Zimbabwe girls from impoverished families not only as a result of poor economic conditions, often face pressure to enter into marriage at an earlier age while also curtailing their access to education and limiting their economic opportunities as victims of patriarchal culture and gender management habits, all of which maintains the vulnerability of girls to child marriage (Musemwa, 2017). The Intersectionality Approach affords a context for thinking through how intersecting matrices of impoverishment, gender inequities and geographical location lead to child marriages.

Through the perspective of intersectionality theory, this research study hopes to provide a multi-dimensional understanding of the connections between poverty, gender inequality and child marriage in Norton, Zimbabwe. The development of intersection list theory may offer an alternative to reductionist or flat narratives around child marriage and acknowledge the intersectionality of different factors which may in turn impact types of child marriage.

2.3. Poverty and Economic Disadvantage

Families might see early marriage as a route to financial security (World Bank, 2022). Zimbabwe as a country is seriously affected by economic disadvantage with nearly 70% of the population experiencing economic deprivation (ZIMSTAT, 2020). This unfortunately extends the economic disadvantage factor to families who will begin to arrange an early marriage for their

young girls. Which is relevant as girls too not only lack economically conducive environments but they will be the factors leading to cyclical economic disadvantage for families. In Zimbabwe some communities, treated as used in examples during focus group discussions, young girls are seen as ‘economic liabilities’ to families and are being pushed more to facilitate arrangements for early marriage (Musemwa, 2017). To tackle economic deprivation that encourages early marriage, many factors need to be addressed. They all follow an adapted but similar path to that of the perfect policymaker’s intervention in the early marriage scenario - creating economic disparity in the battle of economic deprivation so it directly addresses early marriage. Economic disparity needs to focus on strategies that also support economic resilience whilst challenging to provide girls with supportive education. Research needs to be conducted on contextual economic opportunities addressing and preventing early marriages.

2.4. Gender Inequality

In Zimbabwe, women are subject to multiple social, cultural, and economic constraints to their agency and autonomy (USAID, 2020). In general, girls are seen as less valued than boys, or viewed as an asset to be sold or exchanged for social or financial capital. The National Family Health Survey (2019) found that girls of lower caste families in India are more likely to marry at a young age. Discriminatory attitudes and practices must change to stop child marriage. Supporting and enabling girls’ agency and providing girls with quality education can and should be prioritized. The research must identify ways to fight discriminatory attitudes and practices.

2.5. Social Norms and Cultural Practices

There are vast contributions made by social norms, customs and cultures to the perpetuation of early marriage. For example, wealth, though there are inequalities therein, does

make it possible for families to manage some constraints (for example, the expectation of 'lobola' (bride price) could force girls into early marriage in Zimbabwe) (Chitando, 2017). Early marriage is often a product of traditional or religious custom and changing the social norms that can be attached to that custom may be a necessary step in stopping early marriage. In some communities of some countries, it may be expected of girls to marry much older men and that is quite a common practice and no one is surprised (UNICEF, 2020). So, it is important to share the values of assets and resources with the community leaders and communities as to who is the 'right' community leaders and communities that can challenge those norms and propose new positive norms. However, it is very important that there is more research to find how to engage the right community leaders and members in challenging those norms.

2.6. Impacts of Child Marriage

The effects of child marriage can be life-threatening, public health consequences for girls; health outcomes related to reproductive health access to health services, maternal health risk, diminished educational attainment and economic opportunity, and negative psychosocial consequences (UNICEF, 2020). More specifically, child brides have higher risks of maternal mortality and obstetric fistula as well as sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and so on, as a result of giving birth too early and limited access to health services (World Health Organization, 2019). In the case of one 13-year-old girl, internal ruling (bleeding) as a sequela of forced child marriage immediately after marriage to a 30-year-old man in Yemen was the child bride's cause of death (Human Rights Council 2019). The violence of the impact of forced child marriage is tragic for every individual girl affected, however collectively, it keeps communities locked in cycles of impoverishment and inequity. We need more granular details around harmful predatory and coercive child marriages and impacts on girls' health, particularly physical and mental health,

including economic status of girls, to really grasp the urgency of the negative (often) lifelong impacts.

2.7. Prevention Strategies

Increasing girls' autonomy through education and livelihoods is critical, as supported by the "Girls' Education Challenge" which focused on supporting girls' education in developing nations (DFID, 2019). It is also important, of course, to strengthen and implement laws and policies to prohibit child marriage, for instance in Bangladesh the "Child Marriage Restraint Act" (ICRW, 2018). Programs that are community-led and community-based and that involve local leaders and community members are also critical in influencing social norms and action and creating alternative practices.

2.8. Summary

This chapter has provided an extensive review of the literature on poverty and gender inequality and how they are driving factors of child marriages in Zimbabwe through the framework of the Intersectionality Theory. There were Key Findings related to the drivers and impacts of child marriage, the risks associated with child marriage, and opportunities for prevention of child marriage. There are severe impacts of child marriage, which include health and safety impacts, no education, economic and powerlessness and trauma. Key drivers of child marriage are identified as poverty, social norms, and gender inequality. Prevention strategies were identified as empowering girls/women to positively journey towards their future through education and safe economic opportunities for girls/women; community mobilization around preventing child marriage; strengthening policy/laws; and influencing social norms. While child marriage literature is emerging, significant gaps in the existing literature exist that include the need for longitudinal

studies; research and evaluations that take place in humanitarian settings; research that examines the impact of interventions; and research that actively considers men in prevention; and these gaps informed the research questions and methodology of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGNS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter identifies, and discusses, the methodological issues related to the study. This chapter will present the research design, a rationale for the chosen methodology, a description of the sampling and data collection methods and presentation for the research. The ethical concerns, validity and reliability of the study will also be presented and addressed.

3.2 Methodology

Research methodology can be defined as the systematic process of collecting and logically analyzing data for a given purpose (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). This research will follow an integrated research methodology to examine the connection between economic hardship and unequal gender relations, in sustaining child marriage, in Norton, Zimbabwe. The rationale for using integrated methodology is that it is best suited to provide an all-encompassing understanding of both how early marriage is a complex phenomenon that is constituted by a range of social, economic and cultural considerations. This study will use an integrated quantitative and qualitative methodology, which will provide both breadth and depth of understanding of the relationship between economic hardship and unequal gender relations in child marriage.

3.3 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy chosen to integrate the different components of a study in coherent and logical way, thereby ensuring you will effectively address the research

problem. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection measurement and analysis of data as defined by (Castein, 2010). The study will use a concurrent mixed-methods design where quantitative and qualitative methods will be used to gain a richer understanding of the phenomenon. The quantitative strand will identify the prevalence and factors that may be associated with early marriage and relationship, while the qualitative strand will explore the lived experiences, views and socio-cultural norms, with respect to the phenomenon of early marriage.

3.4 Data Collection and Research Instruments

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, the study will use a multi-faceted approach to data collection. The study will collect quantitative data through a survey from 50 households from the selected areas of Norton for a representative sample of community views on early marriage. The quantitative study will allow for structured data collection that can be subject to statistical analysis and therefore reveal patterns.

