

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES



**Social perceptions on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the Mazowe district
of Zimbabwe**

BY

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment for the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy in Peace
and Governance in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at the Bindura
University of Science Education (BUSE)**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to understand social perceptions of communities towards female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in Mazowe District, Zimbabwe. Child sexual abuse is generally viewed as a crime committed by male perpetrators. The objectives of the study covered community perceptions on female-perpetrated CSA, effects of CSA, the community response mechanism, and the developed CEM model. This research was posited in the interpretivist paradigm and guided by the qualitative research methodology. A case study design of the Mazowe District was used. Data from 42 participants, who comprised the adolescents, FSWs, parents, government ministries, CSOs, and chiefs, were collected using key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews. Data analysis was done using the thematic analysis route and was processed using MAXQDA computer software. The study results show that sexual abuse of children by women is widespread in Mazowe District. The results also suggest that there is a significant gap between empirical evidence of abuse committed by women and community understanding. Study participants expressed scepticism about the extent of the problem and tended to rate female offenders as less guilty compared to their male counterparts. Sex workers were identified as the main perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The study found that child sexual abuse has health, social, and psychological impacts on the children affected, their families, and the wider community in general. The community fails to take appropriate action due to prevailing social norms and values at the family and community levels, as it strives to promote relationships while silently suppressing children's rights and child protection issues. Study participants viewed abuse committed by women as less serious or harmful, which could lead to inadequate recognition, reporting, and response from social services and the criminal justice system. This is worrying as children who fall victim to female perpetrators may not receive the support and protection they need. A Community Empowerment Model (CEM) was developed. The CEM offers a holistic approach to reducing cases of female-perpetrated child sexual abuse. This study concludes that societal attitudes tend to minimise the culpability of female perpetrators compared to male perpetrators. The persistence of misconceptions and myths in this area can hinder victim identification, discourage reporting, and undermine appropriate interventions. The study recommends the need for improved public education and awareness of female-perpetrated child sexual abuse. In addition, a multi-sectoral approach, the need for key stakeholder engagement, public awareness, and a combination of prevention strategies are recommended as a means to reduce female-perpetrated child sexual abuse.

Keywords: Child sexual abuse, child, community empowerment, female perpetrator, perceptions, Mazowe District

DECLARATION FORM

I hereby declare that this study titled **Social perceptions on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse (CSA) in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe** is my work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Nyamurera', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

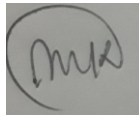
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David Nyamurera

APPROVAL FORM

We the undersigned certify that we have supervised and recommended Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) for acceptance of a thesis entitled **Social perceptions on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse (CSA) in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe** for submission of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Peace and Governance.

Dr. J. Kurebwa Signature:
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Date: 15/08/2024

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the Almighty, my Lord God, for leading me along the wholesome assignment. I would also like to devote this project to my late mother, Emily Manyaya Chinzambwa, who passed on during the initial phases of the project and who supported me throughout my initial educational and professional development stages when she was active on this earth. Indeed, she made her contribution. I recognise the unwavering commitment and support from my wife, Jerinah Nyamurera, and the children, who stood firm in all the pillars of social life when I was inactive in those areas of responsibility.

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Many other people have contributed through comments, moral support, and otherwise to make this thesis a reality, but have not been acknowledged. To them all, I owe you a special thank you.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AGYW	Adolescent Girls and Young Women
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect.
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health
CeSHHAR	Centre for Sexual Health HIV and AIDS Research
CD	Communication for Development
CRB	Child Rights Barometer
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAAC	District AIDS Action Committee
DDC	District Development Coordinator
DHPO	District Health Promotion Officer (MOHCC participant 2)
DMO	District Medical Officer
DNO	District Nursing Officer (MOHCC participant 1)
DREAMS	Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe model
DSD	Department of Social Development (DSD participant)
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FOST	Farm Orphan Support Trust
FSWs	Female Sex Workers
FSPs	Female Sexual Perpetrators
GFP	Gender Focal Person
GBV	Gender Based Violence

HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge System
IPs	Implementing Partners
JSC	Justice Service Commission
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MAXQDA	Max Weber Qualitative Data Analysis
MoHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
MOLPSSW	Ministry of Labour, Public Service and Social Welfare
MOPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
MSPs	Male Sexual Perpetrators
NAC	National AIDS Council of Zimbabwe
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
PCC	Parent Child Communication
PTSDs	Post Traumatic Stress Disorders
RDC	Rural District Council
RSA	Republic of South Africa
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VFU	Victim Friendly Unit
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZACC	Zimbabwe Anti-corruption Commission

ZHI Zimbabwe Health Interventions
ZRP Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZWLA Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is a serious, silent and devastating social-behavioural problem that is affecting all communities in the globe. CSA is a persistent and serious issue that affects public health, society, human rights, and security in the modern world. It can have serious short-term and long-term health and social repercussions for the victim, their close friends and family, and the community as a whole. Anderson et al. (2020) argue that adolescents and young children are the most targeted by women and men as sexual abuse. Research evidence has suggested that when it comes to sexual abuse crimes, men and women are responsible for ninety-six percent and four percent, respectively (Anderson, 2020). Gruenfelder (2021) states that one in ten men and more than one out of every five women worldwide suffer from CSA, a serious problem. CSA prevalence globally has been estimated at 11.8% (118 per 1000 children, and comparing girls and boys, as CSA victims, higher rates are reported among girls (Mantula & Saloojee, 2016; Stoltenborgh et al., 2011, cited in Gruenfelder, 2021 & Cant et al., 2022).

According to a global meta-analysis CSA study by Stoltenborgh et al. (2011), which was referenced by Gruenfelder (2021), 7.9% of men and 19.7% of women had experienced sexual abuse before turning 18. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2002) and the United Nations (UN) Secretary General's research on violence against children (2006), which is referenced in Selengia et al. (2020), both state that a startling number of children worldwide are sexually molested every year. About 20% of women and 8% of males worldwide reported having experienced sexual abuse as youngsters in a WHO (2006) study that was also referenced in Selengia et al. (2020). The survey covered 39 nations. According to a study report by Martin and Silverston (2013), which was quoted by Selengia et al. (2020), the most recent data indicates that 2% of boys and 4% of girls may have been victims of sexual abuse on a yearly basis. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that CSA affects people of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. According to estimates from the WHO (2010), 8.6 million boys and 24 million girls under the age of 18 have been sexually abused worldwide.

According to a research by Selengia et al., (2020), the frequency of CSA (both generically and specifically characterized) in Africa ranged from 2.1% to 68.7% for Ethiopian and Tanzanian girls and 4.1% to 60% for South African males. Between Hong Kong and Sri Lanka, the prevalence is between 4.3% and 58% for males, and between 3.3% and 42.7% for females in China and India, respectively. These statistics from the study by Selengia et al. (2020) were consistent with those from a meta-analysis by Stoltenborgh et al. (2011) cited in Selengia et al. (2020) which states that, Africa had the highest frequency of CSA at 34.4%, followed by Europe at 30.7%, Asia at 23.9%, and America at 10.1%. Africa has been observed to have considerably high figures for CSA. Furthermore, Mantula and Saloonjee (2016) state that the WHO estimates that throughout Africa, 24 million girls and 8.6 million boys under the age of 18 have been victims of sexual abuse involving physical contact.

Laccino (2014), referenced by Mantula and Saloonjee (2016) reviews and analysed media reports on CSA in RSA, India, Zimbabwe, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and established that Zimbabwe has been ranked among the five countries with the highest CSA prevalence rates, both at continental and global levels, and has been described as an epidemic. Within a period of one year, Zimbabwe, with a national population of 16.32 million people, recorded a figure of 3172 victims of CSA, up from 2883 (Laccino, 2014 and Mantula & Saloonjee, 2016). The other countries on the list, with relatively large populations, however, recorded low figures measuring against their national populations. Republic of South Africa (RSA), with a population of 59.89 million people reported 67000 CSA victims, India (pop: 1.417 billion) reported 48 000 victims, UK (pop: 66.9 million), had 18 915 victims, while the United States of America (population: 333.3 million) reported 500 000 victims. According to Laccino (2014) quoted by Mantula and Saloonjee, 2016), although the true prevalence of CSA is not known, the reports from various media houses in the five countries indicated that Zimbabwe is adversely competing with major countries of the globe. A myriad of factors contributing to this problem, with poverty and inequalities, have emerged as a major underlying factor and root cause of CSA, including other related social ills (Laccino, 2014; UNICEF, 2010; Mantula & Saloonjee, 2016; UNAIDS World AIDS Campaign, 2021). Although researchers have made some strides in building up female-perpetrated CSA, empirical evidence, the research component in Africa is still in its infancy, and there is a paucity of information from the majority of countries on the continent. Studies considering CSA in the African context vary in terms of estimates depending on the country being studied, the type of sexual abuse, the data

quality collected and the definitions used (Peter, 2009; Gannon & Rose, 2008; Cortoni & Hanson, 2005 (cited in Cortoni et al., 2017); Finkelhor et al., 2016). Rumble et al. (2015) state that the Zimbabwe national CSA prevalence data reported that 32.5% of females and 8.9% of males experienced CSA before they attained the age of 18 years.

According to Nyamanhindi (2015); Mantula and Saloojee (2016), the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) has verified the consistent increase in the quantity of CSA reports and approximated that one hundred girls are abused daily nationally. According to Muridzo and Chikadzi (2020), primarily due to the prevailing economic challenges, children are left vulnerable to poverty, which exposes them to the risk of CSA. Further elucidating the issue of child sexual abuse is the Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) (2012), which shows that 34% of females aged 15-19 who reported experiencing sexual abuse did so prior to the age of fifteen. Mass media reports are rife with tales of intimate friends and family members, educators, locals, and occasionally even women who sexually abuse minors, (Mantula & Saloojee, 2016).

Empirical evidence covering the Female Sexual Perpetrators (FSPs) and the subsequent offenders on the social ill in Zimbabwe is still skimpy. Additionally, there is no significant research that shows the actual prevalence of female-perpetrated CSA and it is currently not known, but the analyses of identified or reported cases of victimisation consistently suggest that females comprise less than five percent of all sexual offending against youth and children (Zack et al., 2018; Tozdan et al., 2019; McLeod, 2013; Stathopoulos, 2014).

While CSA has predominantly been known to be perpetrated by males and, for time immemorial, perceived as a form of behaviour associated with men, circumstances are changing, and female perpetration is on the rise, and it is now evident that a fraction of CSA is committed by females, with research confirming a sizable fraction (4 to 5 percent) to this effect (Anderson, 2020; Finkelhor et al., 2016). Social perception which subsumes community attitudes and beliefs is a pertinent concept regarding this phenomenon, but there is minimal understanding of public perceptions on which subsumes community attitudes and beliefs, is a pertinent concept regarding this phenomenon, but there is minimal understanding of public perceptions of females' sexual behaviours in relation to the CSA. Contemporary research has so far indicated that female sexual perpetrators (FSPs) research information is now available

and is being used for meta-analyses and reviews (Stoltenborgh et al., 2011 cited in Gruenfelder, 2021).

However, the statistics for victims of CSA by male and female perpetrators are not similar, although the perpetrators often use different approaches to paedophiles, with females targeting family members as they perform their role as caregivers (Anderson et al., 2020; Zack et al., 2018). Research has revealed in the past few decades that the number of children who experience sexual abuse has always been underreported, primarily as a result of underreporting (Hillis et al., 2016; Pandey et al., 2018). Female-perpetrated CSA is one of the associated confederacies to the general CSA (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2020; Wangamati et al., 2018; World Health Organization, 2014).

The issue of the general CSA and female-perpetrated CSA underreporting exacerbates this problem and is common across the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the globe at large, and this has resulted in a general dearth of literature on this social ill (Cortoni et al., 2017; Farm Orphans Support Trust, 2021; Brennan & McElvaney, 2020). Underreporting is also noted by Freire (2012, p.32) in his submissions on the community perceptions of themselves when he argues, "But their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression." Underreporting of CSA in Zimbabwe, including in countries in the SSA, is rife and is attributable to a myriad of factors that include, among others; general perceptions of the phenomenon by the community, children unable to verbalise that abuse has taken place, threats by perpetrators, especially those known to the children (Chitundu et al., 2018; Brennan & McElvaney, 2020; Muronda, 2002). There is no significant research that has been conducted regarding social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA as baseline study to contribute to the design of primordial prevention of CSA by female perpetrators in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Child Sexual Abuse is prevalent in all countries around the globe and is a problem of considerable magnitude with a significant impact on the health and well-being of children that affects people at micro and macro levels in terms of public health, psychological, behavioral and socio-economic impacts. Muridzo et al., (2018) state that Zimbabwe estimates that 400,000 or more cases of CSA are reported yearly. A study conducted by Muridzo and Chikadzi (2020) in Zimbabwe revealed that 62.7% females and 47.9% males experienced more than one incident of sexual abuse before they attained 18 years of age. The ZRP has reported a consistent

increase in the number of CSA cases and estimated that 100 girls are abused daily. Therefore, the topic of CSA is quite relevant in Zimbabwe (Nyamanhindi, 2015; Mantula & Saloonjee2016). The ZRP (2012) report cited in Muridzo (2014) mentioned that more than 2,400 children under the age of 18 were victims of sexual abuse between January and October 2012, and overall, 3,421 CSA cases were reported during the year 2012.

According to Muridzo and Chirikadzi (2020), primarily due to the prevailing economic challenges, children are left vulnerable to poverty, which exposes them to the risk of CSA. Further elucidating the issue of child sexual abuse is the Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZDHS) (2012), which shows that 34% of females aged 15-19 who reported experiencing sexual abuse suffered this prior to the age of 15. Stories of intimate friends and family members, educators, members of the community, and occasionally even women abusing minors sexually, are often reported in the media (Mantula & Saloojee, 2016).

Muridzo et al. (2018) argue that CSA results in felt effects at both micro and macro levels, particularly under the banner of public health. In this category of effects, all the components of health that include the physical, mental, social, spiritual and economic health, are affected at the individual victim (self-object), family, community and societal ecological levels. A variety of psychological and mental illnesses, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), rage, sadness, low self-esteem, anxiety issues, suicidal thoughts, and subsequent risky sexual behaviours, have been connected to childhood sexual abuse (CSA). A diversity of response strategies have been initiated to try and prevent and mitigate these effects, but, given the upsurge of CSA cases, it has been argued that fresh and more robust ways of approaching the problem are required (Lalor & McElvaney, 2010, and Muridzo et al., 2018).

In a social environment where society expects females to be nurturers and caregivers of these children, and generally to be at the fore of protecting this category of the population, the social structural system appears to be condoning the ill practice. Studies have shown that there is a rise in CSA perpetrated by both females and males but with different perceptions and descriptions by society in general (Ste-Marie, 2019; Gavin, 2005). The general feeling in society is that females are foster beings; they display love, particularly to the children, more than males (Bhattacharyya, 2023; Ste-Marie, 2019; Gavin, 2005).

A female sexual perpetrator (FSP) is met with skepticism, and differing opinions about her actions and character. This impression has the unsettling effect of making many female sex crimes go unreported because of how society perceives these women and their sexual abuse victims. (Chitundu et al., 2018; Clements et al., 2014). The reproductive, physical, and mental health of sexually abused children, their families, and the community as a whole, are all impacted by CSA committed by women. It also negatively impacts the children's social welfare and increases the burden of disease (MoHCC, 2019; NAC, 2020; Jewkes et al., 2002). In Zimbabwe, there has been a dearth of empirical research in the area of social perceptions regarding FSPs; however, programme reports have shown that there is CSA that is perpetrated by females and they further indicate that in three consecutive years, Mazowe District has recorded a steady increase in female perpetrated CSA cases, thus; 105-2016, 183-2017, 253-2018, (National AIDS Council and Ministry of Health and Child Care [MoHCC] unpublished periodic reports, 2019). According to the same sources, female sex workers (FSWs) from Mazowe District, females from the community, and professionals from organizations and institutions have been instrumental in silently recruiting and engaging young boys and girls in sexual activities for a fee as a benefit. According to the initial inferential program data, the author did not establish a clear model or theory that is being used to respond to female-perpetrated CSA in the study area (MoHCC and NAC periodic reports, 2019).

1.2 Purpose of the study

This research sought to explore the social perceptions on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research was guided by the following specific objectives;

- (i) To examine the community attitudes and beliefs towards female perpetrators of CSA.
- (ii) To determine the effects of female-perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District.
- (iii) To analyze the community response to female perpetrators of CSA.
- (iv) To develop a model to reduce female-perpetrated CSA.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the community attitudes and beliefs towards female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District?

- ii. What are the effects of female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District?
- iii. How does the Mazowe District community respond to female perpetrators of CSA?
- iv. What intervention model can be developed to reduce female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will be significant to several stakeholders.

The first beneficiary of this research is the MoHCC as the primary technical coordinator and implementor, representing the Government, who would utilize these findings in planning and implementing child care prevention of abuse, health promotion, and treatment interventions. The MoHCC would also use the findings of this research as an empirical guide to the development partners as they execute their work.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) is the second beneficiary of this research. Considering that they have the mandate of child welfare and protection, this research will provide baseline information for their interventions in this regard. The DSD, being the registrar of NGOs in the country through the Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO) Act, will find the recommendations from this research useful in analyzing the aims and objectives of the applicants and monitoring them in the field as they execute their duties in child welfare and protection.

The Zimbabwe Republic Police-Victim Friendly Unit (ZRP-VFU) is the third beneficiary of this research. The VFU would mold their CSA awareness campaigns considering the perpetrator-gender component, and that would assist in opening up for reporting, leading to primordial prevention of CSA. As a policing agent and custodian of the law, the ZRP-VFU will also be enabled to suggest on the adjustment of some sections of the statutes to allow comprehensive interventions in the prevention continuum.

Non-governmental Organizations working on children's rights (including human security) issues are expected to utilize this information as baseline data for strengthening intervention activities targeting the FSPs, amending existing laws that are associated with child protection, human sexual potential behaviour, gender equality, children's rights and respect. Since these organizations are also mandated to implement CSA prevention programs, the research would

provide information on the voice of the community in terms of their prevention frameworks, local social norms and values, and perceptions of the sustainability of those programs. Additionally, the research information will also benefit the families of the vulnerable children through integration and enhancing communication between parents/guardians and children, and the improved interventions by the development partners.