Besides quantitative data collection, the study will incorporate qualitative approaches to assist in deeper and varied understanding of the experiences and attitudes of key stakeholders. In-depth qualitative interviewing with 20 girls who had experience of adolescent arranged marriage; 10 girls' parent/guardians and 10 community leaders to learn about their individual stories, motivations and opinions. The study will use some focus group discussion with adolescent girls, boys and women's groups to gain a sense of group opinion, norms and group dynamics. Through a concurrent mixed-methods design and data triangulation, the study will strengthen issues of validity and reliability by reducing the limitations of respective methods.

3.5 Research instruments

The study will utilize a survey questionnaire which will generate quantitative data on the prevalence (incidence) and correlates of early marriage within Norton Town, Zimbabwe. The questionnaire will be developed from wide existing literature and expert knowledge.

We will be utilizing semi-structured interview protocols to gather information regarding the rich experiences of adolescent girls who have undergone early marriage, parents/guardians or significant other who were complicit with early marriages of adolescent girls, and in addition, we will be exploring the perspectives of community leaders from local government and traditional leaders, along with stakeholders who represent and serve the interests of the community that they signify. Lastly, the use of focus group discussion guides will assist in data gathering that will explore community-level attitudes and perceptions related to early marriage by providing different community groups, male and female (boys, girls and women's groups) avenues to express their perspectives.

3.6 Target Population

This study explored child marriage as a multiplicity in Norton Town, Zimbabwe, with the overall goal of gaining understanding about the lived experiences and perspectives of those who have been affected. The specific target population for the study consisted of four groups: (a) Adolescent Girls, aged 12-19 years, who are experiencing early marriages; (b) Parents/Guardians who were complicit with Early marriages of adolescent girls; (c) Community Leaders and Stakeholders (traditional leaders, village elders, local government officials whose attitudes and perspectives influence communal attitudes); and (d) Households in High-Prevalent Areas, those

who are residing in areas of high prevalence of early marriages. The intention of the study design is to draw themes and understandings from the perspectives and lived experiences of these exploratory groups with a view to establishing a more thorough understanding of early marriage on

3.7 Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling will be used to select districts with the highest levels of child marriage rates at the local level while household sampling will use systematic random sampling. When gathering qualitative data we will use snowball and convenience sampling.

3.8 Sample size

The study sample will consist of 50 households for quantitative data collection, permitting a representative picture of the characteristic in Norton Town. The qualitative component will consist of interviews with 20 key informants (adolescents, parents/guardians and community leaders) to obtain deep narratives to understand their experience. There will also be 3 focus group interviews comprised of certain community groups-descriptive adolescent girls, adolescent boys, women's groups-to obtain collective perspectives and community expectations regarding child marriage.

3.9 Ethical consideration

Ethical integrity regarding the research process was paramount to achieve a useful and respectful research project. Prior to data collection, all participants will go through a process of receiving informed and written consent, with consent forms being translated into local languages with allowance for signing or not signing. We will also have special consideration to ensure

protections for adolescent girls and women for possible harms from the research. All interviews that will require sensitivity and will need support services will be offered accordingly. This will be carried out with cultural sensitivity and awareness. This will include being cognizant of local customs, honoring local traditions, and following local protocols by permitting data collection to be conducted in ways that accommodates local differences as required. We will be working with local leaders to determine cultural sensitivity.

3.10 Validity and Reliability

Validity is how credible the research evidence is and the extent to which evidence elicits inferential support (Polit and Beck, 2012). The study ensured validity by using semi-structured interviews, which is crucial because it ensures that the data gathered is not biased as it allows cross-verification from one or more sources. This approach also enabled the researcher to gather in-depth insights into the participants experiences and perceptions. Reliability refers to the precision of information that has been collected from a study and the fact that it cannot be changed (Bowling, 2009). Reliability is considered a measure of the amount of random error in the measurement technique and is concerned with characteristics such as dependability, consistency, accuracy, and compatibility. The study ensured reliability by maintaining a consistent data collection protocol and conducting interviews in a neutral and non-threatening environment.

3.11 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data presentation is a means of illustrating the features of the distribution of data in a convenient form as defined by Silverman (2010). The researcher adopted the use of graphs,

tables, and charts to present the data. Data analysis according to Cohen and Ullman (2007) involves organizing, accounting for, and making sense of the data in terms of the participants definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities. The study employed thematic analysis in examining the data. Thematic analysis is based on themes and follows a logical progression, whereby the information gathered will be grouped into key themes that emerged from the findings (Kumar, 2011). Thematic analysis is appropriate because it offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analyzing qualitative data. It also allowed the study to go beyond simply counting phrases and words but allowed the researcher to have a rich description of the data set. Thus, the study thematically analyzed the findings by compiling descriptive summaries and analysis. The analysis was also assisted by the literature obtained from documentary sources.

3.12 Feasibility

The feasibility of the study will transpire in a few different ways. First, partnerships with local organizations will support access to the target population and context-specific information on the target population. Experimental documents and validity of research instruments will be piloted to ensure that they function and provide suggestions for modifications. Finally, the commitment of time, human, and financial resources has been provided to support the completion of the study so the researcher can implement the methodology and activities as they plan to.

3.13 Potential limitations

This study has many potential limitations. Firstly, by using convenience sampling, we may have introduced a selection bias, resulting in a sample that is not fully representative of our target

population. Secondly, we must acknowledge potential bias in participants regarding social desirability; participants may have been influenced by social acceptability and provided their socially acceptable answer rather than their own true reflection of the event. Transferability of findings may also be limited based on geographic specifics of the study. Additionally, we must be cognizant that time limits the data we might collect, when we could potentially collect richer and more accurate information, thus limiting the richness and accuracy of information we can collect. The study recognizes these limitations and will try to minimize their effect, through a validation of data quality and detailed sampling framework, to contribute meaningful knowledge about child marriage in Norton Town, Zimbabwe.

3.14 Summary

This present study draws on a parallel convergent mixed-methods design to look at the complex interplay of poverty and gender inequalities that keep child brides in Zimbabwe. The study uses a range of reductive design strategies, in the forms of surveys and semi-structured interviews and focus groups involving 50 households, 20 girls who married early, 10 parents and/or guardians, 10 community leaders, a representative sample of adolescent girls and boys and women's groups. The study adopts an inclusive stance that recognizes the significance of power systems that perpetuate early marriage or simply ignore it, and has aimed to raise, as much as possible the voices of son marginalized communities. The study employed purposive sampling, systematic random sampling, snowball sampling, and non-probability convenience sampling. The study took into consideration multiple ethical implications, as it attends strictly to ethical elements

of informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity. The study acknowledges significant limitations (selection bias, social acceptability bias, regional bias, time) and took steps to mitigate these and not have the limitations any greater than they would be.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