The research will also contribute to the existing literature bank for use by researchers and academics within the country, the region, and globally. This researcher envisions closing the dearth of information on female perpetration of CSA, which will attract additional local and international resources to support the interventions. The research findings contributed to the development of an intervention model entitled a community empowerment model for reducing cases of female-perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District. The community empowerment model will be implemented by the wider communities and their leadership in broadening their scope of preventing CSA using the public health prevention continuum.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The broad focus of this research is to explore the social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. The research specifically examined the community attitudes and beliefs towards female perpetrators of CSA, determined the effects of CSA in Mazowe District, and analysed the current community response to female perpetrators of CSA. The research also developed a comprehensive intervention model to avert cases of CSA. In terms of the time frame of undertaking the study, it took me from 2017 to 2023, which was characterised by three semesters of deferments due to some social and work-related challenges since my studies were on a block programme. The study was done in the rural, farming, mining and urban human settlements of Mazowe District, which is one of the eight districts in Mashonaland Central Province, and the rationale for the choice of the district was the high figures of female perpetrated CSA reported as inferential program data during the period 2016 to 2018. The closest areas that are related to this study but were not included are substance and drug abuse and its relationship with CSA. The other area that the research discovered to be critical but was not part of the study include the need for reviewing the previous assessments on poverty and inequalities, the upsurge of young female sex workers, the level of implementation of current CSA interventions in neighbouring districts like Goromonzi, Zvimba and Bindura, including other areas in Zimbabwe.

1.10 Definitions of Key Terms

The key terms used in this research are;

Child Sexual Abuse -The definition of child sexual abuse (CSA) is any sexual behaviour or action that is intended to give an adult perpetrator—male or female—sexual pleasure, stimulation, or gratification while using a victim who is a minor or adolescent and under the age of eighteen, and depriving their human and protection rights (Castro et al., 2019; Lange et al., 2020 and Srivastava et al., 2017).

Gender- This refers to a core component of a person's individual sense of self, and it expresses and describes how a person communicates their sexual orientation category to others through their behaviour and appearance. Being a social construct rather than a biological one, it is defined by the economic, social, political, and cultural possibilities and traits that come with being a woman or a man. These vary depending on the norms, values, and roles of a particular society, culture, and era. In terms of sex and sexuality, gender is a societal expression of specific traits linked to specific groups of individuals. Gender affects how individuals interact, see themselves and one another, and the allocation of power and resources. Intergroup and interpersonal dynamics, as well as broader power structures, constitute the foundation of gendered relations (Kurup and Underwood, 2021; Barr et al., 2024; Achyut et al., 2015; Chrisler & Lamer, 2016).

Female Sexual Perpetrator (FSP)- is identified as a woman, or female who sexually abuses children, but the abuse has met society and most communities with public denial and the misconception that sexual abuse is the traditional sense of forced penetration of the vagina by a penis, and forgetting that this is just a single typology of sexual abuse. Women commit the same types of sexual abuse as men, and these include sexual stalking and touching, harassment, oral-genital contact, sexual intercourse, digital penetration, and masturbation, among other typologies, and these are imposed on the victim by the FSP. When such practices come to adolescents by female perpetrators, they define it as privileged access to sex, and usually close to 50% of these sexual abuses by FSPs are done with an accompanying co-accuser/abuser removed (Augarde & Rydon-Grange, 2022; Cain, 2013).

Social perception- is the process of interpreting a current stimulus based on prior experiences, or assessing and comprehending a stimulus as it is. People use social perception to process sensory information and become aware of the things and events in their environment. As a result, social perception can be thought of as a means of addressing issues that affect people as a society (Devito, 2016; Gruenfelder, 2021).

Prevention- this refers to actions/interventions taken to reduce susceptibility or exposure to the social ill (primordial and primary prevention), detect and treat the associated problems brought about by CSA in early stages (secondary prevention), or alleviate the effects of CSA (tertiary prevention) and use quaternary prevention, which is an action taken to identify victims at high risk of over-medicalization to protect them from new medical invasion, and suggest to them ethically acceptable interventions (Kisling & Das, 2022; Pandve, 2014).

1.11 Thesis Outline

This thesis comprises of eight chapters as indicated below.

Chapter One: Introduction

This serves as the study's backdrop and introduction in essence. Sections of the proposal were adopted and thoroughly presented to explain logically the development of the study. This chapter gives the background information for the research, as well as information on its focus, scope, and definition of the research problem, purpose, objectives, and questions. It also includes information on the study's assumptions, significance, delimitations, limitations, definition of key research terms, and structure.

Chapter Two: Literature review and theoretical framework

The chapter reviews and presents comprehensive literature on social perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA, the nature of female perpetrators and their victims' characteristics, personal history, the typologies, effects of CSA, including mental health and substance abuse, and CSA prevention efforts, in different contexts and geographical areas. The theoretical framework of the study is presented.

Chapter Three: Research design and methodology

Chapter Three takes us through the research design and methodology. The areas covered in this chapter includes the research philosophy, methodology, design, data collection and analysis. The study used the interpretive qualitative methodology and the case study as a research design.

Chapter Four: Perceived community attitudes and beliefs regarding female perpetrator of child sexual abuse

The chapter undertakes an empirical examination of community perceptions focusing on community attitudes and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated CSA and the four identified gender dimensions (symbolic, economic, power and emotional dimensions) connected to the committing of female-perpetrated CSA, which are the main underlying elements that showed up in the study.

Chapter Five: Perceived effects of child sexual abuse by female perpetrators

The perceived micro and macro-level effects of CSA are defined in this chapter, which analyses the consequences of the social ill on the individual victim, the family, the society and the nation at large, as defined in relation to the ecological systematic levels of Mazowe District.

Chapter Six: Perceived community responses to child sexual abuse by female perpetrators

This chapter analyses current community response mechanisms to avert female-perpetrated CSA, including the role of CSOs and government in CSA prevention in Mazowe District.

Chapter Seven: Community Empowerment Model to reduce cases of female perpetrated child sexual abuse

Chapter Seven presents the suggested model which is entitled; Community empowerment model. The intervention model is presented to deal with female perpetrators of CSA and to provide sustainable measures of mitigating its impact.

Chapter Eight: Summary, conclusions, recommendations and areas of further research

Basically, this chapter provides the summary of the research process, the conclusions and recommendations on the best approaches towards community empowerment in CSA prevention. The suggested community empowerment model for the prevention of female

perpetrated CSA is summarised, and various components of the model were linked to the recommendations proffered.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of related literature and the theoretical framework. An explanation of the relevance of the identified theories is provided. A comprehensive discussion of the key and related concepts in the study is presented in this chapter. Key related concepts that include CSA, its causes, and effects are discussed. Sexual perpetrators and offenders (their characteristics, personal history, physical and mental health, including substance and drug abuse, offence patterns, motivational factors, and belief systems) are also discussed. A discussion on social attitudes, myths, misconceptions, and hazards is also included. This literature review includes international, continental, regional, and domestic response mechanisms, such as laws, regulations, conventions, and preventive initiatives.

2.2 The Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the following theories: Self and Object/Relations theories from the Psychodynamic Theory by Freud (1915), and the socio-ecological model (SEM) and pathways model as outlined by Bronfenbrenner (1990), Wurtele & Kenny (2012).

2.2.1 Human Personality

In psychology, personality theories seek to explain why and how people think, feel, and act in certain ways. Major viewpoints that provide distinct insights into personality development and functioning include psychodynamic, humanistic, trait, and social-cognitive theories (Spielman, et al., 2020; Levy, 2019; Freud, 1920). The main personality components, thus thoughts, feelings, behaviours and patterns are associated with the mentioned theories.

2.2.2 Psychodynamic Theory

The development of a theoretical framework for this study was hinged on the psychodynamic theory developed by Sigmund Freud (1920). The first thorough explanation of personality was Sigmund Freud's psychodynamic perspective, which explained a broad range of both normal

and disordered actions. Freud's psychodynamic perspective on personality was the first comprehensive theory of personality. Freud believed that our personalities are shaped by unconscious desires that are impacted by sex, violence, and childhood sexuality (Freud cited in Spielman et al., 2020; Levy, 2019).

According to the Psychodynamic Theory, childhood experiences have a significant influence on an adult's charisma. The theory describes personality in terms of unconscious psychological processes (such as desires and fears of which people, as individuals, are not completely aware). Spielman et al., 2020; Levy, 2019. According to the theory, the majority of people's behaviours and preferences in adulthood are shaped by the experiences in their childhood. According to Freud (1915), cited in McLeod (2017), behaviour is solely caused by past experiences, most notably those from childhood. The psychological forces and urges that exist within people and explain behaviour and personality are the main focus of psychodynamic theories. The theories stem from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, which highlighted psychological suffering and dysfunction as originating from the unconscious mind (Spielman et al., 2020; Levy, 2019).

This research supports the arguments by Freud, as they provide the basis for examining the perceptions (community attitudes and beliefs) regarding female perpetrators of CSA, determining the effects of female perpetrated CSA, analysing the community response to female perpetrated CSA and developing an appropriate response model to avert female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District, through bringing in the psychological basis and concepts that determine an individual being.

2.2.2 The Self

The key concepts in psychology are the self and self-theory. The self is a person's idea of who they are, and self-theory explains how this idea evolves and shapes behaviour, frequently by combining experiences, self-image, and self-esteem. The term "self" describes a person's multifaceted sense of an individual, which includes their identity, self-image, and self-perception (Spielman et al., 2020).

According to Gross (2020), the self and self-theory hold that each person lives in a constantly changing world of experience in which they are the centre and that no one can truly understand a person's private world better than the individual themselves. The self and self-theory, through

the concept of the self, are central to understanding the individual private world of experience. The self is the aspect of personality that embodies an individual's perceptions and values; there are two kinds of values: those that are acquired from the experience of the subjective self and those that are acquired from others, possibly through the verbal self. Values that arise from experience are the ones that most frequently contribute to personal growth and self-knowledge. But the outside world isn't completely cut off from other people's private experiences, (Spielman, et al., 2020; Levy, 2019). Acquired values are typically linked to confusion since they frequently force an individual to suppress their own emotions in order to comply with the wishes of another.

It is against this background that the research selected the Object/ interpersonal relations and the self and self-theories that developed from the psychodynamic theory in order to achieve the interpretation of females' behaviour on child sexual abuse or why they commit CSA when society expects them to be nurturers and caregivers of the same children they abuse. They provide an important basis for this research on social perceptions of female sexual perpetrators' behaviours. A person's perceptions and ideals are embodied in themselves, a personality trait. The object/interpersonal relations theory is well integrated into the self-theory and the socio-ecological model as people interact to derive a meaning of their social world at different levels. (Stokol 1992 quoted by Thaivalappil et al., 2024; Glanz et al., 2024; Freire, 1974 cited in Super Summary, 2019).

2.2.3 The Relationship/Object

Since 'object' in psychodynamic terminology refers to a person, object relations theory is more akin to interpersonal relations theory. According to the object/interpersonal connections hypothesis, a person's personality can be regarded as a reflection of the mental pictures of important figures, particularly their parents, that form early in life as a result of interactions within the family. (Spielman, et al., 2020; Levy, 2019; Gross, 2020). This research supports this part of the psychodynamic theory as it analyses and interprets the behaviour of the female perpetrator of CSA and its effects, the current localised interventions to respond to the social ill in Mazowe District, and the proposed intervention model.

2.2.4 The Socio-Ecological Model

The bio-ecological model/theory, developed by Bronfenbrenner (1998) cited in Socio-ecological Model (Adapted from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2020), asserts that an individual's environment and innate characteristics interact to shape an individual's growth and development. In order to fully comprehend a child's development, Bronfenbrenner (1998) underlined the significance of examining them within the framework of several environments/ecological systems, thus the Individual (microsystem), with factors like attitudes, knowledge, and self-efficacy. Interpersonal (mesosystem): Relationships and social networks, such as family, friends, and community groups. Organizational (exosystem): Factors within institutions and workplaces, including health programs and wellness initiatives.

Most significantly, the socio-ecological model was applied in this study to create comprehensive, all-encompassing intervention strategies that methodically target mechanisms of change at every level of impact among different population groups. The exploration of the social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe leads to the interpretation of females' behaviour on CSA. It also leads to the intertwining of the individual's development, and the influence of the environment in the creation and nurturing of a CSA female perpetrator and the society coming up with agreed social perceptions (art-facts, belief systems, attitudes and social norms) regarding the same. The main environment influencing a person's growth is their own biology. An individual's growth is fueled and guided by the interplay of elements in his or her developing biology, immediate family (including significant others), community environment, and societal landscape. It is envisaged that multi-level intervention models targeting CSA are inspired by a bio-ecological model and seek to create change on various levels (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998; Bronfenbrenner, 1990 quoted in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2020).

Social-ecological models are believed to provide comprehensive frameworks for understanding the multiple and interacting determinants of health and other social behaviours (Glanz et al., 2024; Stokols, 1992). The ecological model of social behaviour emphasises the environmental and policy context of behaviour while incorporating psychological and social factors of influence. The ecological approach prompted the creation of more thorough

community-based interventions by explicitly considering various levels of impact (Green & Kreuter, 2005 quoted in Meilianingsih, & Sari, 2023; Porter, 2016). The fundamental idea of an ecological model in the fields of health and, more broadly, in social science is that social perceptions and human behaviour are influenced at several levels, including intrapersonal, interpersonal/mesosystem, macro, exo, and chrono systems. (Glanz et al., 2024; Porter, 2016; Green, & Kreuter, 2005).

The broad goal of primordial prevention is to stop CSA before it begins at population level. This research is of the view that, for a primordial prevention program to achieve the intended goals it requires understanding of the factors that influence CSA. A four-level social-ecological model is employed by theorists and development practitioners to comprehend CSA and the impact of possible preventive measures. This model considers the complex interactions that exist between societal, relationship, community, and individual effects. It makes it possible for peace and development professionals to comprehend the myriad of variables that either shield individuals from CSA perpetration or put them at risk of it (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998; Dahlberg & Krug, 2002), hence, it was adopted by this study. From the provided background information on the existential position of female-perpetrated CSA, according to Freire (2012), CSA dehumanizes a particular segment of the population, those affected directly and indirectly, and this distortion is associated with the history, background and culture. Therefore, those who are affected by dehumanization through female-perpetrated CSA, which is associated with despair, poverty, mental health, death and, on the part of the perpetrator, false generosity, should then employ a humanistic approach to emancipate themselves from the adverse practice, (Freire, 2012). As argued by Freire (2012), the socio-ecological model invites the holistic approach that subsumes dialogical and dialectical approaches to community awareness and vocation.

This study considered that the overlapping rings in the model showing how variables at one level affect variables at the next or other level is a fundamental aspect of preventing CSA. The model proposes that, in addition to aiding in the clarification of the variables linked to the social ill, simultaneous action across all of the model's levels is required for sustainable prevention to occur. This strategy has a higher chance of achieving population-level impact and long-term sustainability of preventative initiatives. This study validates the claims made by Bronfenbrenner (1979) at the individual/intrapersonal level, according to which the first level identifies biological and personal history characteristics that increase the risk of being a victim

or perpetrator of CSA. These variables include, but are not limited to, age, and income, education, and drug and/or substance misuse histories. This level of prevention measures encourages attitudes, convictions, and actions that stop CSA. Conflict resolution, life skills instruction, social and emotional learning, safe dating, and healthy relationship skill programs are some examples of specific strategies (Muridzo & Chikadzi, 2020).

The second level of the SEM, which looks at close relationships that may raise the chances of CSA, for either being a victim or perpetrator, is where this research stands on the relationship/interpersonal/mesosystem scale. The people closest to an individual—their family, friends, and partners—have an impact on their experiences and conduct. At this stage, prevention techniques could include parenting or family-focused initiatives, as well as peer and mentorship programs that aim to improve parent-child communication, foster positive peer norms, develop problem-solving abilities, and support wholesome connections.

Thirdly, this research argues that the bio-ecological model examines the settings, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, in which social relationships occur and seeks to identify the characteristics of these settings that are associated with becoming CSA perpetrators or victims. Community/macro-systems/exo-systems constitute the social (community beliefs and attitudes) and cultural values that shape the child, as well as organizational, community, and indirect environmental systems. At this level, prevention methods concentrate on enhancing the social and physical environments in these settings, as well as addressing other factors that encourage CSA cases to rise in communities (Muridzo & Chikadzi, 2020; Muridzo et al., 2021).

The final Societal level/chrono-system (governing policies that influence the way the child develops and interpret the social world around them), is also important for this study (Glanz et al., 2024). The health, economic, educational, and social policies and laws that support the upholding of social or economic inequality between social groups in society are among the other significant societal variables in this category or level. At this level, prevention interventions include initiatives to increase household financial security, education and work prospects, and other policies that impact the structural determinants of health, in addition to campaigns to promote societal norms that guard against CSA.

2.3 Typologies of female sexual perpetration

There is little empirical data on FSPs, according to studies by Gannon and Rose (2008); Gannon et al., (2012), and this situation has led to the development of a few theoretical frameworks for women who commit CSAs. Furthermore, according to Gannon and Rose (2008), efforts to create theories in this field have taken the form of typology development, which is mostly based on the data acquired from CSA MSPs. Gannon et al., (2012) state that, since they will be working with individual people, FSP researchers and professionals should learn about the typologies of FSPs because each female perpetrator is likely to have had a different set of circumstances, motivations and attitudes that led to her sexual abuse of children. Therefore, by becoming familiar with empirical data regarding the vulnerability factors—variables that predispose women to CSA—professionals working in FSPs interventions in the community and institutions may find it helpful. The term "vulnerability" is helpful because it conveys the heterogeneous nature of FSPs, the fact that different vulnerability factors are not always present in all FSPs, and the encouragement of careful and thoughtful formulation of the sexual perpetration/offence for treatment and risk management (Gannon et al., 2012).

This study has embraced the descriptive model of female sexual offending developed by Gannon et al., (2012). Alcohol, sexual arousal, cognition, and effect were found to be strong interveners in four main approaches to the sexual offence found in Gannon et al. (2012)'s descriptive model of female sexual offending. These approaches were the maternal approach, maternal avoidant, aggressive approach, and operationalized approach. According to the model, the maternal approach refers to women who approach their victims in a coercive but non-aggressive manner, and who do not actively try to refrain from sexually abusing them. These women may approach their victims directly to initiate a sexual relationship (effective regulators), or they may use ineffective strategies (mis-regulators, such as putting themselves in situations where they are clearly at risk) to avoid offending. Maternal approach is linked to male accompanying offenders on occasion, unattended offenders, and offenders who victimize teenage boys. It is possible that some of these women were drinking when they committed the crime. The thoughts that these women have after committing an offence typically centre on how mature they believe the youngster to be, and how capable they are of making sexual judgments that are supported by good effect and sexual pleasure. Maternal avoidant behaviour is when a woman approaches a sexual victim in a coercive but non-aggressive manner, intentionally seeking to avoid offending, but does so within the framework of pressure from violent and abusive partners. Extreme discord, cognitions about the nature of harm motifs,

significant negative emotion, and low sexual arousal are all present in such a female sexual offender. The offender convinces themselves in their head that if they do it, the child would not be as hurt (Gannon et al., 2012).