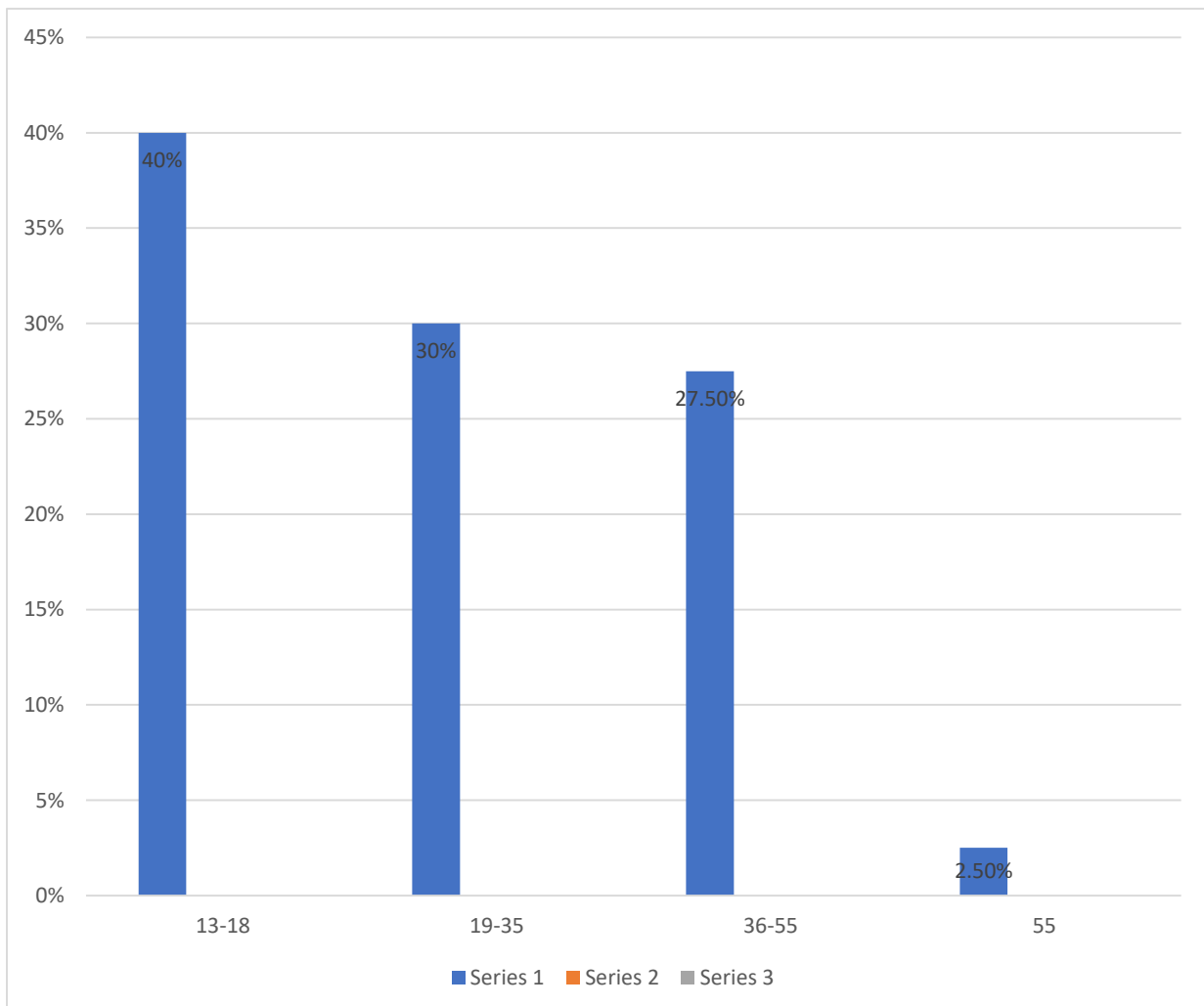
This chapter provides a synthesis of the findings of the exploratory research on the relationship between poverty and the gender-based inequalities associated with early marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. The data collection process consisted of empirical mixed methods research in a sequentially integrated survey approach to qualitative semi structured interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders to represent significant inputs such as parents, community leaders, and the reproductive decision maker and participants in early marriage. The chapter will discuss the lived experiences, perceptions and perspectives of the participants, and also how uniquely complicated such an interplay might be in terms of poverty, gender inequalities and early marriage. For comparative and organizational purposes, the findings have been arranged around goal directed themes that are similar in structure to the questions guiding this research and included as much data as possible presented mainly in tables, graphical and descriptive form as a reflection of the inherent complicatedness of the problem. The chapter intends to answer as many of the research questions as possible.

4.2 SECTION A: Background demographic profile of participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	12	30%
Female	28	70%
Total	40	100%

There were forty participants and twenty-eight were females and 12 were males meaning to say thirty percent were males and seventy percent were females.

2. Age



2. The first group of respondents had consisted of age 13 – 18 which made up 40% of total. The second largest group of respondents had consisted of age 19 – 35 which totaled 12 respondents or made up 30% of total. The next largest group of respondents had consisted of age 36 – 55, with 11 respondents or 27% of total, and lastly the smallest group (55+), which only consisted of 1 respondent and only made up 2.5% of the total number of participants total 40.

3. Employment status

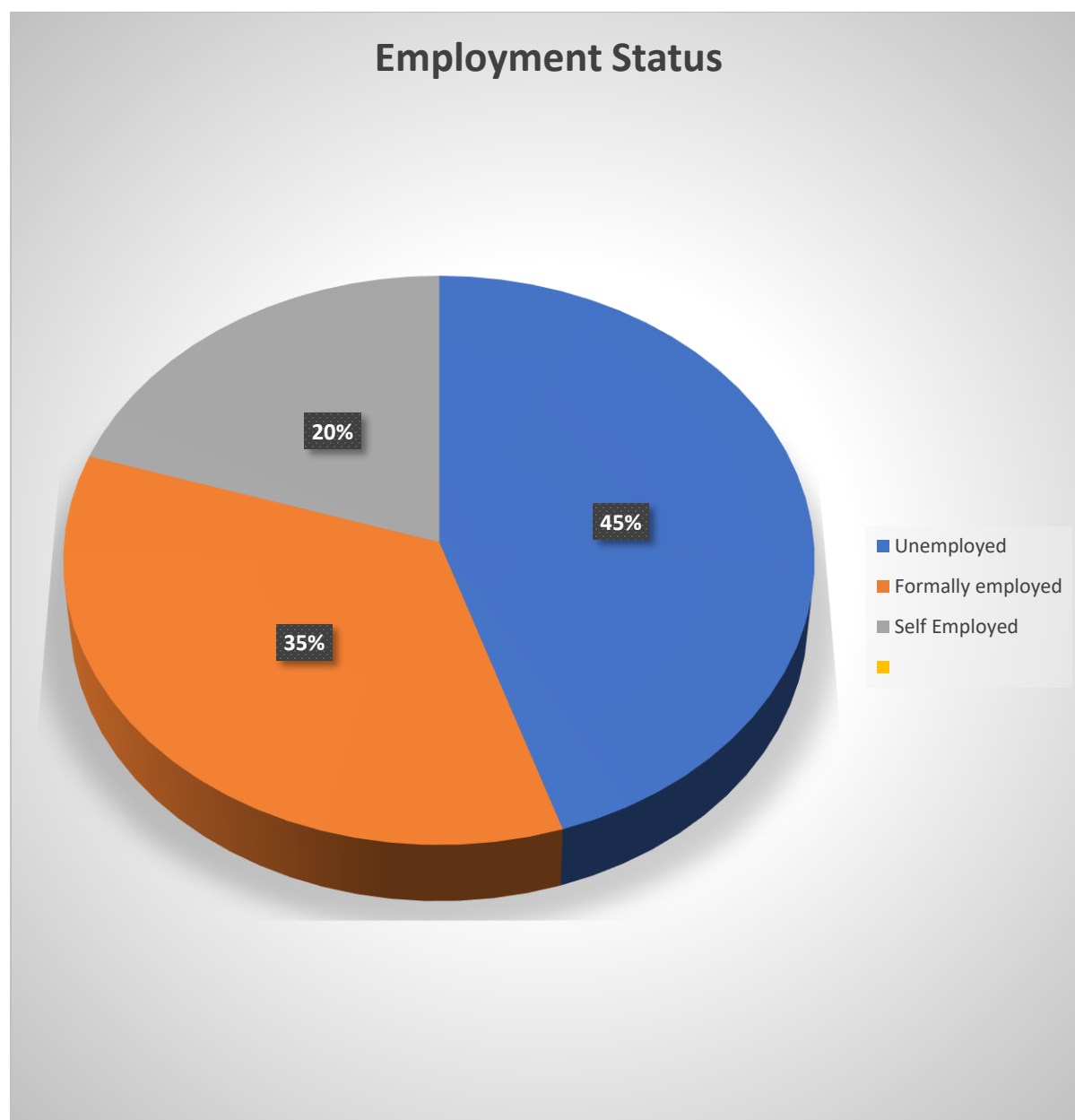


Fig 4.3

The largest group of respondents were unemployed which consisted of eighteen respondents, whereas self-employed group comprised of eight respondents and formally employed group included fourteen respondents out of the forty respondents.

4. Marital status

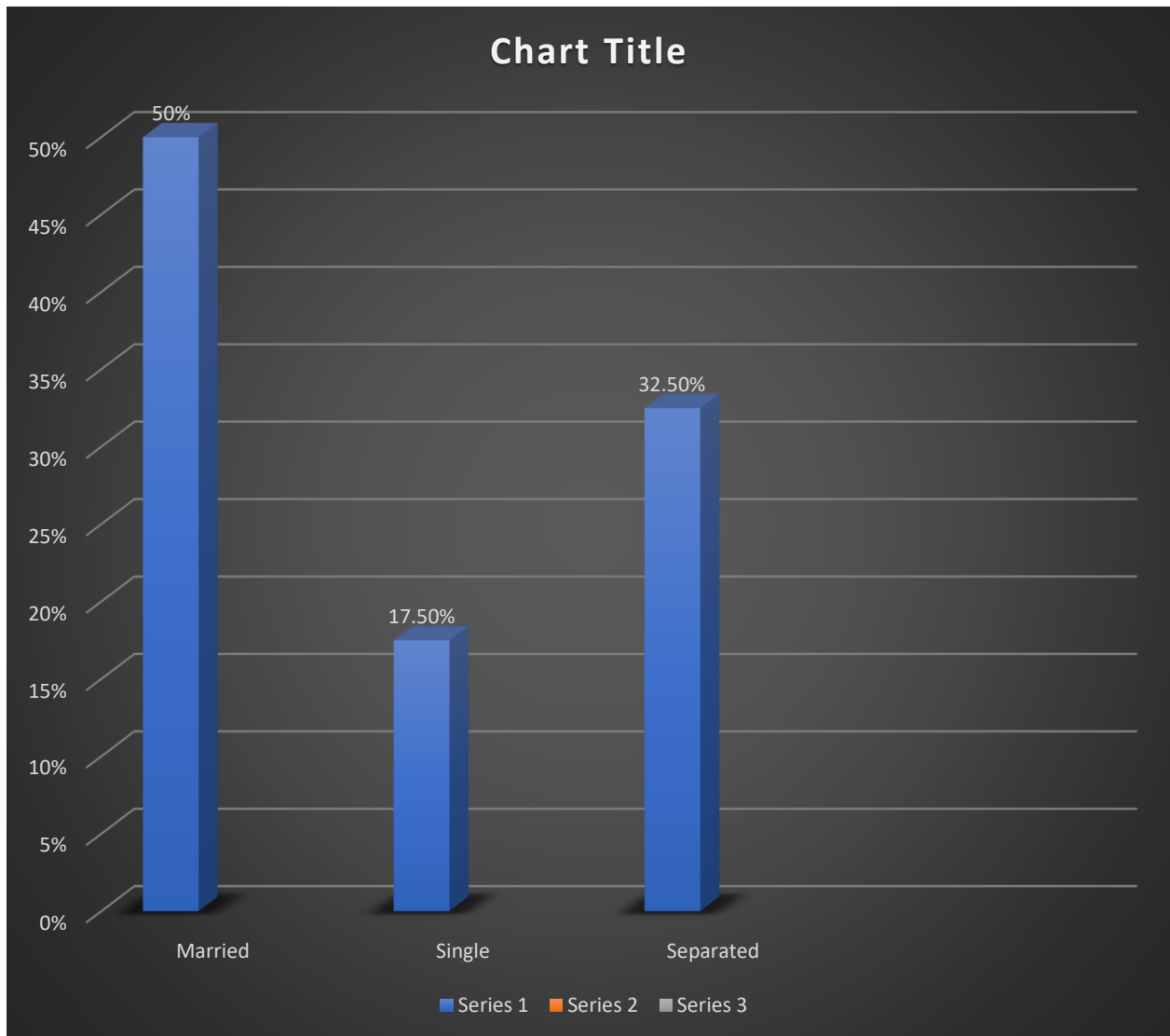


Fig 4.4

The study illustrates that the group respondents is mostly married which included twenty respondents, then separated respondents thirteen, and single seven out of 40.

SECTION B

4.3 Reasons for Child Marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe

Reason for Child Marriage	No of Participants	Percentage of Participants	
Pregnancy	16	40%	
Poverty	12	30%	
Love eloping	4	10%	
Church	8	20%	
	TOTAL	40	100%

Fig 4.5

The pie graph in Fig 4.5 lists the most frequent reasons identified by research participants for child marriage. The most common was pregnancy, as indicated (16 of 40 = 40% of total number of participants); followed by poverty, indicated by twelve participants (30% of total number of participants); church/religious beliefs by eight (20%); and love/elopement, found by 4 (10%; of total number of participants). The experiences narrated by these participants provide some insight of the interlocking influences that contextualized the reasons for marrying as a child. For some research participants, pregnancy and parental pressure figured prominently (If one girl had not gotten pregnant and / or if he had wage employment, they may have avoided an early marriage):

"I got pregnant, and my parents suggested he had to marry me."

For others, poverty and desperation limited the choices they had.

"I was poor and thought I would be better off by marrying in these horrible economic conditions."