Gannon et al. (2012)'s descriptive model defines an aggressive approach as a general aggressive stance taken by female sexual abusers toward their sexual victim. These offenders are typified by strong pre-offence cognitions regarding a specific class of persons and typically assault adults or operate in groups. These crimes/abuses are usually linked to intense positive or negative affect, and most of the time, women show little to no interest in the sexual abuse component of their offence (no sexual desire). This kind of crime is also seen as an additional way—which may or may not have been premeditated—to degrade the victim.

The operationalized typology, or approach, to use Gannon's descriptive model terminology, is the ultimate strategy. The female sexual offenders in this category—such as sex traffickers—see the sexual aspect of their abuse or transgression as essential to achieving certain objectives. These people show little to no sexual desire and a range of pre-offence cognitions. It has been observed that in this approach, the proximal planning and subsequent approach behaviours happen well before the actual offence/sexual abuse behaviour or goal attainment (Gannon & Rose, 2008; Gannon et al., 2012). The unconscious behaviours and thoughts described in Gannon's descriptive model align with the concepts from the object relations theory and the self and self-theory psychodynamic theories. The four categories listed in Gannon et al., (2012) model can be summed up as follows: maternal approach refers to women who interact with teenagers, typically boys; compelled or not, maternal avoidant women perpetuate alongside a co-perpetrating male. Thirdly, some women adopt an aggressive strategy by intentionally targeting children who are not yet adolescent (pre-pubescent). The fourth type consists of women who commit crimes as a component of a larger criminal enterprise (operationalised approach).

Gannon et al. (2012)'s descriptive model of female sexual offending has been incorporated into this study. Alcohol, sexual arousal, cognition, and effect were found to be strong interveners in four main approaches to the sexual offence found in Gannon's descriptive model of female sexual offending (Gannon et al., 2012). These approaches were the maternal approach, the maternal avoidant, aggressive approach, and operationalised approach. Because of the study's argument that these typologies align with findings in Mazowe District, some of the factors have

been considered while designing the intervention model and suggestions. The most popular typology, in recent literature, which has contributed to the development of the latest Gannon's (2008) descriptive model, was presented by Mathews et al., (1991). It contains rich information on the nature of CSA offending and what motivates the perpetrators. The small qualitative study provided the authors with clusters of participants who managed to come up with three types of FSP. The first type was the situation where a woman abuses an adolescent but denies the abuse. However, she has the feeling that she has an affair with the victim. They named this type the teacher-lover type of Female Sexual Perpetration. The intergenerational predisposition type was the second one they found. This type is typified by the presence of a mother who has previously abused her own kid or acquaintance physically or sexually. The third category included dependent women who have either participated in or helped to facilitate child or child sexual abuse because they have personally experienced it. Her husband or intimate partner is likely the one who started this sexual abuse. This kind of abuse is referred to by the authors as a male-coerced CSA.

2.3.2 Pathways Model

In order to meet the goal of identifying the many CSA typologies perpetrated by females in the study area, this research first addresses the aetiology of CSA. Psychologists claim that these aetiologies take the shape of hypotheses or models. The roots or causes of sexually abusive behaviour's genesis, onset, and maintenance are referred to as the aetiology of CSA offending (Gwirayi, 2010). Understanding the causes of sexual offenses is crucial for developing, putting into practice, overseeing, and assessing suitable, long-lasting CSA solutions. Over time, the diagnostic data have been used to help construct comprehensive and significant prevention and treatment plans that benefit CSA victims, sexual perpetrators and offenders, and the community at large. In relation to primordial and primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary levels of CSA prevention, community oversight, criminal commitment, and punishment measures for offenders are some of the policy decisions that can be influenced by this knowledge. Over the recent decades, CSA research has had progressive developments in defining and exploring CSA prevalence, its consequences and grimness or severity. Several CSA aetiological researches have been carried out around the globe in an effort to develop effective prevention programmes targeting the CSA perpetrators (Ward & Sieget, 2002).

Ward and Siegert (2002) provide an overview of the three main models and aetiological hypotheses of CSA chronic pain syndrome, that is; the Quadripartite model (Hall & Hirschman, 1992), the Integrated theory of Marshal and Barbaree (1990), and the precondition model of CSA (Finkelhor, 1984). The Pathways model, which was formed from the three earlier theories of child sexual abuse aetiology, was created by Ward and Siegert (2002) based on these three models. The beginning, growth, and motivating elements of the psychological mechanism of CSA perpetrators have all been significantly impacted by these three theories (Ward & Siegert, 2002). Ward and Siegert (2002) create their own Pathways model, which is built on the motivational elements and clusters of CSA theories, after critically analysing these three theories.

According to Ward & Siegert's (2002) Pathways model, there are several possible routes that might result in sexual abuse. They identified five distinct causal pathways for the development of sexual offending behaviour based on several symptom clusters. These are:

1. A lack of social skills and intimacy.
2. Adolescent mentalities (sexual scripts).
3. Dysregulation of emotions
4. Anti-social cognition or cognitive distortions, which include a lack of empathy and a sense of entitlement toward the psychological and emotional needs of others.
5. Various faulty mechanisms, including every cluster of symptoms linked to these earlier routes.

Child sexual offenders lack the socially acceptable abilities to develop closeness (Ward & Siegert, 2002). First, the theory that the offender may have had a childhood marked by unstable and compromised attachment could serve as a psychological mechanism. Second, deviant sexual thought processes or sexual scripts (deviant thought processes) - such as inappropriate sexual partners (like children), inappropriate sexual behaviours, or inappropriate sexual contexts (like impersonal sex) - are a part of the psychological mechanism of a child sexual abuser. The third psychological process, emotional dis-regulation, postulates that a lack of inhibitions and self-control results in inappropriate sexual behaviours, such as having sex with a child. Cognitive distortion, the fourth psychological mechanism, results from issues with intimacy and social skills, aberrant sexual arousal (for example, being aroused by children), and emotional instability that eliminates any inhibitions against engaging in sexual activity with children. (Ward & Siegert, 2002). However, personality flaws are typically the

perpetrator's primary vulnerabilities that lead to aberrant/deviant sexual behaviour (Hall & Hirschman, 1992, and Ward & Siegert, 2002). Therefore, the concepts of rapid and radical social change, the non-communication between parents and children, social norms that discredit gender equality, and take the girl child and women as simple sex machines (Achyut et al., 2015), and lack of proper primary socialization due to competing interests by adult parents, come into play.

2.4 Defining Child Sexual Abuse

According to the World Health Organization (2014), (cited in Srivastava et al., 2017; Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019, p.136) child sexual abuse is defined as “the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. CSA is evidenced by this activity between a child and an adult or another child who, by age or development, is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to: The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; the exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials”. Other sexual activities that involve minors or adolescents include fondling, masturbating in front of them, having sex, exposing one's privates to them, having sex of any kind—vaginal, oral, or anal—sharing pornography, sex trafficking, or engaging in any other sexual activity that could cause mental, physical, or emotional trauma to a child. (Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019).

CSA definitions vary widely across research, resulting in a diverse array of definitions of the social concept. Certain studies employ distinct age standards, while other studies vary in what constitutes abusive sexual conduct. Pereda et al. (2009) state that researchers studying sexual abuse have employed a variety of criteria of childhood sexual abuse, such as the age at which childhood is defined, the nature of the abuse, or the age gap between the abuser and the victim. However, even though definitions of CSA vary widely, it is commonly understood to be sexual behaviour or sexual act that takes place in childhood or adolescence, that is, sexual activity that takes place before the age of 18 and involves a man, woman, or other kid as the perpetrator (Hillis et al., 2001; Bensley et al., 2000).

This thesis defined CSA as any coerced sexual act or coercive sexual act by a female perpetrator against a boy or girl who is under the age of eighteen. The age of 18 was used for the study because it is the age at which minors are most commonly considered to be beyond the age of consent in sexual history literature as well as the concept of a child. This definition has, in the broadest sense, also linked with the views of this research that looked at the social perception regarding female perpetrators of CSA. Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2019) have identified and articulated five problem areas related to a common CSA conceptual understanding. The first problem area is related to knowledge generation and research. Different definitions of CSA in prevalence, aetiology, and sequelae research have resulted in significant variation in findings on the same occurrence under this category, making it impossible to trace or create shared knowledge of prevalence across time.

According to Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2019), issue number two has to do with the legal field. The legal system is faced with a variety of issues that are crucial to recognizing, addressing, and preventing child sexual abuse. Many legal provisions prohibit particular behaviours and offer remedies for social infractions that lead to the establishment of standards of behaviour. A particular application of the CSA that is pertinent to compensation for injuries under civil law. Criminal law, which entails the prosecution of the offender; child protection, which identifies and stops child sexual abuse; and telecommunications law, which forbids the use of electronic media to spread the word about child sexual abuse. Constitutional law restricts free speech by outlawing the use of CSA materials and professional licencing, which keeps offenders away from children. Conceptual ambiguity, or the lack of a widely accepted definition of CSA, continues to be an operational difficulty in all of the domains that have been mentioned.

The third problem relates to preventative initiatives, which typically have a variety of goals. These are observed in the kids, the offenders, the parents or guardians, the establishments, and the general public. Approaches may differ in their theoretical soundness, actual accomplishments, and success depending on what is included in the CSA idea. Furthermore, policy approaches and preventative measures may require various methods and content based on the CSA conceptualization and operational definition. This also applies to therapeutic interventions such as therapy and psychosocial support (Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019).

Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2019) identify problem four as the enormous impact that is posed and exercised by national and international policy development and implementation bodies, as well as other reputable professional groups. Although their strategies for CSA avoidance have the potential to produce noticeable results, the application of flawed CSA criteria could jeopardise legislative efforts. The establishment of societal norms for appropriate behaviour, which may be impeded, is the fifth issue. The lack of a benchmark for judging behaviour encourages detrimental behaviours that violate children's rights to continue. Some sexual experiences are not even regarded by society as CSA because of this type of issue (Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019 and United Nations, 1989, 2006). Convention on the rights of the child). In order to have an effective approach towards the epidemiological measurement of CSA, aetiology identification and response, and primordial prevention, there is a need for a sound, common definition of the concept (Mathews & Collin-Vezina, 2019). If the social, health, and legal institutions can first agree on the conceptual definition of CSA, they can collaborate effectively to address it (Pinheiro, 2006; Jayapalan et al., 2018).

The analysis conducted by Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2019) go on to say that sexual activities involving a person who is younger than the legally designated age are covered by the CSA. However, different countries have different legal age limits for consent, ranging from 12 or 13 years old in the US and Australia to 17 or 18 years old in other countries. The legal age for sexual encounters is 16 in almost all of Europe; nevertheless, in some nations, 14 or 15 is the minimum age for consent. Accordingly, situations involving sexual contact between an adult and a teenager, say, 14 years old, will either be viewed as consensual relationships or criminalized and defined as sexual abuse based on the legally defined age of the country where the abuse/event occurred, provided that no coercion or force is used. CSA is a form of entrenchment of the rights of a child, popularly referred to as maltreatment, and it provokes reactions of outrage and is not understood in all cultures around the globe. On the other hand, CSA is a regrettably widespread societal illness that impacts one in five women and one in ten males globally. Given this concerning prevalence, it is obvious that significant and effective policy and practice initiatives that are biased toward prevention and treatment are needed (Selengia, et al., 2020).

While the effects of CSA may not always be visible, victims still carry the threat to their well-being. Research has indicated that, on its own, CSA is thought to be responsible for 1% of the

worldwide disease burden. However, given its strong correlation with other conditions like drug and alcohol abuse, mental health issues, and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, the total impact of CSA is estimated to be over 20% (Singh et al., 2014; Selengia et al., 2020 and Lalor, 2008; cited in Mokokwe et al., 2022). Due in large part to regional wars, ethnic warfare, and socioeconomic issues, the effects of CSA are significantly more severe in low- and middle-income nations, which includes those in Africa and Asia. The Asia Pacific region's economic burden of child maltreatment/entrenchment, which includes sexual abuse, is estimated by Fang et al. (2015) to be between 1% and 3% of GDP annually due to the illness burden associated with this issue.

2.5 Causes of CSA

The research first discusses the aetiology of CSA in view of satisfying the objective of identifying the different typologies of CSA perpetrated by females in the area of study. According to Ward and Seiget (2012), these aetiologies are in the form of theories/models. The aetiology of CSA offending refers to the origins or causes of sexually abusive behaviour's development, onset and maintenance (Gwirayi, 2010, 2013). Knowledge about the aetiology of sexual perpetration is important for designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating appropriate, effective and sustainable CSA interventions. The diagnostic information has, over the years, assisted in the development of prevention and treatment strategies that are comprehensive and meaningful to the sexual perpetrators, CSA victims, and the community at large. This information can also inform decision-making at the policy level, focusing at perpetrators' punitive measures, community oversight, and civil commitment relating to primordial, primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary levels of CSA prevention (Muridzo & Malianga, 2015; Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1990; McLeod, 2017; Grant & Osanloo, 2015).

Over the recent decades, CSA research has had progressive developments in defining and exploring CSA prevalence, its consequences and grimness or severity. Several CSA aetiological research have been carried out around the globe in an effort to develop effective prevention programmes targeting CSA perpetrators. The Pathways Model, which was formed from the three earlier theories of child sexual abuse aetiology, was created by Ward and Siegert (2002) based on these three models. WHO (2009) states that researchers have examined the following factors as reasons and propellants for CSA; CSA is a forceful behavior. Rather than being a sex urge, as is commonly believed, power and control are the underlying causes in the

majority of cases of CSA. It is rarely a crime of passion. It is actually a violent, hostile, and aggressive behavior intended to control, humiliate, dehumanize, and degrade the victim. The perpetrator's aggressiveness, hatefulness, and sadism are meant to undermine the victim's sense of self (see the psychodynamic model's self-theory). CSA violates a victim's sense of safety, privacy and well-being.

In addition, WHO (2009) has affirmed that rape and other forms of sexual violence, such as CSA, are not driven by sexual desire. All forms of sexual violence, including CSA, contain aggressiveness and sexuality, but sex is only a vehicle for expressing non-sexual emotions like rage and hatred toward the victim, as well as a drive to dominate and control them. Not all of the people who conduct acts of sexual assault have the same reasons for doing so, and their methods often differ. Regardless of the motivation behind the CSA or the type of act performed, sexuality, power, and rage are constant aspects that are present. Determining the motivations behind a single perpetrator's decision to engage in sexual abuse of a minor is a difficult task. Nonetheless, a few recurring themes have shown up. According to WHO (2009), sexual violence can also be used as a way to express frustration, assert one's identity, defend against sexual anxieties, assert one's sexual adequacy, assert compensation for feelings of helplessness, assert sexual gratification, and assert status among peers. Therefore, this study makes the case that in order for CSA intervention practitioners and programmers to provide compassionate, impartial, and high-quality care, it is critical that they comprehend the diverse dynamics of CSA.

Furthermore, Castro et al. (2019) find a correlation between CSA and engaging in risky sexual activities, especially throughout adolescence and youth. Being a crucial stage in a person's development cycle, adolescence is when sexual activity starts. During this time, sexual behaviours are susceptible to a variety of factors that may encourage a loss of control over one's circumstances and an increase in vulnerability. Substance misuse, not planning sexual activities, and poor risk perception are some traits of sexuality and CSA poor skills to negotiate condom use and perform safe sexual behaviors (Fragouli & Theodoulou, 2015; Slovic, 2000). This research was of the view that the inclusion of adult women and adolescent girls (including Female Sex Workers (FSWs) and community leadership-the chiefs) into the study population, was of paramountcy as it enabled them to realise the set objectives.

2.6 Effects of CSA

The victim is the one who is most impacted by CSA, then the victim's significant others and the community. The victim is the one who is most directly impacted by sexual abuse, but the ramifications of this societal evil extend far beyond them, having an influence on their closest connections, communities, and society as a whole. The impacts of CSA on reproductive, physical, and mental health, as well as social well-being, are among the most prevalent (Jewkes et al., 2002), they are expounded upon here. Every CSA victim reacts to the abuse in a different and unique manner. The victim's background, culture, customs, belief systems, and way of life may have an impact on these responses. While some victims choose to share their thoughts, others choose to keep them inside. Some would disclose to others what would have happened right once, while others—if they choose to disclose to others—would wait a while, perhaps weeks, months, or even years. Respecting each person's decisions and coping mechanisms for the traumatic experience is so essential. Whether the sexual abuse occurred long ago or recently, it still has an impact on the victim's ability to function daily, regardless of whether it is determined to be complete or attempted CSA. The victims may experience a wide range of reactions, which can be divided into three categories: emotional, psychological, and physical reactions (Denov, 2003, 2004). Emotional responses can result in the victim being abused again and include feelings of shame, guilt, self-blame, embarrassment, fear, mistrust, sadness, vulnerability, and isolation. Psychological responses include depressive symptoms, trouble focusing, nightmares, flashbacks, and PTSD (Borja et al., 2006; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Schumm et al., 2006). Beyond sexual and reproductive health, the repercussions of CSA also impact the physical and social wellbeing of those who are affected (Denov, 2004; Senn et al., 2008), which in turn has an impact on a country's overall economic and social welfare. Children who experience sexual abuse are more likely to engage in harmful behaviours such as drug and alcohol addiction, smoking, truancy, running away from home, and occasionally getting married young in an attempt to escape the abuse. Sexual abuse also has long-term psychological effects (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor et al., 2016).

2.6.1 The impact of CSA on loved ones and significant others.

When an individual is sexually abused, it is not only them who are affected, but also the people around them as well. Sexual abuse can affect many people in the victim's life, and these include; parents and guardians, partners, friends, other children, classmates and so on. Most importantly, the loved ones are left with a dilemma of what actions to take and how to start the

appropriate action. (NAC reports-unpublished, 2019; Borja et al., 2006; Filipas & Ullman, 2001 and Schumm, et al., 2006).

2.6.2 Community effects of CSA

As is the case with all forms of violence in society, such as civil war, financial collapse, gender-based violence, and CSA, it rips at the fabric of communal wellbeing. The neighbourhoods, campuses, workplaces, schools and cultural or religious communities may feel anger, disbelief or fear of sexual abuse of children if it happens in their community. Financial costs also exist for the provision of medical and mental health services, legal fees, missed productivity and work hours, property damage and theft, and the innumerable immeasurable lost contributions of those impacted by the CSA (Borja, et al., 2006; Filipas & Ullman, 2001 and Schumm, et al., 2006).

Studies on FSPs have been quite few. However, the scarcity of studies in this area does not mean that FSPs are not important to study. Sexual abuse can have a grave effect on victims that can last throughout their life time, and this impact may be different when the perpetrator is female. It has also been observed that despite the small numbers of FSPs, having different studying motives, with diverse modus operandi and having possible mental disorders, it is still necessary to be able to have successful empirical research on FSPs. More knowledge on FSPs may assist victims in reporting and seeking aid and programmers in designing appropriate community-based intervention activities. Because the perpetrators of sexual abuse are a heterogeneous group of women who commit the crime for a variety of reasons and in a variety of contexts, the few studies that have examined the small groups of FSPs have suffered from smaller sample sizes, even less than studies on MSPs (Vandiver & Walker, 2002).

2.7 Health, mental health, and substance abuse

WHO (1948) defined health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. WHO (1986) further qualified this definition by saying that health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept that emphasises personal and social resources, including physical and mental capacities. This means that health is a resource to support an individual's function in wider society rather than an end in itself. A healthy lifestyle provides the means to lead a full life with meaning and purpose. Mental and physical health are the two most frequently discussed types of health; however, additionally, spiritual, emotional, and financial health also contribute to the overall health of an individual. To focus on mental health issues specifically, Mathews and

Collin-Vezina (2019) state that traumatic CSA experiences are a significant risk factor for the emergence of a wide range of mental health issues that have an impact on victims' present and future well-being.

According to WHO (2003), mental health is a state of well-being whereby individuals recognise their abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully and contribute to their communities. Therefore, important concepts in mental health that are relevant to this study include; perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, intergenerational dependence, subjective well-being and recognition of the ability to realise one's intellectual and emotional potential. Mental health, therefore, entails more than a mere lack of mental disorders and is about enhancing the competencies of individuals and communities and enabling them to finally achieve their self-determination.

The effects of CSA are extremely severe and account for a sizeable portion of the world's health burden. Even children who survive CSA have severe psychological and physical trauma. Furthermore, CSA may cause an early death. Their exposure to violence jeopardizes not only their physical well-being but also their capacity to learn and develop into responsible individuals capable of building stable families and communities. Abuse has serious consequences that go beyond the happiness and health of the individual survivors to impact the community as a whole (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986 and Jewkes et al., 2002). The consequences of sexual abuse are higher when the abuse is within the family (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

In Zimbabwe and many other nations in the region, substance and drug misuse have become pandemics, with most urban districts experiencing crisis levels of the problem. The WHO reports that 70.7% of males and 55.5% of females aged 15 to 19 in Zimbabwe are episodic drinkers, making it the country with the highest rate of this behaviour in Africa (Matutu & Mususa, 2019). Matutu and Mususa (2019) further assert that the prevalence of drug abuse is at 57% among young people, and the most abused substances and drugs are marijuana and alcohol. Moreover, with the consequences of the covid-19 pandemic, some estimate that about 73% of young people in both urban and rural areas are now into drugs. Matutu and Mususa (2019) further argue that although substance and drug abuse are on the rise, little effort is being made to curb it in Zimbabwe. Additionally, African News (2022) reports that Zimbabwe and other neighboring countries have moved from marijuana abuse to much harder drugs such as crystal methamphetamine and bronzer.

Young people have been recognized as the most vulnerable demographic (Matutu & Mususa, 2019). This is especially true for individuals from low-income or insecure families who may be persuaded to view drugs as a way to escape their problems in life. In most districts, the youth constitute the highest population involved in substance and drug abuse, and the commonly abused substances and drugs include cannabis (*mbanje*) and alcohol (*mutoriro and guka*). Most of these drugs are smuggled from neighboring countries, stored at some undisclosed bases, and then find their way into the streets where young people access them. Boat cruises, most young people's parties, and music shows in artisanal mining sites have incorporated shisha and take this opportunity to introduce young people to substance and drug abuse.

Matutu and Mususa (2019) argue that there is a linkage between substance and drug abuse, CSA, STIs (including HIV) transmission, gender-based violence, as well as child marriages. Some of the long-term effects of substance and drug abuse include depression, anxiety, and suicide (Lalor, 2008). Rehabilitation centers and community reintegration systems are among other strategies that can be employed in communities to combat these effects. HIV prevention behavioral models like Sister to Sister, parent to child communication, and brother to brother peer dialogues are being implemented in most parts of the country to empower young mothers and youth out of school on critical life skills, effects of drug abuse, sexual reproductive health issues (Achyut et al., 2015). According to Mahiya (2016); Matutu and Mususa (2019), the majority of drug addicts turn against their families, becoming defiant, challenging, and displaying unreasonable rage. Adolescents who use illicit drugs are more likely to perform poorly in school, engage in risky sexual behaviour that raises their risk of contracting STIs like HIV, and become pregnant unexpectedly.

When a family member is involved in drug and substance abuse, it automatically affects the entire family and community. Drug abusers have tendencies to become thieves to secure the money to buy drugs; they also engage in physical abuse and conflicts. Hence, there is a need to enhance parent-child communication and sensitise communities on reintegration mechanisms. According to Zuckerman (2009, 2014), an important concept that is brought about by substance and drug abuse and their effects is sensation seeking. Sensation-seeking is a fundamental personality characteristic that is described as "a trait defined by the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience" (Zuckerman, 2014,p.

27). It is another challenge facing the youth. The definition of sensation-seeking is the desire for new and varied experiences, as well as the readiness to take chances to get them. As a result, broncler, alcohol, marijuana, and crystal meth have all been linked to sensation-seeking. According to Mafigu (2018), the primary correlated personality traits that are strongly and reliably linked to substance and drug usage, are impulsivity and sensation-seeking. The author further reiterates that there is a propensity for juveniles to have heightened sensitivity to reinforcement, a strong incentive focus, and a lack of previous concern for the repercussions of their behaviour. This study is of the view that the notions of impulsivity and sensation seeking are imperative and relate not only to substance and drug abuse and their effects, but are also closely related to the female perpetrated CSA and its effects, hence the inclusion of the object, self and self-theories and the socio-ecological model as the theoretical basis for this research in Mazowe District.

This implies that women are losing their status in society, which leads to social exclusion and physical health issues such as impairment of function, accidents, and permanent disability. Girls and boys who experience sexual abuse are vulnerable to STIs, including HIV (Senn et al., 2008). Additionally, when an adolescent girl is coerced into sexual actions, it is doubtful that she will use a condom or other type of contraception, which raises the risk of an unintended pregnancy (Jewkes et al., 2002). Urinary tract infections, unsafe abortions, vaginal bleeding, and infections are among the additional ecological issues connected to sexual violence. Furthermore, there are other physical reactions that can be experienced, such as changes in eating or sleeping patterns, loss of control, increased startle response, confusion, numbness, anger, shock, disbelief, denial, anxiety, phobia, substance abuse, eating disorders, and low self-esteem. These reactions can also result in fatal health outcomes like suicide, homicide, maternal mortality and, due to exposure, STIs, including HIV (Mellor & Deering, 2010 and Rosenhan, et al., 2000).

2.7.2 Mental health

Many people who experienced sexual abuse as children go on to experience mental health issues as adults. Life situations that are stressful have the potential to cause or worsen mental and physical health issues that are linked to PTSD (Cohen et al., 2024). Research on the connection between CSA and mental health problems has demonstrated that the victims' level of damage is determined by the severity, length, and, in certain cases, the age at the

commencement of CSA. These can be short-term or long-term psychological effects, such as anxiety, depression, somatisation disorder, low self-esteem, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Several research, including literature reviews and meta-analyses, have corroborated these findings (Davidson et al., 1991; Kendler et al., 2000; Molnar et al., 2001 and Paolucci et al., 2001). This study supports the arguments by the scholars mentioned above as it also looks at the effects of female-perpetrated CSA in the Mazowe District, which will contribute to the measurement of the gravity of the social ill.

2.8 Social perception on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse

This research is about social/people's perception of female sexual perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe, which basically seeks to interpret female behaviour in child sexual abuse (CSA) or why they commit CSA when society expects them to be nurturers and caregivers of these children. Social perception or interpretation of FSPs requires past experience. The stimulus in this research is CSA as perpetrated by females. The organisation of what people have seen or heard, their interpretation, beliefs, attitudes and record/recall, and their lived experiences, are what matters in the research.

Social perception is an important psychological concept in this research as the enquirer attempts to understand the behaviours of females in CSA, including the entire community's beliefs and attitudes and their interpretation. Social perception is a key component of social skills and interaction. People are aware of the events and objects in their environment through the process of perception, which is the interpretation of a current stimulus based on prior experience, or the analysis and understanding of a stimulus as it is. Perception occurs in five stages that are orderly; stimulation, organization, interpretation-evaluation, memory and recall. It is also defined as a need to solve problems around people as a society (Russell & Ward, 1982; Devito, 2016 and UK Essays, 2018). Social scientists have recognised group identity (political, ethnic, national or religious identity) as a powerful determinant of individual attitudes and behaviour. Paluck and Ball (2010), in their explanation of the concept of social norms, highlighted that people desire to belong to social groups, and as individuals, they have a basic drive to fit in those groups, avoiding deviance from the standards set by those groups (Lilleston et al., 2017). They, therefore, conform to the group standards, internal pressure of the group to maintain uniformity and group sanctions of members who deviate from the

standards. The entire puzzle may vary according to the accepted culture and context or geographical influence of the people, Dost 2025.

It has been further observed that conforming to the set standards of the group is not an individual weakness but a basic psychological feature that motivates group outcomes that are both pro and anti-social. People's drive, at the individual level, to fit in their group, is the departure point for understanding the power of social norms (Paluck & Ball, 2010). A social norm has been described by Paluck and Ball (2010) as a perception of where (social location) a social group is and where it ought to be on some dimension of individual attitude or behaviour. In this definition, two major types of social norms were identified and these are the descriptive, which is the perception of where the group is. The descriptive norm identifies attitudes and behaviours of the group. The other type of social norm is the injunctive norm or the perception of where the group desires to reach or to be. Injunctive norms identify the desirable attitudes and behaviours of the people in a group. Descriptive and injunctive norms entail a certain kind of social consensus, where descriptive norms are perceived consensus about a prevailing descriptive pattern of CSA behaviour and the injunctive norms imply a perceived consensus about a forbidden or prescribed behaviour (Paluck & Ball, 2010).

According to Lilleston et al., (2017), social perceptions and social norms are interchangeable. Social norms are common beliefs that have existed within social groupings for a long time and play a significant role in either preventing or sustaining CSA by female perpetrators and convicted offenders. Preventing female-perpetrated CSA requires an understanding of how people's perceptions are formed, dispersed, and eventually altered as a result of their interactions in social groupings. For the purposes of this research, social perceptions about others are social norms that are shared and exist within social groups and are maintained through the group's approval and/or disapproval (Lilleston et al., 2017). The two main categories of social norms and perceptions—descriptive and injunctive norms—are used by the study. While injunctive norms are views about what members of a social group believe others should and should not do, descriptive social norms are views about what members of social groups carry out or execute. In this case, descriptive norms describe how people perceive the prevalence of female-perpetrated CSA behaviour, whereas injunctive norms describe how much people feel pressured to participate in female-perpetrated CSA behaviour due to perceived social benefits or penalties (Lilleston et al., 2017). Social norms, as they are widely known, can be characterised as behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, and moral judgments on those

behaviours that are deemed good or bad. The majority of people do not necessarily need to think that social norms or perceptions are real or correct for them to persist; instead, they only need to believe that other members of the group do (Lilleston et al., 2017).

Devito (2016) asserts that perception is the process by which an individual forms their final understanding of the universe and also entails processing sensory information. There are a plethora of stimuli in the world that draw attention through different senses. As a result, people are able to methodically describe the tastes, smells, sights, and sounds that make up their conscious experiences. As people perceive events, their brain actively selects, organises and integrates sensory information to construct events. Perception creates melodies, faces and illusions (something that many people believe is false) of raw material of sense impression.

People's senses are constantly being stimulated by a variety of external stimuli. Many of these impulses are absorbed by the sense organs and transformed into impressions or feelings that are then sent to the appropriate areas of the brain. The brain will then interpret these feelings, and after it has done so, the person will comprehend the purpose of the stimulus. As people understand the world around them, they are brought to the attention, which is followed by sensation/sense impression and, finally, interpretation. This process of interpretation of stimulus is the one referred to as perception.

In the social science field, each individual brings with them personal life experiences that shape perceptions. McDonald (2011) states that perception is an individual's view, making it a driving force for action. One can create a lens through which to view the world through a filter of socio-cultural influences by processing sensory information and relating to past experiences. This study argues that the intervention practitioners in the area of female-perpetrated CSA need to be cognizant of how these differences can impact the execution of community education and awareness. Since individual views are the only ones we are aware of, miscommunication and less than ideal results from intended treatments may result from a conflict between the service provider and CSA victims and perpetrators. No perception is ever objective. It is the distinct perspective that an individual or group has on a phenomenon, one that requires processing stimuli and understanding by incorporating memories and experiences. This study also makes the case that studies including conceptual models such as the Health Belief Model and Health Promotion Model yield useful information when it comes to CSA responses (McDonald, 2011; Glanz et al., 2024; Noar & Zimmerman, 2005).

Abeid et al., (2014) quoted by Citundu et al., (2020) conducted a qualitative study in rural Tanzania to investigate community attitudes toward child sexual abuse and rape. The findings of the study indicated that both rape and CSA are acknowledged as human rights, health, and security issues both in Tanzania and globally. The study participants thought that CSA and rape were common but obscure social phenomena. A number of factors that contribute to the commission of sexual abuse came out from the study participants, and these included poverty, exposure of children, alcohol and drug abuse, erosion of social norms, poor parental guidance and care and rapid, radical social changes due to globalisation. According to McLeod (2015), FSPs are significantly underrepresented in empirical evidence mainly due to the fact that female perpetrators have not been recognised by our society; they have been allowed to sneak detection, prosecution, forensic investigations and treatment. Part of the reasons include that the female perpetration behaviours, victim profiles and personal characteristics are not the same as the male sexual perpetrators, though the society is more familiar with the MSPs than the FSPs. McLeod's (2015) study confirms that the female and male perpetrators domains are different and affirms that FSPs are distinctly different from their male counterparts.

Wangamati et al. (2018) establish and confirm previous research on the perceptions of communities regarding factors contributing to community-based surveillance (CSA) vulnerability in Kenya. The study focused on communities' perceptions of CSA vulnerability and found that while CSA is a global public health concern, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding factors contributing to CSA vulnerability in Kenya. In Western Kenya, the study examined and evaluated community perceptions of factors leading to CSA susceptibility through the use of qualitative data from 28 focus group discussions and ethnographic field notes. According to the study's findings, residents of these communities believed that a variety of factors, such as peer pressure, gender inequality, a lack of knowledge made worse by harmful cultural practices and social norms, developmental stage, the HIV epidemic, and social media platforms that spread sexualised images, all had an impact on CSA (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

It was evident from these results that poverty was associated with the commissioning of CSA. Poor children used transactional sex as a means of surviving and gaining social status. The perception of certain community members was that girls who wore tight apparel and short skirts were inviting rape and other forms of anti-social sexual approaches. The community connected

victims' patterns of dress or behaviour with this anti-social practice, even if poverty and gender norms were seen as increasing vulnerability to CSA. The researchers recommended the necessity for a thorough community education campaign on CSA, its repercussions, and women's and girls' rights as they concluded their study.

2.9 Community beliefs and attitudes towards CSA

A belief is a state of mind or habit in which confidence or trust is placed in some person regarding something about their lives. Beliefs relate to individual attitudes or convictions that substantiate something to be true. A belief involves a mental state of having a particular stance, opinion or attitude regarding a phenomenon. Beliefs are assumptions and expectations about routine matters that relate to social, physical and spiritual world rules and they may also refer to ethical, cultural, political, philosophical, theological or scientific matters, among others, and are a result of past experience, and are often constructed by observing the behaviour of others and the consequences of such actions, and this is where beliefs are connected to perceptions (Pickens, 2005 and Albarracin & Pitliya, 2022).

2.9.1 Attitudes

In simplest terms, an attitude is an individual's general opinion about, or evaluation of, some target or phenomenon of interest to the object person (Pickens, 2005). In addition, attitudes can be described as a person's or an item's perspective on and assessment of another person or occurrence, as well as a tendency to react favourably or unfavourably to a circumstance, an object, a person, or a concept. The three elements of an attitude are traditionally regarded as follows: cognitive (perceptions and beliefs), affective (feelings or elicited emotions, likes and dislikes), and behavioural (actions or declared intentions towards the object depending upon the emotional and cognitive responses). Psychologists have also described attitudes as a learned disposition to view and make judgements of phenomena in a particular way, and it includes an evaluation of people, events, policies, objects, issues and people. It is an umbrella term that consists of people's perceptions, beliefs, expectations opinions, emotions, intentions and values (Chaiklin, 2011; Pickens, 2005 and Bizer et al., 2006). Additionally, according to Chaiklin (2011), attitudes to the social structure are important in creating and maintaining social order, and also, the adverse can be experienced, for example, the practice of paedophiles, which results in the devastation of the upcoming generations and the present community. Bizer et al. (2006) explain the two models that cause attitudes, thus: 1) the cognitive and affective core centre of attitudes that predict the behaviour of an individual and 2) the behaviour itself is taken

to determine an attitude. The two views are considered to be complimenting each other and not antagonistic. From this view, Cherry (2024) identifies three attitude components, that are basically the; affective (how the person, object or event makes one feels), behavioural (how an individual respond to someone or something that arouse a set of beliefs and feelings) and cognitive component (thus one's perception, beliefs and ideas regarding the matter at hand (Cherry, 2024).

2.9.2 The nexus between perceptions, beliefs and attitudes.

The main determinants of the incidence of harmful social practices are attitudes and beliefs, which are all absorbed into general social perceptions. The relationship between the cognitive component and one's perception, thoughts, and ideas about a certain topic (Albarracin & Pitliya, 2022). As a result, beliefs clearly play a crucial role in cognition, influencing how individuals perceive the world, behave, and think. Albarracin and Pitliya (2022) establish a connection between beliefs, perceptions, behaviour, and attitudes. They also emphasise that beliefs within a social context serve as a basis for understanding and appreciating the world, enabling individuals to act in it and provide a consistent and cohesive representation of their community. This allows individuals to draw conclusions about the causes and effects of world events. This set of beliefs facilitates goal-directed behaviour, the construction of common worldviews, environmental assessment, and explanation of new observations. Society accepts this connection and passively follows it in order to maintain its standard of living when it comes to the commissioning of female-perpetrated CSA.

2.10 Myths Myths can be defined as a widely held but untrue belief, a prevalent misperception, a fictional or imaginary person or entity, or a widely believed but idealised belief about a real person or event (Resilience Empowering Survivors Ending Sexual Violence, 2021). A myth is a story or narration of practical happenings without an author that is passed along and is usually intended to teach a lesson or something that is not true. This research has adopted the former definition by the Resilience Empowering Survivors Ending Sexual Violence (2021), which has been used in the development of an all-encompassing community awareness model.