These statements highlight how social pressures, economics, and lack of agency can in timetables and opportunities for girls. The leading factor for child marriages is poverty, and while impoverished families do not often have much of choice with poverty, to get married makes sense because it frames adult marriage as eliminating some amount of financial responsibility, as this shows much of the social and psychological hopelessness that poverty offers. As stated by Chae and Hwang (2020), poverty constrains access to education or access to even employment opportunities, or to the possibility of ever being employed, but, ultimately, where the only path is marriage.

This continues cycles even more, but when poverty is an almost total aspect of decision-making poverty is an auto contributor to the child marriage considering that poverty suppresses almost every other societal aspect, and there are so very many inter-locking - intersectionally focused socio-economic structures, e.g., education; limited employment opportunities, etc., can shape and potentially escalate child marriages within the lens of intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 2017), with social acceptance and even some cultures preferring marriage or marriage as the preferred option. Precisely all one transitioning into an adult relationship with children adds layers of consequence with applicable terms. Addressing child marriages, the work is about the many relevant dynamics of contextualization when breaking socio-economic status and the cycles.

In the town of Norton, Zimbabwe, religion plays an important role in child marriages. As one respondent explained, there is a *"Prophet in my church who had a vision that I was going to be his wife and insisted that was God's will"*. 20% of the participants attributed to early marriage some relationship to church or religious beliefs. The literature on child marriage includes only a few authors who discuss the extent to which religious beliefs and practices facilitate the

continuation of child marriage (Wodon et al., 2017). This data lends itself to these largely unexplored finding relating to child marriage factors which have to do with the practice and beliefs around religion.

Also, the data suggests that pregnancy is also an important contributing factor to child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. The findings presented here suggest that girls, because of constructed expectations, are laden with stigma, burdens, and expectations around being married early, or faced with premarital pregnancy stigma, or worse, premarital pregnancy stigma and then forced to marry as noted by one respondent who said, *"I got pregnant at 17 and in order not to shame the family name I had to marry the boy that was responsible"*. This demonstrates the shame and stigma felt by families, and practically, the shame and stigma often require daughters to have to marry before premarital pregnancy.

The same shocking narrative and statistic, with 40% of respondents stating pregnancy as a reason for why they think child marriage occurs, validated the narrative. Pregnancy is commonly cited as a cause for child marriages in many, many African countries (UNICEF, 2020). These findings suggest a need for all entities to increase awareness on sexual education and access to reproductive health services, and to change the way we think about social norms to eliminate child marriages, along with more intervention activities to empower girls.

In addition to this, there were findings that love or eloping is a rationale for child marriages in Norton Zimbabwe. As one respondent said: *"I loved my boyfriend and I was going to leave so I eloped."* For instance, 10% of respondents indicated love or eloping is a reason for marrying at an early age. The literature discussed about love and eloping as rationale for child marriage, specifically, where there are insufficient educational and job opportunities (Erulkar & Muthengi, 2019). Therefore, this concept suggests love is somewhat of an aberration of child marriages.

4.4 The Relationship Between Poverty and Child Marriages

The evidence shared by the participants interviewed in the study showed a clear link between poverty and child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. Thirty percent of the participants shared were influenced by poverty and chose to marry because of it. This is in line with what the literature in the subject area noted since poverty was summarized as the root cause of child marriages (Mason 2005; UNICEF, 2018) that were studied. As discussed in section 2.3.2, poverty links and intersects with other socio-economic levelled denied factors like educational marginalization, and job/paid work rate to intersect with their ability to wait to marry as a result of poverty (Crenshaw, 1991). The lived experiences of the participant samples indeed accounted the role of poverty in their decision making in relation to child marriages. The stories shared by the participants demonstrated an intersectional understanding of poverty, and child marriage as is seen below when one of the participants discusses their financial hardship: - *"I experienced financial difficulties and I thought if I married, my life would change. My husband told me he would cater for me and my family"*.

Another participant provided a similar example; while the context surrounding financial issues and schooling were salient situational imperatives: And, *"I didn't have many choices. I was financially needy, and unable to attend school."* One participant observed, *"Getting married maybe was my best choice for improving my life"*, and another participant general observation was that, *"Poverty is a big issue in our community"*. The findings were aligned with other findings - and identified economic empowerment, education and employment as possible opportunities to intervene to prevent child marriage (Erulkar & Muthengi, 2019; Wodon et al., 2017). The authors of the study suggest to view economic empowerment, education and employment creation as

opportunities not just to respond to child marriage, but ultimately improve the lives of girls and women.

4.5 Gender Inequality and the Entrenchment of Child Marriages

The data show that gender inequality plays a substantial, if institutionalized, role in the continuation of child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. At least 20% of participants indicated that church/ religious beliefs affected their decisions about marrying as children, and those beliefs also reinforced gender inequality in terms of the value and importance attributed to early marriage. This supports other academic literature that has identified gender inequality as a significant contributor to the persistence of child marriages (UNFPA, 2012; Girls Not Grey, 2017). The theory of Intersectionality posits that gender inequality intersects with other disadvantaged socio-economic intersections, such as poverty, unemployment and education (Crenshaw, 1991), to forbid efforts to end child marriage. Participants' narratives from the current study revealed gender inequalities which contribute to early marriages.

The accounts from participants demonstrate evidence of clear influence of social responsibility and gender roles in child marriage. One participant reflected on the intermingling of her gender identity and her parents' expectation of the traditional feminine roles, as possible reasons for her forced marriage, saying, *"I was forced to marry because everyone expected me to take up the traditional expectations of women, and, it was time for me to have family obligations at home."* Another participant articulated a largely similar experience with little autonomy, stating, *"I didn't have much power to make decisions; my parents and husband made the decisions, I felt obligated and was expected to pursue housework."* A third participant made a further statement repeated the two participants' statements in a broader sense, *"There is gender inequality in our*

community. For girls, marriage is expected early and home obligations expected later. Boys are expected to concentrate on education; employment is secondary. It just doesn't seem fair." These quotes highlight how inflexible gender expectations perpetuates child marriage.

These statements show how existing constraints of gender inequality prevent girls in Norton from successfully transitioning from child brides. Data generated in this research are consistent with other studies highlighting how the promotion of gender equality goals would forestall child marriage in many African countries (Wodon et al., 2017; Erulkar & Muthengi, 2019). This challenges policy and practitioners to prioritize gender equality goals and engage patriarchal orientations of community development in the light of child marriage prevention and improving the wellbeing of girls and women.

4.6 Experiences and Perspectives of Girls and Women as Child Brides

The evidence outlined above clearly shows in the Norton, Zimbabwe context girls and women face challenges, barriers, burdens and trauma in their exit from child marriages. Many participants reflected on experiences of physical and emotional violence, challenges/barriers accessing services, and barriers to achieving financial independence.