2.10.1 Myths related to CSA

Dignity among both CSA victims and their perpetrators in general is an important phenomenon of human security. According to Abeid et al, (2014), quoted by Chitundu (2020) victims do

not report CSA incidences because they want to maintain dignity. CSA moves with it a number of myths and risks that are associated with people's perceptions. Perceptions of people can be derived from the myths surrounding them. People are expected to behave according to the dictates of their reputation, whether the reputation is self-made (psychodynamic theories) or assigned (socio-ecological theory). Dake (1992) argues that although people individually perceive risks and have concerns, such as in CSA, it is a culture that perpetuates socially constructed myths about belief systems that people internalise and continue to reshape, influencing how they interpret natural phenomena and forming part of their worldview.

2.11 Conventions, Laws, and Policies Regarding Children's Rights

A wide range of national laws, policies, media reports, documentaries, program guides, program manuals, and international and regional conventions were examined as part of the document analysis process. The following documents were reviewed and considered relevant for the study; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage, the Constitution of Zimbabwe, Children's Protection and Adoption Act, Child Justice Bill; Children's rights, the Children's Justice bill, Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, Zimbabwe National Action Plan for OVC (NAP for OVC), Protocol on the Multisectoral Management of Sexual Violence, Program Manuals on Parent-Child Communication, Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Guidance and Counselling for in and out of school youth, Zimbabwe National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan-ZNASP 4.

2.11.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC), and many other relevant child rights conventions, have all been ratified by the Zimbabwean government.

The Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, however, has not been ratified by the Zimbabwean government. Given that the majority of adoptions start out as foster care cases, this convention—an international

agreement to protect international adoption—is pertinent to the foster care system. Although the adoption provision of the Zimbabwe Children's Protection and Adoption Act exists, the nation is unable to complete all adoption procedures, which could lead to the child experiencing bias (World Vision, 2018).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC,1989) is a legally binding international agreement setting out for the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of every child in all countries of the globe, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or abilities. The Convention contains 54 articles outlining the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights to which every child is entitled. It is the most comprehensive statement of children's rights ever created and the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history. It also describes how governments and adults must collaborate in order to guarantee that every child has the opportunity to exercise all of their rights, considering the fact that every child has rights regardless of their gender, race, ability, religion, or any other status. Additionally, the convention recognises that, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, the child should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

Since Zimbabwe is a UN member state and has ratified and signed the Convention, all 54 of its articles are significant. Ten articles out of the 54 articles have been determined to have a direct bearing on the research for the purposes of this analysis. Article 1 provides a definition of a child, and it states that;

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, the majority is attained earlier (UNCRC, 1989, p.2).

The UNCRC (1989) has also touched on the security of children in the family setup and has stated that all children should not be separated from their biological parents or guardians. Article 19 of the convention states that;

States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child.

States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

According to this article of the UNCRC (1989), all member states must make sure that their state parties have implemented the necessary legislative, administrative, awareness-raising, and social measures for the protection of children. These measures must include both preventing the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of drugs and substances, and shielding children from the illicit use of substances and drugs as defined by the pertinent international treaties (Article 33-UNCRC, 1989). Article 34 of the UNCRC directly talks about the protection of children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and states that;

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular, take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent: (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

A child has the right to be protected from all forms of sexual abuse by taking the necessary precautions to prevent any form of abuse, as stated in Articles 34 of the UNCRC and Article 27 of the ACRWC. Zimbabwe has strengthened its support for the realisation of children's rights through NAP for OVC 1 to 3. Nevertheless, despite all the attempts, there is a growing draw towards female sex work, and the nation's economic circumstances have made some families more vulnerable. The country is also grappling with the comprehensive implementation of the UNCRC in view of the three Ps thus; provision, protection and participation (UN, 1989; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (2016) and Fairhall & Woods,

2021). This research is of the view that the recommendations proffered will provide baseline information on how to educate the citizens regarding female perpetrated CSA and the available related statutes and instruments so as to reduce the problem.

2.11.2 The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

The African Union produced and approved the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC, also known as the African Children's Charter or the Charter). It has been in effect since 1999, and as of June 2019, 49 countries had signed it. The UNCRC's definition of a child is agreed upon by the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). All children in Africa have their rights and welfare upheld by the ACRWC. It describes the obligations and rights that African children have. It offers African governments guidelines on how to enhance the quality of life for children in their nations. The Charter also acknowledges that, given the difficult circumstances that many African children face—such as abuse, lack of education, natural disasters, armed conflict, exploitation, and hunger—it is imperative to preserve and protect the rights and welfare of children in Africa. It demonstrates that our African governments have a major duty to defend the rights of children.

The African Charter, which recognises the supremacy of human and people's rights and guarantees everyone's access to all rights and freedoms, has been accepted by the African Union's member states. This includes people who are born into different social and national origins, are of a particular ethnic group, or are of a particular colour, race, sex, religion, language, or any other status. As a result, member states of the African Union have concurred in this Charter to acknowledge the necessity of taking all necessary steps to advance and safeguard the welfare and rights of African children. They have also done this in recognition of the unique factors associated with the African children such as; their cultures, traditional and development circumstances, socio-economic statuses, natural disasters, armed conflicts, exploitation and hunger, hence the need for states and Governments to commit a blueprint.

After considering the socio-ecological context, the Charter also takes into account and recognises that African children need special attention when it comes to their physical, mental, moral, and social development, as well as legal protection in an atmosphere of freedom, dignity, and security. The ACRWC's Article Number 14 therefore states that;

Every child has the right to good physical and mental health.

This Article is further supported by Article 18, which states that;

Every child's family is to be protected as their most basic need,

Article 19 of Parents' Care and Protection, states that:

Every child has the right to be raised by their parents or other adults who love them.

There is also Article 20 on parental responsibilities, which states that;

Parents or guardians are responsible for caring for every child in the best way they can.

Article 25, states that:

Under separation from parents- every child has the right to protection and assistance to return to their family or be cared for by other adults if they do not have a family' and article 27, 'every child has the right to be free from sexual abuse,.

These are an important aspect of this study as they emphasise the role of parents and guardians in the protection of children from any forms of hazards, including CSA. It is, therefore, crucial to consider in the holistic multi-sectorial net of interventions the aspect of domestic violence and conflict resolution at the family level to enable parents to promote responsibility in this area. Article 31, which addresses the aspect of the development of a responsible child with desirable morals, calls for every child to have the responsibility to help their family, respect their parents and guardians, and serve their communities and country well, supporting their African culture and contribute to their country's overall development.

2.11.3 The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage

This regional model law on child marriage, known as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) model law on eradicating child marriage and protecting those children who are already married (also referred to as the model law), provides a common framework of ending child marriage and protecting those who are already in marriage, for the political leaders who make the law, service ministries and parastatal, and the civil society among other actors in the region. The aim of the model is to originate the law and/or policy reform on child marriage in SADC member states by providing an easy-to-apply regional standard and promoting cohesion among SADC member states in relation to their legal response to child marriage and the related attributes. The SADC model law and its subsequent guide also aim at

the domestication and implementation of this law, providing workable or easy-to-use content with practical recommendations and examples of how political leaders, CSOs and young advocates promote the law in their own countries.

Additionally, the model law provides a framework that cuts across all sectors and looks at prevention, protection and mitigation of the effects of child marriage. It also focuses on programming and can be used to guide the development of national action plans to end child marriage. The model law allows the ministries, NGOs, and other partners to apply the recommendations even before legislative reform takes place. The current research has observed important aspects coming from the model, and can be used in future intervention/ delivery models based at community levels, organisations and governance/policy levels targeting female perpetrated CSA as the SADC member states commit themselves by saying;

We, the members of the SADC Parliamentary Forum, being conscious of Article 21(2) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child provides that: 1. States Parties to the present Charter shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate harmful social and cultural practices affecting the welfare, dignity, normal growth and development of the child and in particular- a) those customs and practices prejudicial to the health or life of the child; and b) those customs and practices which are discriminatory to the child on the grounds of sex or other status 2. Child Marriage and the betrothal of girls and boys shall be prohibited, and effective action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify the minimum age of marriage to be 18 years and make registration of all marriages in an official registry compulsory.

Part 2.6 of the model also states that;

Protection from exploitation and abuse (1) A child shall not be subjected to physical and psychological violence or abuse, neglect and any other form of exploitation, including being used in sexual work, induced or coerced to engage in any sexual activity, exposed to obscene or pornographic materials, sexually abused or groomed using the internet, or sold, enslaved, trafficked or abducted by any person. (2) The Minister, in consultation with relevant, appropriate authorities, shall put in place policies, measures and interventions to ensure that – (a) a child is accorded protection from physical and psychological violence or abuse, neglect and any other form of exploitation, including the sale, slavery, trafficking or abduction by any person; and (b) necessary support is given to a child, a child in marriage and a victim of child

marriage for the prevention, identification, reporting, referral, investigation, rehabilitation and treatment of injury or illness resulting from maltreatment, abuse or exploitation.

Part 2.8 of the model also discusses that;

Parental responsibility and State interventions (1) A child is entitled to parental care and to live with one parent or both parents. (2) Where a child is not receiving the necessary care and protection of that child's parent, the Government shall endeavour to provide appropriate alternative care for the child. (3) Both parents have an equal duty to protect and adequately provide for the child. (4) A parent shall provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance to the child in the exercise by that child of the child's rights. (5) A judicial or administrative institution, child marriage prohibition officer, or an appropriate authority may, subject to judicial review, remove a child from parental responsibility where the judicial institution, child prohibition officer or appropriate Page 38 of 78 authority determines that the continued living with the parent may (a) lead to significant harm to the child;

(b) Lead to the child being married off;

(c) Subject the child to neglect, exploitation or abuse; or

(d) Not be in the best interest of the child.

(6) A child who is temporarily or permanently deprived of the family environment, or in whose own best interest cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, is entitled to special protection, alternative care and assistance provided by the Government, as specified in this Model Law, including adoption, with due regard to the desirability of continuity in the child's upbringing and the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

(7) The Minister shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children conform to the standards established by appropriate authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, number and suitability of staff and competent supervision.

(8) The Government shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the community, as provided for by local customs that are compatible with this Model Law, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights specified in this Model Law and regional and international human rights instruments.

(9) The Government shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when a judicial institution, or child marriage prohibition officer or an appropriate authority, subject to judicial review, determines, in accordance with applicable laws and procedures, that such separation is necessary in the best interest of the child. Page 39 of 78

(10) Where separation of a child from his or her parents or parent results from any action initiated by the Government, the Government shall, upon request of the parents or parent, provide the parents or parent with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the child, unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child, as provided in this Model Law and regional and international human rights instruments.

(11) A request by a child's parents, as provided in subsection (10), shall be dealt with by the Government in a positive, humane and expeditious manner.

The significance of these two closes of the model is that, this research, aimed at exploring the social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe, will contribute to the design of implementation activities through the recommendations from IKS blended with the recognitions from the SADC model law and other International, continental conventions and national laws and policies.

2.11.4 Children Rights and Protection Laws in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, the principal laws that govern children's rights and protection are The Children's Act, Chapter 5:06, Guardianship of Minors Act, Education Act and The Child Justice Bill, which is yet to be passed into law. Zimbabwe is also currently amending the Children's Act and the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23], especially of the definitions of a child and minor in relation to sexuality matters that include sexual abuse and the age of criminal responsibility of a child, respectively. The main goal of the bill is to establish a child justice system for children in conflict with the law in accordance with the values and principles underpinning the Constitution and the international obligations of Zimbabwe. Additionally, the Child Justice Bill. The objective of the Child Justice bill is to update and align the two acts with the Constitution and Zimbabwe's International obligations, which are in various related treaties and conventions. The amended Acts and the Child Justice Bill will go a long way in operationalising prevention efforts at the community level.

2.11.4.1 Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013)

The Government of Zimbabwe is a signatory to various national, regional and international declarations on the rights and protection of children and has implemented a number of protective policies, legislative instruments and programmes to ensure the fulfilment of all children and women's rights and specifically their right to protection from sexual violence and abuse. These instruments include the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which is the supreme law of the land, The Children Protection and Adoption Act, the Criminal Law-Codification and Reform Act, the Protocol on the Multi-Sectoral Management of Sexual Abuse and Violence in Zimbabwe, among others, are not known by the general population, and there is need for an aggressive approach for awareness for action by the people themselves.

Section 3 (2) (i) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe talks about the principles of good governance, including recognition of the rights of children, while Section 19 (1) and (2) articulates Gannon et al. (2012). The best interests principle which states that "The State must adopt policies and measures to ensure that in matters relating to children, the best interests of children concerned are paramount. This is supported by Section 19 (2c), which states that:

The state must adopt policies and measures, within the limit of the resources available to it, to ensure that children are protected from maltreatment, neglect, or any form of abuse.

The Child Justice Bill and the Children's Act Chapters 5–6 (2019) are represented by Section 81 of the Zimbabwean Constitution and are presently being reviewed. Children in Zimbabwe have always been seen as essential members of society. Thus, it has been determined that the community as a whole should be especially concerned about their protection. The cultural values ingrained in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are rooted in Zimbabwe's rich heritage of caring for and protecting children. These values emphasise that a child is not only a member of their immediate nuclear family but also of the community at large. Because of its long history of extended families, Zimbabweans hold the view that orphans and other vulnerable children are cared for by their extended families, who are also expected to support them through the Chief's Granary/Food Storage Reserve (*Zunde raMambo*) concept and provide care and support. Conceptually, acceptable moral ideals (*hunhu/ubuntu*) alluded to this idea and the networks of support for OVC. However, the government is overburdened by the

socioeconomic and political environment, making it impossible for it to provide for every family and child in need of care. The devastating impacts of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, as well as sexual, substance, and drug abuse, made matters worse and left about 2 million orphans and vulnerable children in need of immediate care and protection.

2.11.4.2 Children's Protection and Adoption Act

The Children's Protection and Adoption Act's primary goals are to outlaw child abduction, implement the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction, establish surrogate motherhood, establish a few new child-related offences, and address issues related thereto. The Children's Act was created to safeguard children and ensure their welfare regardless of their identity, place of residence, or caregiver. The purpose of the Act is to support family unity and ensure that all children get care from their parents or relatives or are placed in alternative care in the event that no family is present. In Zimbabwe, one weak area that is currently prevailing is that the country has not yet signed the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction. This has always and continues to affect children who need particular protection and those that need adoption. The Children's Protection and Adoption ACT (1971) says;

In this respect,

The Children's Protection and Adoption ACT (1971) in Zimbabwe provides for the establishment of children's courts; to make provision for the protection, welfare and supervision of children and juveniles; to provide for the establishment, recognition and registration of certain institutions and institutes for the reception and custody of children and juveniles. The Children's Act is a legal document that was created to help protect children and make sure that their rights are respected. The instrument is there to protect children and make sure they are taken care of, no matter who they are, where they live and who takes care of them.

In Zimbabwe, under the Children's Protection and Adoption Act (Chapter 33);
A child is defined in Section 2 as any person (including infants) under the age of 16 years.

On the other hand, under the Legal Age of Majority Act, (1982),
Any Zimbabwean under the age of 18 years is a minor (Children's Protection and Adoption Act; 2002).

The Children's Act provides a clear framework for all kinds of safeguarding and child protection systems and laws that have been implemented in Zimbabwe. The key focuses of the Act are the importance of children's welfare and the requirements and expectations of anyone who has a duty of child care. The Children's Act criminalises child abuse, including CSA, by creating an array of offences with respect to children, including abandonment, corporal punishment, child pornography, child grooming and, notably, bullying and online harassment. In addition to these statutory instruments, Zimbabwe has some important policies that are designed to address children protection issues, and these include the National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (Part 3); this policy and the Child Welfare Policy provide for protection of children from all forms of physical and psychological torture, inhuman behaviour or degrading treatment and punishment, as well as all forms of abuse.

Despite the prevention and response mechanism against CSA abuse and the laws in place, the country still has room to improve on the policy and response dimension. According to the CRB (2018), Zimbabwe scored poorly on the capacity dimension. The low score denotes that although the country is providing child protection services through childcare workers and child protection committees, the country has a low capacity for effective implementation. Like other government departments, the Department of Social Development (DSD) is grossly underfunded. This has seen the DSD failing to be adequately resourced in terms of staff and other materials. Further, the DSD has, over the years, not been able to retain qualified social workers. Due to this lack of capacity, the DSD has not been able to protect children from all forms of abuse. It is therefore recommended that the government invest in developing and employing adequate financial, equipment and human resources to deliver on its commitment to the UNCRC and the ACRWC. Accountability is equally low in the provision of child protection services in Zimbabwe. Additionally, monitoring of childcare facilities being done by the DSD is not systematic and leaves a lot of gaps since it is still centralised at the national level. It has been recommended that the monitoring be shifted from national to the provinces and districts and that an independent monitoring mechanism, for example, the Office of the President and Cabinet's monitoring and evaluation unit, be introduced to improve accountability, and these include external monitoring of service provision in child care facilities.

This should include timely collection and reporting of the monitoring data, with nationally agreed, multi-sectorial indicators. The complaints handling mechanism is not child-friendly and is not easily accessible. Children in residential care facilities are required to report their CSA experiences and grievances to the parents and guardians, as well as the law enforcement agents. In most cases, these authorities, including parents, are not available and inaccessible to the victimised or vulnerable children (Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, 2016; Judicial Service Commission, 2012 and Mantula & Saloojee, 2016).

2.11.4.3 Child Justice Bill (2019)

Specifically, the objectives of the Child Justice Bill (2019) are;

To establish a distinct criminal justice system for children who are in conflict with the law; to protect the rights of children entrenched in the Constitution and in international and regional instruments; to set out principles relating to the best interest of children; to delineate the powers and responsibilities of members of the Zimbabwean Republic Police and of child protection officers in relation to children; to provide for the detention of children and their release from detention; to entrench the principles of rehabilitation and restorative justice as an integral part of the child justice system; to incorporate the diversion of cases from formal court procedures; to establish procedures for the screening of children to create special rules for a child justice court; to provide for legal representation for children; to extend the sentencing options available for children; to establish review procedures; to establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure effective operation of this Act through child justice committees at national, provincial and district level; to amend the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23] with regards to age of criminal responsibility of a child; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

Clause 3 of the Child Justice Bill (2019) states that;

Clause 3 will amend certain definitions in the Children's Act. For instance, the definition of "child" will be amended so that a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years. The definition of "child in need of care" will be

changed to read “child in need of care or protection or both” and will be widened to include children who are at risk of being unlawfully married, a child who is pregnant or who is sexually abused. The definition of parent will be amended so as to remove the discriminatory reference to the illegitimacy of children born out of wedlock.

Additionally, according to the Zimbabwe Child Justice Bill (2019), under Section 8, which discusses age and criminal capacity, it is stated that;

For the purposes of this act, a child below the age of 12 years is irrebuttable presumed to lack the capacity to commit a crime and cannot be prosecuted for that offence; it must be dealt with in terms of section 14.

Section 14 (The process for dealing with child aged 12 years who is alleged to have committed an offence) of the Bill goes further to say;

Where a police officer has ascertained that a child suspected of having committed an offence is under the age of 12 years, he or she may not arrest the child, and must immediately hand the child over- a) to his or her parents or an appropriate adult or a guardian; or b) if there is no parent or if it is not in the best interests of the child to be handed over to the parent, to an appropriate adult or a guardian or to a suitable child care centre; and must notify a probation officer.

These definitions of a child and measures thereto are in conflict with the one above presented by the UNCRC, and this situation has caused some legal and operational challenges when it comes to dealing with children’s issues and rights in Zimbabwe over the past decades. However, Zimbabwe has since harmonised the age of a child in her definition, and it is now up to 18 years. Section 14 of the Bill articulates the appropriate measures to be taken by the involvement of parents, guardians and the community. In this regard, Clause 84 of the Zimbabwe Child Justice Bill (2020) states that;

The clause (84) establishes a Child Justice Committee and outlines its membership, and the committee advises the Minister on Child Justice Matters, and also receives and considers reports from Provincial Child Justice Committees among other issues. Child Justice Committees will be established and operationally active at national, provincial and district levels.

2.11.4. Criminal Law Codification and Reform) Act, 2005)

Zimbabwe's criminal law is a body of regulations that govern social behaviour. Criminals are perceived as a threat to society. Their behaviour cannot be tolerated because it creates instability and turmoil in society. The major goal of criminal law is to keep behaviour within socially acceptable bounds or, at the very least, to prevent it from occurring. The goal of criminal law is to quell antisocial behaviour that could cause societal unrest by threatening punishment. These behaviours include generalised violence and CSA.

The criminal law is a social tool that is used to threaten, limit, imprison, and cause pain to members of society in order to make them refrain from acting in a way that could endanger the interests of society as a whole. Its goal is to create and uphold peace and order in order to advance the well-being of society and its constituents. This research contributed to the enforcement and education of these laws to the general populace by providing baseline information about female perpetrators of CSA so that they refrain from the ill practices and behaviour. Section 70 of the Act talks about sexual intercourse or performing indecent acts with young persons and, in elaboration, states that;

1) Subject to sub-section 2, any person who- a) has extra-marital sexual intercourse with a young person; or b) commits upon a young person any act involving physical contact that would be regarded by a reasonable person to be an indecent act; or c) solicits or entices a young person to have extra-marital sexual intercourse with him or her or to commit any act with him or her involving physical contact that would be regarded by a reasonable person to be an indecent act; shall be guilty of sexual intercourse or performing an indecent act with a young person, as the case may be, and liable to a fine.

Additionally, the Act talks about the prevention of conspiracy/confederacy or incitement abroad to commit sexual crimes against young or mentally incompetent persons in Zimbabwe, stating that;

1) Any person who, outside Zimbabwe, conspires with or incites another person to commit the crime of rape, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, sexual intercourse or performing an indecent act or sodomy in Zimbabwe with or against a young or mentally incompetent adult person shall be guilty of

conspiracy or incitement, as the case may be, to commit the appropriate crime and liable to be sentenced accordingly. 2) Subsection (1) shall apply whether or not conspiracy or incitement to commit the crime concerned is a crime in the place where the alleged conspiracy or incitement took place.

Strengthening of operations at the community level can only be achieved through active multi-sectorial structures that interact with each other and utilise the identified locally based IKS. This study, which is aimed at understanding the social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe, seeks to provide baseline information in this regard so as to contribute to the knowledge of enhancing community-based or focused interventions that are designed by the people themselves and working with government structures to achieve their desired goals, after perceiving and realising that the female perpetrated CSA is affecting them.

2.12 The three “Ps” - Provision, Protection and Participation and the Law

This research argues that there should be a clear operational link between the legal framework and the three “Ps” thus provision, protection and participation and the various aspects of social practice through an integrated sustainable civic education that stems from the community or localised knowledge base or systems of socialisation, and is permanently assigned to a ministry for effective coordination and implementation (Pinheiro, 2006). The most fundamental areas regarding the UNCRC and its implementation, according to contemporary scholars, are provision, protection and participation (UN, 1989 and Fairhall & Woods, 2021). Government, local authorities and development partners must be committed to the provision of basic social services, ensuring that the vulnerable segments of the population are protected with full, and active participation of the local communities (World Vision, 2018).

2.13 Summary

This chapter has presented the literature review and articulated the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the research. The object/relations and self-theories under the umbrella of the modern psychodynamic theories and the Socio-ecological model/theory were explained. The conceptual framework defined and discussed key concepts that framed the study, female sexual perpetrators (FSPs), their characteristics and personal history, physical and mental health, substance abuse, offense patterns, motivation and belief systems, social perception and norms,

myths, misconceptions risks, child sexual abuse (CSA), aetiology, and effects of CSA. Typologies of female perpetrated CSA were also reviewed. The next chapter provides the research philosophy, methodology and design principles of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the research design and methodology for conducting this empirical study. The rationale for explicating the research design and methodology is premised on the provision of detail on how the research was conducted, the presentation of the research findings and their analysis. The chapter outlines the procedures of how the research was carried out in an endeavour to answer the research questions. It also outlines the research philosophy, explaining how the research has chosen the interpretive-constructivist paradigm (Alase, 2017). Additionally, the chapter unpacks the research design, research methodology, and the study population, as well as the sample, and sampling techniques, in subheadings that are interconnected. Lastly, the chapter also provides information on the tools and techniques for gathering data, and the plan for presenting and analysing the data, which creates a clear outline for the following chapter. Validity and reliability, including ethical implications, were also clarified in this chapter.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophies are systems of beliefs and presumptions regarding the advancement of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2016 and Saunders et al., 2019). This means that significant presumptions regarding the researcher's worldview are present in the research philosophy. Every facet of the study project is shaped by these presumptions. This study examined the following three presumptions: ontology, epistemology, and axiology, just like any other research procedure would. The philosophy for this research was influenced by the views of the relationship between knowledge and the procedure used for its development. An important part of the research methodology was the research philosophy, which was brought in from ontology, epistemology and axiology (Saunders et al., 2019). The relationship between ontology, epistemology, and methodology is well-described by Saunders et al., (2019). Specifically, ontology refers to how an investigator's worldview influences their beliefs about epistemology or the nature of knowledge in that world, which in turn influences the investigator's beliefs about how knowledge can be discovered (methodology).

According to Herber et al. (2025), ontology and epistemology are to the research process what footings are to a building; they form the foundations of the whole building structure and, in this case, the whole research project. Ontology means the nature of people's beliefs about reality, basically their assumptions about the nature of reality (Herber, et al., 2025). This research has, therefore, deduced that ontology is the assumptions people make about the kind and nature of reality and what exists, the nature of the world and what humanity can know about it. It is concerned about people's beliefs, about the kind and nature of reality, and what exists in the social world.

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and the process by which knowledge is acquired, communicated to other human beings and validated (Gall & Borg, 2003; Saunders et al., 2016 and Cohen et al., 2025). It is the epistemological question, assumptions about knowledge that leads a researcher to debate; "the possibility and desirability of objectivity, subjectivity, causality, validity and generalisability" (Patton, 2002, p. 134). According to Saunders et al., (2016), epistemology is the study of what knowledge is deemed acceptable, valid, and legitimate, as well as the best ways to disseminate it to the general public for their benefit, advancement, and development on both a micro and macro level. The kind of knowledge a researcher's research contributes depends on the epistemological presumptions they make.

Axiology refers to the study of how morals and ethics work in the setting of research. This includes investigating the ways in which investigators uphold the values of both themselves and the area they are studying. (Saunders et al., 2016). This study considered the researcher's understanding of sexual values and their applicability in the study of exploring social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District. The study examined the sexual values and considered the issues of right and wrong during the ethical considerations section, so as to uphold the issues of authenticity, validity and reliability of the data (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.3 Interpretivist Philosophy

This study was guided by the interpretivist philosophy. It is regarded as the source of all knowledge, meaning that it involves constructs specific to a particular level of thought organization, such as generalizations, abstracts, formalizations, and idealizations (Creswell and

Creswell, 2022). The constructivist/interpretivist viewpoint, which holds that people's social, cultural, and historical experiences are the source of knowledge, was adopted in this study. No knowledge is impartial, objective, perfect, or devoid of values. It is not predetermined knowledge, but rather knowledge derived from experiences that are rooted in people's everyday lives. Considering the constructivist approach, this research was set to interpret females' behaviour on child sexual abuse or explore why they commit CSA when society expects the same women to be nurturers and caregivers of these children in various social settings of Mazowe District.

According to Creswell (2014) interpretive research is defined as the belief of a group of people in a social setting that reality consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world, meaning they can adopt an inter-subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. The interpretivist paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the experiences of participants. It requires the researcher to extrapolate meaning from participant activities in order to determine the motivations behind those actions. Under interpretivism, values are made clear in the creation of findings, and there is a dialogue between the researcher and participants (Walliman, 2011).

Pham (2018) goes on to say that interpretivists believe that meaning and knowledge are products of interpretation; as a result, they reject the idea that there is any objective knowledge that exists outside of human thought and reasoning. According to Myers (2009), the foundation of interpretive research is the idea that social constructions like language, consciousness, and shared meanings are the only ways in which reality—whether it be given or socially constructed—can be accessed. The foundation of the interpretive paradigm is observation and interpretation. Information about occurrences is gathered through observation, and interpretation is the process of giving meaning to that information by making deductions or determining whether it fits with an abstract pattern. It emphasizes the meaningful nature of people's characters and participation in both their culture and society in general. The methods of the research adopt the people's knowledge of reality, which is a social construction by the human actors themselves and thus it distinctively rules out the natural science research methods. Interpretive research attempts to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them (Pham, 2018).

Therefore, this study opted for the interpretivism paradigm because of the data that was to be researched. The interpretivism paradigm was best suited for the current study, which employed meaning-oriented methodologies—such as document analysis, focus groups, and interviews—to explore and comprehend the societal perspectives surrounding female CSA perpetrators in Zimbabwe's Mazowe District. The interpretive paradigm, which underpins the adoption, focuses on comprehending the universe through the subjective experiences of humans. The philosophy of this study is based on the assumptions and system of beliefs on the development of knowledge regarding social perceptions on female-perpetrated CSA (Saunders et al., 2016) that sprout from assumptions in three categories, namely, epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The first category, epistemological assumptions, is about human knowledge. The second category, the ontological assumptions, is about the realities that the researcher encountered during the research. The third category, axiological assumptions, is about the degree to which the researcher's values influenced the research process.

Understanding the research questions posed by the enquirer, the techniques employed, and interpretation of the research results, were all inextricably influenced by these presumptions (Crotty, 1998). It is behind this understanding that the researcher's, which were well thought out and consistent, constituted a credible research philosophy which underpinned my methodological choice, research strategy, data collection techniques and analysis procedures (Saunders et al., 2016). After putting everything together, the researcher was able to create a research project that made sense and had well-integrated components. This research took the interpretivist approach, which states that there is no single reality or truth, but rather a reality is created by individuals in groups (less realists). The constructivist paradigm was most suitable for this qualitative research. Social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA, which include the community attitudes and beliefs and their response to CSA, was an important variable to study since these attributes affect the accurate design of interventions. The interpretivist research took account of the complexity by collecting what is meaningful to the research participants.

In this work, the interpretivist approach aimed to produce new, more comprehensive understandings and interpretations of the social settings and worlds. Regarding the sexual behaviours of women in this study, the enquirer intended to examine the female sexual

perpetrators from the viewpoints of various social groupings, and these were the adolescents, parents/guardians, community leaders, health workers and female sex workers (FSWs); examining and interpreting the behaviours of FSPs on children that they provide care and nurturing, thus providing baseline information that will enable programmers to design strategic, appropriate, sustainable community-oriented interventions that address CSA by FSPs in Mazowe District.

3.4 Research Methodology

Creswell and Creswell (2022) define research methodology as a process used to collect information and data for the purposes of making decisions. Qualitative research methodology was used in this research. It is a form of inquiry that investigates phenomena in their natural settings and uses multiple methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004; Denzin, & Lincoln, 2018; Myers, 2009 and Lester, 1999). Understanding phenomena rather than measuring them is the primary goal of qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003 and Lester, 1999). In addition to being more flexible than quantitative approaches, qualitative methodology is associated with case study orientation, exploration, discovery, and constructivist philosophical approaches to inquiry (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2022,). Qualitative research methodology was chosen in this study primarily because the study involves a holistic and in-depth study of social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District's human settlements. It entailed using multiple methods that include key informant interviews, documentary analysis, verbal quotations through one-on-one interviews with the selected participants, as well as a reflection of people's attitudes, beliefs, and experiences (Kvale, 1996). Therefore, there is need to include the various population segments domiciled in the four different settlements and other key concerned public institutions in their natural settings to better interpret, understand, explain, and bring meaning to the implementation of the existing CSA interventions in the study area (Maxwell & Loomis, 2002; Maxwell, 2002; and Maxwell, 2013).

3.5 Research design

According to Creswell and Creswell (2022), research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches that provide specific directional strategies for data gathering to look into the study topic in the most cost-effective way possible, which offers a framework for data collection, measurement, and analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Creswell

and Creswell, 2022; Marshall & Rossman, 2016 and Cooper & Schindler, 2014). A case study design was used in this research. A case study, according to Yin (2014), is an empirical investigation into a current phenomenon in its actual setting, particularly in situations when it is difficult to draw clear distinctions between the phenomenon and the context. The rationale for adopting the case study design in this research is that, in an attempt to understand the social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA, the case study design follows a reflexive (automatic/instinctive) process that operates through every stage of the project, and therefore promotes the smooth connections between all stages.

The case study design has also been chosen to substantiate or actualise the study logic in a set of procedures that optimise the construct, internal, and external validity and reliability of data for the research project (Thomas, 2011; Merriam, 2007, 2009; and Kabir, 2016). Part of the rationale for the design was that the case study research methodology provided a platform for studying the participants in their natural environment and enabled a comprehensive analysis of the phenomena. The design has the capacity to bring to the fore the researcher's illuminative lens in particular situations, getting closer, that is, in-depth and first-hand, understanding of the phenomenon and its attributes (Yin, 2015). The research took advantage of the capacity of the case study design, using multiple data collection, to evaluate and examine the granular aspects of social perceptions on female perpetrators of the silent phenomenon of CSA, given certain particular situations, ultimately producing thick and rich descriptions of in-depth data about how FSPs behaviour is established and interpreted (Yin, 2015, 2024 and Zainal, 2007).

3.6 Population and Sample

Any collection of individuals that are of interest to the research because they have a common set of qualities or attributes is referred to as a population. Populations can be finite or infinite (Cohen et al., 2024). Kothari and Garg (2023) and Tashakkori et al. (2025) have described a research/target population as the entire group of people or objects about which some specific information is required and meets the designated set criteria established by the research upon which some analysis and conclusions are enabled, and the results can be generalised (Yin, 2015). The target population for this study in Mazowe District is 309,007 people, and these reside in the 41 wards of the district's rural, urban, mining, and farming settlements, of which the majority are Kore-kore speaking. (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency-Zimstat, 2022). The enquirer used the target population's input to choose which units to include and exclude from the study group. A population sample of mature female sex workers, parents/guardians

with young children and adolescents/youth in their homes, adolescents, community leaders, and stakeholders (from the public-service ministries/departments and civil society organisations), formed the study sample of the human participants. The six categories of human participants, drawn from four different settlements of the district, were identified and included (using the purposive sampling procedure) in the research because they form part of the CSA potential victims, female perpetrators, service providers in the area of CSA, and community/society gatekeepers (leaders).

A sample has been defined by Creswell (2014) as a small group of people or objects that is chosen systematically from a target population that is studied, to draw conclusions and generalise to the wider population. This case study gathered data from six categories of human participants and used the case unit analysis approach from the qualitative methodology in which every participant is a case who requires adequate time of interview discussion to establish in-depth data (Patton, 2002, 2015 and Gentles et al., 2015). The study selected, using a purposive sampling procedure, a sample of 42 human participants.

3.7 Sampling methods

Sampling is a research strategy that involves selecting a representative number of study units from a given population to participate in the study (Liamputtong, 2019). A representative sample contains every salient feature of the population from which it is taken.

3.7.1 Purposive Sampling

This study used the purposive sampling procedure. Purposive sampling involves the selection of potentially information-rich sources (Patton, 2015). Criteria purposive sampling, also referred to as non-probability sampling, is defined by Liamputtong (2019) and Etikan, (2016) as a deliberate sample chosen in accordance with the goals of the study and the characteristics of a community. Purposive sampling is used, according to Cohen et al. (2024), to identify knowledgeable individuals who are a part of the target or study population. These individuals are defined by the researcher as possessing in-depth knowledge about the topic under investigation, possibly as a result of their professional role, access to networks, power, experience, or expertise, and the ability to connect the dots between cases with a wealth of information.

The purposive sampling method was used to identify service providers, and the following organisations were included in the study as participants: the Zimbabwe Republic Police-Victim Friendly Unit (1x ZRP-VFU), Civil Society Organizations (3xCSOs)-Zimbabwe Health Interventions (1xZHI), Centre for Sexual Health HIV and AIDS research (1xCeshhar), 1xMsasa Project; Ministry of Health and Child Care (2xMoHCC), and Department of Social Development (1xDSD), 1XNAC, 2xChiefs and the local authority officials (2xMazowe RDC), and individuals from the community who include the adolescents (12, that is 8 for the FGD and 4 for the in-depth interviews), parents (9), mature female sex workers (9), community gatekeepers (traditional leaders) simply because they have a wealth of experience on the sexual practices that prevail in their communities. Selected using purposive sampling procedure, the research considered the participants' age and social statuses (Liamputtong; 2019 and Etikan;2016).The adolescents who included six of each gender were aged between 14 to 18 years, while the parents and guardians had four men and five women with an age range of 39 to 50 years. The mature female sex workers were ladies aged 45 to 55 and were no longer active in routine sex work. The chiefs were both males of above seventy years of age. Purposive sampling was also used to identify and select relevant documents for review in the research.