Looking at the examples stories participants shared, collectively they illustrated powerful examples of what can happen to children because of child marriage. For these participants, child marriage meant the end of their education - an opportunity that has ended and the future possibility defined as domestic and child caring work. One participant reflected: *"It felt like I have been given the right to be given away after leaving school. I regret it so much because my future came from education, and I am now at home taking care of my husband and kids."* Some participants indicated the "normal" relationships associated with child marriage often had violence, abuse, as indicated

from one participant: "*I was abused by my husband and had to move away, am finding it hard to stay alive with my children, I don't know how I am going to care for them*". One participant considers what could be lasting outcome of child marriage is, maybe lost choices, loss of economic empowerment: "*I was given away to a man much older than me. He abused me and controlled me and had to run away. Now I am alone but it's hard to stay alive. I wish I finished school and got a job.*" These were experiences that illustrate the ways in which child marriages deny the opportunities and choices at the hands of girls and women.

The results align with existing literature on the multiple negative impacts of child marriage on girls and women such as - limitations of access to services, limited economic opportunity, and amplified risk for emotional and physical abuse (UNICEF, 2018; World Health Organization, 2011), as well as the intersectionality described in the work of Crenshaw (1991). Crenshaw (1991) conceptualized intersectionality, where she-in part makes visible the stunting effect poverty, education level, and gendered marginalization have with child marriage model. Crenshaw (1991) describes intersectionality as conditions to be faced with multiple and compounding forms of marginalization which intersect and overlap. In the case of child marriage, intersectionality displays how poverty, education, and gendered marginalization overlap and interact to constrain options for girls and women, and allow for child marriage to continue."

The study's results also support that an economic entitlement, and increased risk of poverty, is a long-term potential of child marriage for girls and women. Once again, the results are consistent with the literature which indicates that child marriages do create poverty and inequality for girls (and women), and furthermore create 'intergenerational poverty', or 'intergenerational inequality' (Wodon et al., 2017). Overall, in simple terms, the results relate to significant implications, and also identify child marriage as multifaceted requiring a broader systemic

response. The results suggest that (perspective) policy will want to arguably work with seeking policy-makers, de facto maybe even collaboratively working with communities working with children & women to pursue education and economic empowerment, and gender equity as ways of counteracting child marriages and wellbeing for girls and women.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the major findings about the different causes of child marriage in Norton, Zimbabwe. The results found that pregnancy, poverty, church/religious beliefs and romance all contributed to child marriages. Of the four causes pregnancy was the most common cause of child marriage, followed by poverty, church/religious beliefs and romance. The study found that it is really complicated to disentangle how the intersections of poverty, gender inequalities and lack of educational opportunities contribute to child marriages, and this made it difficult to identify the various elements. This chapter has provided the voices and experiences of the girls and women who experienced child marriage and listed some of the consequences and circumstances that they have faced. This study suggested public policy and practice should consider the intersections of poverty and the importance of promoting education and gender equality by establishing educational programme about child marriages for social change and to better the lives of girls and women.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the primary findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The study has explored the effects of poverty and gender inequity on child marriage in Norton, Zimbabwe. This chapter brings together the components of the study: the introduction, review of literature, theoretical framework, methodology, data analysis, and findings. It illustrates how the research objectives have been achieved and how the findings relate to and answers the research questions. The chapter will then present recommendations for various stakeholders around the issue of child marriage in Norton. The chapter will lastly explore further research opportunities.

5.2 Summary

Chapter One commenced the journey of the doctoral research study that has investigated the complex effects of poverty and gender inequality on child marriage in Norton, Zimbabwe. The chapter provided enough contextual background for the study that addressed the issue of child marriage and presented relevant statistics based on the global, national, and local levels. The chapter addressed the limitations of the study, the research problem, presented the research aims and questions, and discussed some terminology used throughout this study.

Chapter Two examined the existing literature on the relationship between poverty and gender inequality in the continuation of child marriages. In this chapter, the theoretical perspectives were reviewed: feminist theory; social exclusion theory; and intersectionality theory

to examine the complexities of the relationships between poverty, gender inequality, and greater incidence of child marriages. The tentative literature reviews also incorporated the predictors of child marriages, community and societal attitudes and engagement, and the impact of both poverty and gender inequality as individual contributors to child marriages. Overall, the literature review formed a solid basis for thinking about the research issue and research questions.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the research design and methodology for examining the relationship between poverty and gender inequality as risk factors for child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. This chapter justified the rationale for a mixed-methods research approach and provided an outline of the sampling design process for research participants.

Chapter Two outlined the data gathering techniques that involved surveys, interviews, focus groups, and the analysis of data procedures. Chapter Three explained the ethical considerations regarding the validity and reliability of the research, and ensuring participants' privacy and confidentiality.

Chapter Four presented the findings of the factors resulting in child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. The findings showed pregnancy, Extreme poverty, religious customs, and elopement was identified as four of the factors leading to child marriage with pregnancy being close to forty percent of the reasons stated. The chapter established poverty-related issues as well as issues related to gender inequalities and lack of access to education intersected and led to existing situations of child marriages. The chapter captured the actual voices of girls and women sharing their own personal stories of child marriages and the ongoing obstacles and challenges. The chapter summarized the findings with recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to invest in poverty alleviation, educational equity, and gender equality to reduce child marriages and contribute to improvement of health and well-being of girls and women.

Chapter five is a summary of the entire research, and from chapter one to chapter five. It reflects on the study about the context of how poverty and inequities of gender, creates conditions for child marriages to occur in Norton, Zimbabwe. The findings, conclusion and recommendations have been jointly analysed in this chapter. The summaries of the findings highlighted the link between poverty, inequities of gender and child marriages. It also identifies other ways for policy makers and community leaders and practitioners to act to protect girls from child marriages. It discusses prospects for further research.

5.3 Summary of findings

The findings indicate that child marriage in Norton occur as the result of several different factors: contextual notion of poverty; pregnancy; religious belief; and gender disparities. While study participants noted several other reasons for child marriage in Norton, the leading factors noted were economic hardship and pressure to marry upon getting pregnant (30% relating to poverty and 40% relating to pregnancy). Additionally, religious tenets and gender inequality perpetuate child marriage as patriarchal values and norms encouraged and maintained traditional female roles. The findings of the research seem to resonate with intersectionality theory and the explicit interest in a multi-dimensional framework to explore the factors of child marriage. We can confront child marriage and facilitate girl's empowerment in Norton, Zimbabwe, if ours and the policy and practitioners commitments are focused on three focal areas: recognising the lived realities of poverty; understanding the intertwined nature between education and gender equality; provision of sexual education in schools and appropriate community settings; and finally, a community based initiative that depends on discussing the voices of children who feel pressure to marry is necessary.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions will consider the aims and results of the study.

5.4.1 Aim one

Investigate the relationship between poverty and child marriages in Zimbabwe.

Results of the study show that many of the respondents connected poverty with child marriages in Zimbabwe. Thirty percent of the respondents communicated that the financial burden of their poverty resulted in families in poverty marrying off their daughters. Therefore, a connection between poverty and child marriages is evident. In addition, the study found that education and economic opportunities, both limited by poverty, hindered families from escaping the clutches of poverty and ending the cycle of child marriages.

It seems men respondents connected basic needs like food and shelter, and not being able to provide for their children, with plenty of poverty contributory characteristics being an indirect contributor of child marriages. The findings of this study results provided evidence that supports and reinforces the World Bank (2019) claims that the best way to address child marriages is to target economic inequality and poverty before it burgeons into child marriages which can damage the progressive development of children to adulthood.