Table 3.1: Study participants

Source of data/ Data collection tool	Category of participants	Human participants' geographical location.	Number involved
1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Traynor, (2015)	Adolescent youth	Kanhukamwe Village- Ward 9 and Dambatsoko-Ward 8	Eight (8)
	Parents and Guardians of adolescent youth	Kanhukamwe -Ward 9 and Rosa-Ward 10	Nine (9)
	Mature Female sex workers	Glendale Wards 17 and 33, and Mazowe (Jumbo) Mine-Ward 21	Nine (9)
2. Key Informant	Traditional Leaders (Chiefs)	Honorable Senator Chief 1 and Chief 2	Two (2)

Interviews (KIIs)	Civil society organizations (CSOs-NGOs)	Zimbabwe Health Interventions (Glendale) Msasa Project (Dambatsoko) Ceshhar Zimbabwe (Glendale)	Three (3)
	Government ministries and parastatals	MoHCC (2), MOLPSSW-DSD (1), ZRP-VFU (1), NAC (1)	Five (5)
	Local authority	Mazowe RDC	Two (2)
3. Key Informants, in-depth interviews	Adolescent youth	Dambatsoko-Muchirikuenda (Ward 8), Rosa (Ward 10)	Four (4)
Total Study participants			Forty-two (42)

3.8 Data Collection Methods

The research data for this study was collected through KII and in-depth and FGDs interviews (primary data) and a documentary review for the secondary data.

3.8.1 Key Informant Interviews

According to Kabir (2016), key informant interviews are techniques for cross-referencing data from various sources and/or sampling strategies that can be applied to a specific research objective or objectives. Examples of these strategies include focus group discussions (FGDs) or individual key informants, as well as the use of secondary data sources such as particularly related documents. Key informant interviews entail one person asking another a series of predetermined questions concerning a very specific subject; the interviewer is permitted to clarify any points that the interviewee finds unclear or difficult to comprehend. The in-depth interviews target informed participants who, in most cases, occupy positions of influence in the decision-making system (Yin, 2024; Gill et al., 2008). For purposes of this research, key informants' interviews were also used to check, gauge for strategic opinions and confirm the information gathered from focus group interviews and documentary-reviewed information.

The key informants were purposively selected based on their professional insights into the issues around child protection, Adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health (ASRH) and sexual abuse response, and by occupying strategic leadership positions in society, institutions and/or

organisations providing support to child protection interventions and CSA prevention initiatives in the district. They provided to the research the required information regarding, most importantly, community perceptions (community attitudes and beliefs, the typologies of female perpetrated CSA), and their response from IKS initiatives. A repository of Mazowe District-level key informants was developed through initial consultations with the OPC-Provincial Affairs and Devolution Permanent Secretary, District Development Coordinator and National AIDS Council of Zimbabwe (NAC). The enquirer then conducted key informant interviews with community leaders (two traditional chiefs), three members from CSOs, one member from ZRP (Victim Friendly Unit), one participant from the DSD Mazowe, two members from MoHCC, and one NAC participant. A total of 12 key informants were interviewed.

Purposive sampling was also used to identify and select relevant documents for review in the research. A total of four adolescent youth were interviewed as the primary target victims of female-perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District. The in-depth interviews were specifically appropriate in that they enabled the researcher to gather detailed information regarding their thoughts and behaviours about the subject under study, as they are the target group of victims. The in-depth interviews with the adolescent youth gauged for their experiences and opinions in relation to the prevalence of CSA, their attitudes and beliefs, the cycle of sexual abuse and the subsequent sexual behaviours, and the nexus with cultural and religious practices (e.g. child marriages and early pregnancies) that follow after one has been sexually abused (Boyce & Neal, 2006).

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are in-depth group discussions on a study topic that involves six to twelve homogeneous participants and other significant sectors of the target population (Kabir, 2016). The goal of the conversation is to encourage members to share underlying beliefs, attitudes, and motivations behind their actions by using the social dynamics of the group and the support of a moderator or facilitator. The study identified and oriented the appropriate moderator/ facilitator (the researcher himself) who assumed the role of facilitating, moderating, listening, observing and analysing the information from the FGDs as he conducted them as proposed by Thomas (2011); Dilshad and Latif (2013). The FGD is a data collection method that uses a semi-structured group interview guide and helps in finding out the 'how'

and ‘why’ of human behaviour relating to a specific topic. The semi-structured group interviews crystallised the research issue both to the researcher and the participants. The FGDs are also important in gauging the wide range of opinions and beliefs on the topic of inquiry in Mazowe District, and an average of nine participants were involved for each FGD (Kabir, 2016; Krueger, 1998). In order to qualify the main themes of the remarks made by various people, focus group interviews were held following a series of individual interviews. (Kabir, 2016; Krueger, 1998). The participants interviewed using the FGDs were the parents and guardians of adolescent children (9), mature adult Female Sex Workers (FSWs) (9) and adolescents (8).

3.8.3 Documentary Searches

Documentary search, as defined by Creswell (2014), is the process of looking at different textual information from primary and secondary sources that are available in both the public and private domains. Documentary search and review entails a more in-depth study of documents, and also takes the form of literature review and secondary data, which is commonly used in case studies (Creswell and Creswell, 2022). The documentary review was used in this research as part of gathering secondary data and followed the set research questions and the theoretical framework as a guide with specific and general documents being reviewed that include, among others; books and journals, feasibility studies, International and Regional conventions on child protection and SRH, domestic laws and policies, national and programme specific strategic and annual implementation plans, budgets for ASRH and sexual abuse interventions, media reports and periodical articles. Specifically, the research reviewed the following related documents and periodicals: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, The Southern African Development Community, Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage, Constitution of Zimbabwe, Governance, Children’s protection and adoption ACT; Child Justice and Children’s rights bills, Criminal law (codification and reform) Act, Child Rights Barometer (CRB), ZNASP-4, Protocol on the Multisectoral Management of Sexual Violence and Program Manuals on Parent-Child Communication, Comprehensive Sexuality Education, and Guidance and Counselling (Mapfumo, & Nkoma, 2013), for in and out of school youth. The rationale of using documentary review was to assist the research in achieving a detailed and in-depth analysis of the gravity of female-perpetrated CSA and the current interventions being

implemented by various organisations and will aid the understanding of causes for implementation inertia of current interventions.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure validity and reliability, this research utilised the literature review to construct data collection instruments, which included the interview and the FGD guides. The research also used the objectives as a guide to the construction of the instruments, and experienced researchers were consulted for scrutiny and provided their inputs before administering them to participants like service providers and community gatekeepers. The comments and suggestions from the resource persons were then adopted to adjust the data collection instruments.

3.9.1 Validity

Validity is the ability of a research instrument to measure what it is supposed to measure (Yin, 2024). Validity determines whether the research instrument truly measures that which it was intended to measure or the truthfulness of a measure (Creswell and Creswell, 2022; Thomas, 2011 and Yazan, 2015). A valid instrument should measure what it claims to measure. The credibility, authenticity, and accuracy of the research are established through the validity process (Creswell, 2014).

3.9.2 Reliability

Reliability, or measure consistency, is the degree to which a research tool can consistently yield comparable outcomes under comparable circumstances (Creswell, 2014; Yazan, 2015). If an instrument can be relied upon to provide an accurate and consistent measurement of a constant value, it is said to have a high level of reliability (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013 and Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2015). In general, reliability means that the study may be conducted again and produce the same outcomes. When it comes to reliability checks, the main concern is if the results and conclusions can be replicated in a similar study conducted by a different researcher using the same unit of analysis and the same methods (Yin, 2015). In order to achieve reliability in this qualitative case study research, the enquirer employed the route of explaining the assumptions and theory behind the research, used multiple methods of data collection and analysis (triangulation), and explained in detail how data was collected to allow for an audit trail if the need arises. The researcher thought that dependability might be attained by auditing, which includes recording the data, procedures, and choices made during the research process.

The investigation also considered how important it is to remember that thorough and detailed study descriptions and data are necessary for auditing for dependability. Moreover, it could be improved by modifying the study plan when fresh information becomes available during data collection (Creswell and Creswell, 2022).

3.9.3 Trustworthiness

Yazan (2015); Yin (2024) describe the four strategies or conditions that must be used to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research as credibility or believable, that is, internal validity, conformability/adapt (construct validity), transferability/shift/reassign (external validity), and dependability/trust/reliable (reliability). These strategies are based on standardised instruments and can be assessed in a relatively straightforward external validity, manner. They are constructed parallel to the corresponding four conditions as propounded by Yin (2002), when they presented the construct validity, internal validity, and reliability. Accordingly, this approach was adopted for this research.

3.9.4 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative studies is defined as the extent to which the data and its analysis are trustworthy and believable (Merriam, 1998). Credibility is analogous to internal validity, thus, how the established research findings match reality. For the purposes of this research, Merriam (1998) offers six additional strategies that can be used to improve internal validity in qualitative case study research. These strategies include triangulation, which involves using multiple sources of data or techniques to confirm emerging findings and member checks, as well as returning data and tentative interpretations to the original sources and asking them to confirm if the results are plausible. Smith and Ragan (2005) contend that rationalists suggest that each person creates their unique reality rather than suggesting that there is a single reality to be found. The most effective way to increase credibility is, therefore, to include a member who verifies the findings. This involves getting input on the data, interpretations, and conclusions from the research participants themselves, and it was taken into consideration in this study.

3.9.5 Confirmability

The degree to which the study's conclusions may be verified or supported by other sources is known as confirmability. It is comparable to objectivity, which is the degree to which an

investigator acknowledges or takes into consideration personal subjectivity or bias. Seale (1999) states that auditing can also be used to demonstrate confirmability if the researcher provides a methodologically self-critical explanation of the research's execution. The researcher should archive all data obtained in a retrievable and well-organized manner to facilitate auditing by other researchers. This way, the data may be readily accessed if the conclusions are contested.

3.9.6 Transferability

Findings from research can only be applied or generalised if they make sense in settings other than the original study. To the extent that results can be generalised, transferability, also known as generalizability, is comparable to external validity. The ability to extrapolate a certain circumstance or population's narrative to other people, places, or eras outside of those that were specifically researched is known as generalizability (Maxwell, 2002). Due to the subjectivity of the enquirer, who serves as the primary instrument in qualitative investigations, transferability is seen as significantly difficult. This poses a threat to legitimate conclusions drawn from the study data in the traditional sense. In order to give the reader enough information to assess if the findings are applicable to other situations they are familiar with, Seale (1999, p. 45) states that transferability must be achieved by giving a thorough, rich account of the settings under study.

The process of generalisation that this study's single case study approach competently matches is called "inferential generalisation," which is best defined as extrapolating from the research study's context to other settings or contexts (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Accordingly, as this enquirer noted, it is necessary to document and justify the methodological approach, and it outlines the crucial processes and procedures that have helped him construct, shape, and connect meanings associated with the phenomenon of female-perpetrated CSA under study. Additionally, the researcher was aware of the potential for multiple interpretations of reality, which made them alert to potential biases throughout the investigation. In qualitative research, generalizability is occasionally disregarded because the researchers' goal is to improve the local comprehension of the issue. However, in this case, the researcher has given a thorough, rich description of the study, as indicated in the thesis's background and literature chapters. As a result, the data and descriptions speak for themselves, allowing readers to evaluate the

importance of the meanings ascribed to the findings and form their own opinions about how transferable the research findings are.

3.10 Triangulation

According to Blaikie (2000); Scandura and Williams (2000), triangulation is the process of employing several techniques and metrics in an empirical study to get around issues with validity and bias. Triangulation's ethical roots stem from the necessity to verify the process's validity, which can be accomplished in case studies by combining data from other sources (Yin, 2015). In order to gather multiple perspectives on the same issue and to gain a complete understanding of the phenomenon under study, this approach makes use of multiple data sources, informants, and data collection methods (e.g., interviews, participant observation, focus group member/participant checking, and so on). Triangulation, according to Creswell (2014), is a technique for comparing data to determine whether it supports each approach employed and, if so, to validate the research conclusions. It is one of the most crucial strategies for enhancing the reliability of qualitative research findings. When a single researcher is examining a phenomenon, biases may be revealed through the use of triangulation, a method of mutual confirmation of study findings. To strengthen the validity of the results, triangulation may combine information from several researchers, data sources, and theoretical viewpoints (Painter & Rigsby, 2005). Triangulation is the process of using the outcomes of one type of data to validate those from another (Brannen, 2004).

This thesis provides a detailed description of CSA background information and literature related to female perpetrated CSA perceptions. The broad literature search and review in the construction of data collection instruments that matched the objectives and the theoretical framework was a key component of the study in addressing the issues of trustworthiness of the study. Furthermore, this study's validity and reliability were also determined by using a sample of respondents from a variety of social and professional backgrounds and numerous points of view during the data-gathering process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). As advocated by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2015), using at least three different data sources, this study achieved validity and reliability attributes by means of triangulation using case and focus group interviews and document analysis. The study used six groups of human participants. The qualitative research considered the aspect of sensitivity and the enquirer's capacity to make the study participants, community gate keepers and the wider society in which the study was carried out was enhanced

through communication in all hierarchical protocols, channels and social leadership strata, and this facilitated the entry into the study community, collection and interpretation of the sensitive data on female perpetrated CSA, and reaching out to the final findings and conclusions.

3.11 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data presentation refers to the organisation of data so that logical and statistical conclusions can be derived from the collected measurements (Creswell, 2014). This study basically used textual or descriptive, tabular and diagrammatic presentations. The choice of which data to be presented in which form rests with the researcher in consideration of the nature of the collected data. For example, diagrammatic presentations can be in the form of pictures, and textual data can be in the form of live direct quotes. Themes were generated from the presented data and used to analyse and interpret the data.

According to Yin (2024), data analysis is the process of looking over, classifying, adding up, or combining pieces of information to support a study's central claims. In order to highlight important information, make recommendations, and assist in decision-making, the process of data analysis involves looking for and organising transcripts, field notes, video, audio recordings, and other pertinent materials that were gathered for the study. It also entails inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling the data (Bailey, 2008; Lacey & Luff, 2007 and Miles, & Huberman, 1994). The research objectives and propositions stated in Chapter One served as a guide for this study's data analysis. The present study employed qualitative thematic analysis techniques for data analysis (Yin, 2024; Braun & Clarke, 2016 and Clarke & Braun, 2017). According to Braun & Clarke (2016, p.79), “thematic analysis is an independent qualitative descriptive approach that is often described as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the research data set.”

In this study, data was collected from six groups of human participants who are adolescents, parents/guardians, community leaders, adult female sex workers, CSOs and ministries/departments. The research adopted the method of collecting data and simultaneously analysing it, which enabled the researcher to adjust along the way (Yin, 2024). Key informants and in-depth case-by-case interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis were used to gather research data. Thematic analysis was then used to identify trends and make initial interpretations, which helped choose how to proceed with data gathering (Yin, 2024 and Kabir,

2016). The multi-methods of data collection from multiple sources enabled the research to achieve triangulation of data. Data collected through face-to-face interviews were processed using MAXQDA computer software for the qualitative data analysis process (VERBI Software, 2021).

3.12 Ethical considerations

Different issues that relate to research ethics were considered in this study, such as authority and voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. The research was carried out with ethical clearance. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Bindura University of Science Education, acting through the Chairperson of the Department of Peace and Governance, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, approved the design of a time-tabled Gantt chart/plan of action, which marked the beginning of the research fieldwork process. After that, appropriate authorities were contacted, with the Permanent Secretary of Mashonaland Central Provincial and Devolution Affairs serving as an entry. A letter from the university was used to request permission to access study sites and human participants. As a result, in addition to the IRB, the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) provided ethical clearance for the research to be conducted. The four main pillars of ethics—informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, authority, and voluntary participation—were followed and taken into consideration by the research. The study treated all participants with respect, fairness, and dignity. Authority and voluntary participation refer to a human research participant's exercise of free will in deciding whether to participate in a research activity. International, regional, national, and scientific communities' codes of conduct protect this right.

The permission was sought and granted by the study sample participants after a broad comprehensive and wide array of study information had been provided, which includes; the purpose of the study, the enquirer's background and where he was coming from, how the data will be used and what participation will be required of them among other information. For this case study, informed consent was sought at individual, organisation, local authority and societal levels, which was provided to the enquirer; voluntary participation and granted authority to undertake this study, which is aimed at exploring the social perceptions of female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District.

In order to achieve these attributes, the researcher informed the participants that their involvement was voluntary and that they were not coerced to sign the consent form for the study. By using fictitious names (aliases) during the initial stages of fieldwork, the research

protected the privacy of the participants. This was the case for all participant groups at the time of data collection. The participants were given the enquirer's contact information in case of emergency to further guarantee their safety and privacy. The semi-structured interview and focus group discussion guides were kept confidential and only available to participants during data collection. They did not list the participants' names or the names of the locations or villages. Participants were asked to maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed in the FGDs group and with their individual key informant interviews. (Creswell, 2014).

During the collection of data, the researcher respected the sites such that they were left undisturbed after the research study. Both the key informant interviews and the FGDs were recorded, and the consent of the participant was sought first. The participants were assured that the recordings were to be destroyed after data transcription. During the process of data analysis, of which the thematic analysis route was adopted and used, the research avoided unethical practices like falsification and fabrication of data through being honest, accurate and triangulation of data, and checking the history of some participants like those from the sex workers category, given their culture of social interaction. Furthermore, during the analysis, the study respected the privacy of the participants through the use of aliases or pseudonyms and designated for individuals as advised (Creswell, and Creswell, 2022).

The research used clear and straight forward language during the presentation and reporting of the results, discussions, recommendations and conclusions, avoiding plagiarism. The research findings were shared through publications in highly accredited peer-reviewed journals. The research appreciated the participants, advisors and other technical practitioners and recognised credit for ownership to the researcher (Cohen et al., 2024 and Creswell and Creswell, 2022). The goals and methods of the research were verbally explained to the participants in order to guarantee their voluntary and informed involvement. This meant requesting verbal informed consent after participants were orally told of the purpose and goals of the study, the confidentiality measures in place, and the possible advantages and disadvantages of their voluntary involvement. After that, the study participants were told about the confidentiality policy and the possible advantages and disadvantages of taking part (Ellsberg et al., 2008).

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Topics of a sexual nature are taboo in the Shona speaking community, especially when focusing on female perpetrators. The research had to counter this by interviewing specialists in the area, and these included the ZRP-VFU and MoHCC participants, among others. In addition, the researcher was also denied permission to interview magistrates by the Judicial Services Commission (JSC) and had to bank on other participants such as the DSD, ZRP, Local authority, and documentary search. The research also missed one CSO who was dealing with human and specifically children's rights interventions (Justice for Children Trust) and had to replace them with Zimbabwe Health Interventions (ZHI), an organization in the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) project consortium. As an overall countering measure to these limitations, the research considered and implemented the fusion of primary and secondary data, and the triangulation of the data.