The study results provided evidence that poverty does aid promoting child marriages by regulating girls and women's autonomy and increasing the susceptibility of girls and women to child marriages.

5.4.2 Objective two

To analyze the influence of gender inequality to sustain child marriages in Zimbabwe.

Through the research, it was found that the implications of gender inequality for child marriages have far reaching effects; many of the participants described discriminatory laws and policies as one of the most influential factors contributing to child marriage. This corroborates research from the World Health Organization (2019), that demonstrated tackling discrimination laws in old laws and practices is an imperative step to prevent child marriage. In addition, the study found that gender inequality sustained child marriages by restricting girls' and women's agency and autonomy, thus increasing the risks of child marriage.

The findings of this study also suggest that gender inequality has ramifications that exceed just the girls and women being wed, and involve the families and communities that engage in child marriage. Many participants in the study referred to child marriage as a determinant of social exclusion and economic incapacity for girls and women, which ultimately continues to cycle poverty and inequality for many. This is consistent with the work of the International Centre for Research on Women (2018) to address child marriage and its extent and social and economic implications, as a way to take on inequality at the source.

5.4.3 Objective three

To determine the experiences and perspectives of girls and women who are affected by child marriages in Zimbabwe.

The survey findings suggested that most respondents generally agree that girl children and women affected by child marriages routinely encounter significant challenges. Many respondents identified limited access to education and economic opportunities as one of the most significant challenges because it laid much of the partial rationale behind many girls and woman entering into early marriages. This aligns with previous research and evidence on the significant importance of

education and economic empowerment on countering early marriage (UN Girls' Education Initiative, 2019). The survey findings also identified that social isolation is also a challenge, with the majority of respondents commenting limited social support and stigma is also a significant contributor to the persistence of child marriages. The study also helped to confirm the effects of child marriages on girls and women, focusing on barriers to health care and economic access, with the majority of respondents noted those limited access pathways as an important obstacle to accessing health care and economic. This is also in keeping with the research done by the World Health Organisation (2019), which indicated that the implications of child marriages needed to be broadened, especially the broader social and economic factors affecting girls and women, due to child marriages. In addition, the study findings indicated that child marriages place girls and women at a disadvantage of living a cycle of poverty and inequality, which marginalize them, and making it at such that girls and women are trapped in child marriages and the cycle of poverty. The indicated results are that girls/women who experience child marriage clearly live with extreme emotional and psychological trauma or trauma - as an emotional or psychological impact - in their lives. Several girls spoke about feeling, "disempowered, isolated" or stigmatized in some way which suggested supportability related to propriety in terms of the need assessment afforded to context 'supportive services or support to girl/women experiencing child marriages' - especially with respect to the International Centre for Research on Women (2018) study, and the notion that they were trying to study context, and context specifically in relation to understand emotional and psychological with girl/women who have experienced child marriages.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 For Girl and Women in Child Marriage

Girls and women in child marriage use supports from - counselling, education, and economic and political empowerment, could be found within the local organizations, support groups and community of girls and women whom they can have a supportive, open atmosphere where they can express and year of lived experience with the girls and women, and will have to make the decisions that are connected to their experience and themselves with respect to their lived lives.

5.5.2 To Policymakers and Stakeholders

Policymakers and stakeholders should develop and implement policies that directly address the root causes of child marriage and support the realization of children's rights, across all areas including poverty, gender inequality, lack of access to education, and limited skill development. Policymakers can help address the root causes of child marriage and prevent children from becoming brides in the first place, by increasing investment in education and economic empowerment initiatives, leading and/or supporting implementation of legislation and policies that support the rights of girls and women, and supporting initiatives that promote community solutions to prevent child marriage. For this reason, policymakers and stakeholders must listen and engage with girl and women and local communities, so that those at-risk, whether being child marriage or child bride, inform their approaches to policy and that policies achieve what they intend.

5.5.3 To Researchers and Academics

We urge researchers and the academic community to continue to engage with the complexity of poverty and gender inequality as the underlying factors of child marriage persistence. Researchers should also look at effective prevention strategies, including programs focused on community engagement approaches and education and economic empowerment initiatives, and policy initiatives. Researchers and the academic community also need to engage with local organizations and decision-makers and other relevant groups to build a knowledge base and to implement research findings into policy changes and practice.

5.5.4 To International Development Organizations

We recommend that international development organizations develop strategies to allocate a portion of their funding and technical assistance resources towards local organizations and invest in and develop funding for child marriage prevention community-based projects, such as educational and economic empowerment initiatives, community-based initiatives, collective action initiatives, policy initiatives, etc. To advocate for national and international policy change that should respond to significant factors related to child marriage.

5.5.5 To Local Communities

We suggest that local communities have their own ownership and accountability for preventing child marriage locally through community actions and policy change. More practically, local communities can raise awareness, work with girl and women who bear the burden of child marriage, advocate for legal and policy change, but mainly, amplify the voice of women and girls. Local communities should work with the local organizations, policy makers or other stakeholders if they want to make sure that their voice is heard and their needs are represented in the policy.

5.5.6 To State of Zimbabwe

The state of Zimbabwe will need to develop and implement new policies and laws around the conditions that make Girls, adolescents and young women vulnerable to child marriage, particularly poverty, gender inequity and low access to education, by doing things like: increasing funding for education and economic empowerment activities; enforcing laws and policies that protect the rights for girls and women; and promoting and funding local efforts at all levels to eliminate child marriage. Similarly, while all of this work is happening, the state of Zimbabwe should engage local communities, Girls and women so they can voice their rights and needs.

5.6 IN TERMS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has highlighted poverty and gender inequity in Norton History, Zimbabwe as key aspects of explaining child marriages. Although the research has contributed to this important field of child marriage research, there remains important areas for additional research to better grapple with the complexities of understanding child marriage. For example, more in-depth investigation and understanding of the way child marriage hampers and regulates the total well-being of girls and women in respect to their physical, mental, economic and social lives. There also remains a critical gap to undertake more research to understand the effectiveness of current interventions which prevent child marriage and assist its victims. In addition, there remains a need for research into the relevance of cultural and religious norms, to inform decisions related to child marriage, of residents of Norton, Zimbabwe. A robust economic analysis of the impacts of child marriage will also be beneficial for policy makers and others providing services to individuals, families and communities about child marriage. Lastly, understanding the experiences and perceptions of boys who experienced child marriage.

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APPENDIX I

Exploring the intersection of Poverty and Gender Inequality in perpetuating child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe.

Quantitative Instrument: Questionnaire

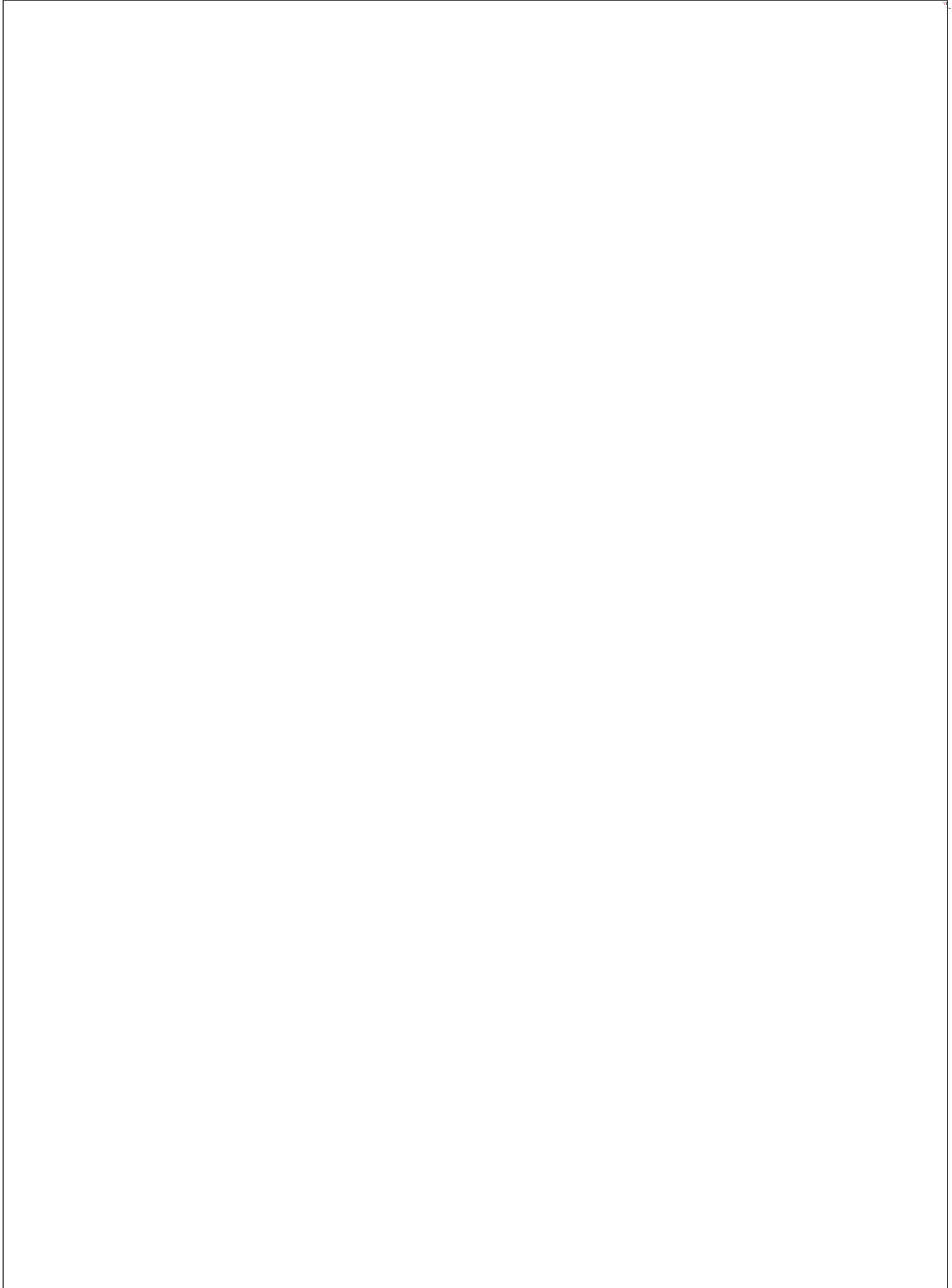
Hello, my name is Tadiwanashe Muchenje, and I am a researcher conducting a study on the intersection of poverty and gender inequality in perpetuating child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. This questionnaire is part of my research, and I kindly request your participation. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. Please answer the questions honestly, and feel free to ask me if you need clarification on any question.

Section 1: Demographic Information (Highlight by ticking)

1. Age.....
 - a) 8 - 12years
 - b) 13 - 18 years
 - c) 19 - 35 years ✓
 - d) 36 - 55 years
 - e) 55+ years
2. Sex..... (Male or Female) ✓
3. Marital status..... (Never married, Single, Married, Separated) ✓
4. Education level..... (No formal education, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary) ✓
5. Occupation..... *Unemployed* ✓
6. Household income (less than \$100, between \$100-250, between \$250-500, above \$500) ✓

Section 2: Child Marriage Prevalence

1. Have you or anyone in your household been married before the age of 18?



APPENDIX II

Qualitative Instruments

My name is Tadiwanashe Muchenje and I am a researcher conducting a study on the intersection of poverty and gender inequality in perpetuating child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. I appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with me. This interview will be recorded, and your identity will be kept confidential. Please feel free to share as much or as little as you are comfortable with.

In-Depth Interview Guides

For Adolescent Girls Who Experienced Child Marriage

1. Can you tell me about your experience of getting married at a young age?
2. What were the circumstances surrounding your marriage?
3. How did you feel about getting married early?
4. What challenges have you faced as a result of child marriage?
5. How do you think your life would be different if you hadn't gotten married early?

For Parents/Guardians

1. What led you to decide to marry off your daughter at a young age?
2. Were there any factors that influenced your decision, such as economic or social pressures?
3. How did you feel about marrying off your daughter early?
4. What do you think are the benefits and drawbacks of child marriage?
5. Would you advise other parents to marry off their daughters early?

For Community Leaders

1. What are your views on child marriage in our community?
2. Do you think child marriage is a problem in our community? Why or why not?
3. What do you think are the root causes of child marriage in our community?

4. How do you think we can work together to prevent child marriage in our community?
5. Are there any existing initiatives or programs that aim to prevent child marriage in our community?

Focus Group Discussion Guides

Hello, my name is Tadiwanashe Muchenje and I am a researcher conducting a study on the intersection of poverty and gender inequality in perpetuating child marriages in Norton, Zimbabwe. I appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with me. This interview will be recorded, and your identity will be kept confidential. Please feel free to share as much or as little as you are comfortable with.

For Adolescent Girls

1. What do you think are the reasons why girls in our community get married early?
2. How do you think child marriage affects girls' education and future opportunities?
3. What do you think can be done to prevent child marriage in our community?
4. Have you or anyone you know experienced child marriage? What was the experience like?
5. How can we support each other in preventing child marriage?

For Adolescent Boys

1. What do you think are the reasons why girls in our community get married early?
2. How do you think child marriage affects boys and men in our community?
3. What do you think can be done to prevent child marriage in our community?
4. Have you or anyone you know been involved in a child marriage? What was the experience like?
5. How can we work together to prevent child marriage?

For Women's Groups

1. What are your experiences with child marriage in our community?
2. How do you think child marriage affects women's empowerment and autonomy?
3. What do you think can be done to prevent child marriage in our community?
4. Are there any existing initiatives or programs that aim to prevent child marriage in our community?
5. How can we work together to support girls and women in preventing child marriage?

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ORIGINALITY REPORT

4%	2%	2%	2%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to Bindura University of Science Education Student Paper	1 %
2	Submitted to Midlands State University Student Paper	1 %
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4	Ngogomela, Moshi. "Guidance and Counselling Needs Assessment at Primary School Level in Kinondoni District, Tanzania", University of Dodoma (Tanzania) Publication	<1 %
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