3.13 Summary

This chapter discussed the research philosophy, methodology, design, population and sample, sampling methods used, data collection methods, validity and reliability, data presentation and analysis and ethical considerations. The chapter provided an explanation of the practical approaches that assisted the research project in realizing the set objectives. The chapter elucidated the purposive sampling method that was used to come up with a sample list of human participants and a documentary search list for the research. A list of six segments of the participants and the documents for reviewing were discussed. The discussion included the data collection meant for the individual-case by case, key informants and focus group interviews, and the documentary search.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PERCEIVED COMMUNITY ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS REGARDING FEMALE PERPETRATOR OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, community perceptions are empirically examined with a focus on people's attitudes and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and the four dimensions linked to the commission of female-perpetrated CSA that were identified as the main underlying factors that emerged from the findings. The chapter also presented and discussed typologies of female-perpetrated CSA that are prevalent in Mazowe District and, according to the study, match with the four identified dimensions, which are symbolic, economic, power and emotional dimensions. A summary section of the chapter concluded the discussions. The data presented in this chapter were collected using the Focus Group Discussions and key informants' interviews and through the review of a wide array of related documents.

4.2 Mazowe community perceptions regarding female perpetrators of CSA

The research established the nexus between community perceptions, beliefs and individual and collective attitudes regarding all social actions that come into their lives as humanity, including female-perpetrated CSA. The research agrees with DeVito (2016) that social perception is the process through which knowledge is sought and understanding other people as they interact in their families, communities and society. This brings in the significance of the object/relations, the self and self-theories and the socio-ecological model, as theoretical framework for this study (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; McLeod, 2017 and Grant & Osanloo, 2015). It is an active process (or set of processes) of forming impressions (feelings, beliefs, and attitudes) of individuals and societal groups (Chaiklin, 2011; Pickens, 2005 and Bizer, et al., 2006).

According to the NGOs, Chiefs, FSWs and the parents, the communities have their own cultural beliefs they want to protect. They may have religious beliefs, and they have to protect their own community. Society may not want CSA to come out because they may have certain silent values and taboos to talk about, especially those related to rituals. Hence, talking about these issues will eat away at the norms and values of that society.

The Ceshhar participant said;

“The communities have their own cultural beliefs they want to protect. It may have religious beliefs, and we have to protect our own community. Society may not want such to come out because it may be taboo to talk about it. Talking about these issues erodes the norms and values of society. Talking about it may deem the community unfit, so they resort to keeping quiet.”

Talking about it may deem the community unfit, so they resort to keeping quiet. On benefits from the silence, the KIIs and FGDs revealed that the community does not benefit anything. It is, in fact, embedded in society that they try to embellish reality and cover it with a veil of fallacy, exhibiting the impression that such abuse is not happening. Talking about these issues exposes them. Additionally, the MoHCC participant 1 also highlighted that there are issues to do with rituals; people are accumulating riches by inflicting abuse. The participant said;

“There is a belief, in the Mazowe community, that sexual intercourse with a youngster will yield prosperity. The community undertakes rituals, beliefs, and peer pressures that originate from their interaction with traditional healers and other peers in society. In rural areas, they use the minors' money to gain sexual favours. Our youngsters travel long distances to school. The ladies will then offer transport to the minors, and then, in the end, forced sexual intercourse. We had such a scenario in Chief 2 communal areas where a woman slept with relatives, and these cases came out through community dialogues conducted at Rosa, and the dialogues also heard that a young boy was sleeping with his grandmother for the purposes of making money and they had got the ideas from a traditional healer.”

Regarding the belief systems and attitudes, which are embedded in social perceptions in Mazowe, FSWs also mentioned that some FSPs are using them for monetary rituals. A participant in the FGD with FSWs lamented that;

“Sometimes, as FSWs, we are taken to the graveyard by men who are the accomplices to the FSPs, who will be behind the scenes, and the men demand that we have sex there with us. Of course, they will then give us more money for these rituals, like even USD500 for an encounter. They will then request that the sexual encounter be done on top of a grave. Normally, the time they request sex at graveyards is around 1 am or 3am. And as a sex worker, I don't refuse such an amount. I am then instructed to go and never turn back till I reach my destination or home. After such an encounter, then I will

start to meet misfortunes in life and question myself why I agreed in the first place, but it is because I need the money; hence, I consent to the sexual encounter.”

The annunciation above was also buttressed by the ZRP participant who reported that;

“As police, we acknowledge the presence of issues related to do with rituals and witchcraft and that they are silently happening, but as public officers, we are limited and bound by the current laws since there are no statutes that support this silent phenomenon.”

From the in-depth interview discussion with the adolescent youth on the issue of rituals, the ZRP participant stated that:

“There is a lot of witchcraft here, and traditional healers always lie to people, so many ritual activities are undertaken. The challenge is that even if the government sees this happening, they do not intervene; they remain silent. Even if someone claims that he or she was instructed by the traditional healer to have sexual intercourse for the benefit of monetary gains, the law sadly does not acknowledge that. You will see some boys of my age cohabiting intimately with a mature lady of the same age, with his grandmother just because of money and enjoying sex. What is happening is really sad. The abusers are seen walking freely after a report has been submitted; this is really bad for us.”

This finding implies that the government public officers are not abreast with the amendments of the current laws since the issue of witchcraft has now changed and can be debated in the court of law, provided the evidence is brought to the table (Criminal Law Act, 2007- related to witchcraft part vi; chapters 98 to 102). The study demonstrated the connection between community views, convictions, and individual and group attitudes about every social activity that occurs in their life as human beings, including CSA carried out by women. Social perception is the process by which people seek out information and comprehend one another as they engage with one another in their families, communities, and society. This is supported by the study. This highlights the importance of the socio-ecological model, the self and self-theories, and the object/relations as the theoretical foundation for the study.

4.3 Typologies of female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The findings of the study revealed that, in addition to females afflicted by CSA, male children in Mazowe are also victims of female-perpetrated sexual abuse. A number of typologies of female-perpetrated child sex trafficking were established by the study. These included the collection of sperm from male teenage children, the display of pornographic videos, and the recruitment of these children into the sex industry and other sexually explicit activities. Adding their voice to the typology of female perpetrated CSA discussion, during an in-depth interview session, an adolescent youth said;

“As male youth, we are vulnerable; even the attire of our lady teachers at school makes us want to have sex, then the ladies with money come and lure us; I will not refuse; this is the reason why some of us end up staying with these prostitutes for even a month. (Lough.) They expose us to pornographic pictures and videos, and we are attracted to have sex because in the community and at school, we would have seen how the ladies will be dressed. Some of these old ladies with money, and sex take the condoms with sperm, and we don't know for what purpose; hence the issue of rituals and use of traditional medicines comes in. The female youth are attacked by the female old prostitutes to then have sex with sugar daddies with money, and this old lady is paid money for the services she would have done. So, these are some of the experiences the youth are meeting, especially in places like mining and farming settlements and in peri-urban areas like the gettos of Glendale, Mvurwi, Concession and Nzwimbo. Here in rural areas, we mainly see it happening in the new mining settlements (Laughs). But, sir, some of our counterparts really enjoy the acts to the extent that they forget to come back home; our parents and government should do something to assist us and the future of the communities and country.”

The Ceshhar participant also said;

“These women, either from local or outside Mazowe, provide the young boys with accommodation where the sexual activities take place. From the sexual encounters, the young girl must surrender an average of 8 dollars a day to the mature women (and female sex workers) who would have offered them accommodation in the log cabins. If these children encounter challenges, these older women are not in a position to assist them as well.”

The MoHCC participant 2 suggested that for the enhancement of child protection in Mazowe, a holistic community response mechanism that includes community education, should be designed and implemented with the communities on the lead. This study in Mazowe argues that the interventions in the area of female perpetrated CSA need to be cognisant of how these differences can impact on the execution of community education and awareness, as argued by Kendall-Tackett (2013) and Webster (2017). On the forms of CSA in Mazowe, Chief 2 participant said;

“The forms of CSA that are prevalent in the community of Mazowe include; luring a child by enticing them to have sex. This is common among single mothers who sometimes operate with their male accomplices. They need to have their sexual desires fulfilled, so they take advantage of the young men by using vulgar language. There are those women who are single and want to be supported financially. They date sugar daddies to get money from offering sex. The man may end up getting attracted to the girl children and end up abusing them. Some loose mothers encourage young girls to be sexually active for the benefit of money. Economic hardships are the major cause of that. Women are quick to use their bodies to get money. Women end up coaching young girls to be sexually active. They are inducted into having sex at a very tender age.”

Both the ZHI Participant and the Local Authority participant 2 of the local authority reported that FSPs might get help as a form of external facilitation, which includes housemaids because they are familiar with the security terrain of the area. In the community, there are observers, and these enable sexual abuse because they have nothing to lose. It is the same scenario as the people who kidnap children. They added that, due to the current economic situation in the country, someone may agree to help the female sexual perpetrators. The issue of female maids is a complex one since they spend the greater part of their time with the children.

The ZHI Participant highlighted that;

“CSA is not only referring to penetration. It starts from fondling, even sexual harassment in schools. Female teachers can even harass the boy child. Anyone is a potential sexual abuser who is capable of doing any act on the child. Sadly, the community still harnesses the belief that it is only the male perpetrators who sexually abuse children, and they remain in denial. The situations of housemaids being intimate with little boys is quite common here in Mazowe District’s mining, urban and farming settlements.”

The ZRP participant also confirmed other types of CSA by FSPs that involve the girls and sometimes the boys by narrating their live experiences in Mazowe, the participant said;

“At times, the community act by reporting to the police. In some cases, a stepfather abuses a child. The mother may even convince the child to drop the case as the father is the breadwinner. Later on, the child will drop the case. The use of pornographic videos and nude pictures, the originator being a woman, is a common feature as evidence of typologies of CSA by FSPs in the district. There is also indecent assault, where a woman starts to fondle a male person, but then when the rape comes to light, it is the man who becomes the perpetrator of the sexual abuse, and yet it is the female who would have started it.”

There has been a rise in CSA cases across the nation, as reported by the *Newsday* newspaper (2022), which also mentioned close relatives, abusive stepparents, and even biological parents. In the same report, the Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development said;

It is disheartening that parents and guardians who are supposed to be protecting children are being found as facilitators or perpetrators of sexual abuse on children, with some children falling pregnant at a very young age. This then presents a very complex situation in dealing with the sexual abuse of minors. The question we are asking is if children are becoming unsafe and insecure in the home, where will they be safe? Certainly, we need to act to make the home the safest space for women and girls. We need to be responsible citizens who shun away from such despicable practices and ensure that children are protected from all forms of abuse.

Sharing with the study during an in-depth interview, the adolescent youth said;

“In this community, we see older women with money (ka bag) abusing young boys through luring and offering them sex, and yet they are still at school and underage. Some boys are taken to faraway hotels and lodges and they have sex with them, and after such encounters, the youths will not want to leave it, they will be enjoying.”

In response to the issue of typologies of female-perpetrated CSA, the MOHCC participant 1 said;

“In Mazowe, we have different types of people, just like any other community. We have those who abuse children, and they could be religious leaders who believe in early

marriages and multiple marriages, and some of these wives are adolescents. As a farming community, we also have child labor, where children are taken to work on farms. Young children are also found in gold panning and artisanal mining as a way of finding a living, and during these processes, the children are sexually abused, and older women are always seen there as either facilitators or the actual abusers themselves. The FSWs abuse both girls and boys, since amongst them, there is a queen mother luring adolescents to take part in sexual work. Young adolescents are found among the group of sex workers.”

This was also supported and confirmed by Chief 1 as he narrated that there is human trafficking involving other countries in the north, mainly due to poverty levels at micro-family levels.

The FGD with parents of adolescent children also reported that another form of female-perpetrated CSA is when older women take young women's friends and give them out to men who sexually abuse them. All these socially ill practices involve older FSWs who come from other areas, as they interact with those from local. One parent during the FGD said;

“The majority are not local, who link up with locals. If they were locals only, we could find it easy to reprimand them. Sadly, they can easily move to another area and continue with their operations after destroying children.”

During the FGD with the parents, one participant said;

“A Female Sexual Perpetrator (FSP) can choose to watch a pornographic video with a young girl or boy, can fondle and even have real sexual encounters that take place after persuasion. FSPs are now becoming sexually complex. With the way technology is advancing, people are now experimental.”

This was also confirmed by video reports from Tilda Moyo Foundation’s (2022) discussions with convicted female sexual offenders in Zimbabwe prisons. During the FGD with FSWs, one study participant said;

“Here in Mazowe, as a community, even if such cases are reported to the law enforcements, the perpetrators will not be convicted as they end up bribing the police agents. The mature female sex workers view this as a lucrative business of taking these young girls. They take advantage of the young girls’ desperateness as some of them would have run away from their homes and parents, and these women (serengeto) and mature older sex workers demand payment from the young girls, who go to the extent

of sacrificing their well-being by having unprotected sex with the imposed male clients and often they end up exposed to STIs, unwanted pregnancies and GBV. All this is done because they want accommodation and a small payment of USD5 for the whole night from a client. Some of these mature women have even purchased vehicles from trading these young girls.”

The above typological statements have been confirmed by the FGD conducted by the researcher with the adolescent children and parents of adolescent children who highlighted that these young children are recruited from the beer halls, which do not restrict young children from patronizing them, and they operate till late times of the day. A parent in the FGD said;

“This is the chance for young adolescent children to mix and mingle with mature sex workers who will be dressed in short skirts and tight fittings, which change their behaviours, and they start looking for sexual clients. The adolescent youth reiterated the presence of CSA as perpetrated by women and emphasised that it is happening in rural areas like Kanhukamwe, Chawona, Nzwimbo, Muchirikuenda,, Glendale, Mvurwi and Rosa rural service centers, which have of late been dominated by artisanal miners and sex workers from outside Mazowe District. The parents lamented that the government may intervene seriously. Some time back, sex workers were told to vacate the premises they operate from, but in a short space of time, they returned.”

The ZHI Participant said;

“The practice of having external facilitators to CSA perpetrated by females is a common feature and is complicated to eradicate since it is not only the one on the foreground but also the ones behind the scenes who must be dealt with. They mentioned that a response mechanism they are familiar with mainly deals with the one who actually perpetrates the CSA. The community, in general, does not consider the ones who spearhead the sexual abuse. It may be a woman facilitating the abuse. Sadly, they only focus on the male, and it is important for a paradigm shift at the community level. They must deal with the person who acts as a catalyst to these abuses and must be tried in a court of law. They would have committed an offence as well.”

This research is of the view that a FSP is an adult female who initiates and sexually abuses a child, as defined by the laws of a country and the World Health Organization (WHO, 2016). A sexual offender is a legal term that is commonly used to define an individual who has been charged and convicted of illegal sexual behaviour (United States Department of Justice, 2015). According to Jiménez Aceves and Tarzia (2024) and Kendall-Tackett (2013), a sexual perpetrator is an individual who initiates sexual abuse on a victim, and the act is characterised by patterned emotional experiences, resulting in physical and psychological harm with lasting consequences for the individual victim, the family of the victim, and the society where the victim comes from. It has also emerged from the study, confirming results from earlier studies, that sexual perpetrators are characterised by concealing/hiding the abuse while publicly presenting as loving, kind, likable, and charming, but in private, they show cruelty, violence, undermining, and being manipulative. Research has shown that sexual perpetrators are characterised by being highly impulsive, resulting in them not thinking deeply about the consequences of the act before it happens (Lim et al., 2021). Meanwhile, other perpetrators premeditate and plan before they act. A lack of healthy coping skills is often cited among sexual perpetrators and offenders (Lim et al., 2021).

Sexual perpetrators, male or female, tell themselves and others that this behaviour is not harmful and go further to claim that the victim enjoyed and liked the act or initiated the sexual contact. This distortion grants permission to the sexual perpetrators and offenders to perform a bad behaviour that they know is wrong, but prevents them from feeling bad about it, and psychologists have defined this as anti-social personality disorder (Lim et al., 2021). This is a common phenomenon that is usually associated with sexual perpetrators, known as cognitive distortion, and is usually brought in (by the perpetrator) to avoid the feeling of guilt about what would have happened (Lim et al., 2021).

Sexual perpetrators lack empathy or the ability to have feelings for other persons, while other perpetrators enjoy dominating and controlling their victims and others will seek to harm and/or terrorize them with their anti-social personality disorder (Lim et al., 2021). The FSPs, who have their roots in the psychodynamic theories of the object and self, as well as self-theories, follows their behaviour from their modest upbringing to their interactions with parents, guardians, siblings, aunts, uncles, and other significant people. The behaviours they acquire at this point are connected to their individual early histories. To address the harmful behaviour of female-perpetrated CSA, in their study on the whole population of sexual perpetrators and

offenders, Miller et al., (2009) hypothesise that women could need treatments that deal with psychopathological issues such as anxiety, depression, and personality disorders. Regarding the same topic, McLeod (2015) argues that based on their observations, the multifaceted mental and behavioural health needs of FSPs manifest in unique risk factors that are different from those faced by men; this idea incorporates gender and the variations that go along with it. Additionally, there is currently a dearth of empirical data on the effectiveness of therapies for women who commit CSA (Gannon & Rose, 2008; Grayton & DeLuca, 1999). In this view, this study argues that a lot more has to be done as a precursor to any interventions that may be instituted in a community regarding female sexual perpetration of CSA.

The implication of these findings is that community education should not only target the imparting knowledge but should go a step further to trigger community action against the identified problem, like in this case, the female perpetrated CSA and the associated adverse cultural belief systems and values that includes believing issues of rituals. This research is of the view that there is a link-up between Gannon's typologies and the theories used in the research as it seeks to interpret females' behaviour on CSA or why they commit CSA when society expects them to be nurturers and caregivers of these children. This study supports the arguments by Ward and Siegert (2002) as they bring to the fore the primary psychological factors that are behind the behaviour of a female sexual perpetrator (FSP), which will enable the design of an appropriate CSA intervention strategy that addresses the various levels of human development. The study findings are consistent with the results from McLeod's (2015) study that discussed and suggested a model of prevention that is holistic and involves multiple multi-sectors.

4.4 The cycle of sexual abuse as an underlying factor to child sexual abuse

According to the study findings, underage marriages, prostitution, and sexual abuse are all perpetuated in the district as a result of CSA. This came out during the in-depth interviews with one of the adolescent girl participant saying;

“Our generation is severely affected, especially as girls; after the sexual abuse, the victim will begin to like it, and they either opt for early marriage or become prostitutes and start enjoying. Lough. On this practice and adverse experience, the boys are not spared; they end up frequenting Rosa Business Centre for sex workers. It's really sad, as the results are that they will then be absent from school lessons, and the pass rates

will be very low. This is why you find the pass rates in our local schools is quite low. I am therefore appealing to the authorities in education to strengthen their supervision in schools so that they reduce days of absenteeism.”

The Local Authority participant 2 also echoed the point that;

“Despite the fact that females are known as nurturers and caregivers, they are sexually abusing children and as an underlying factor, a cycle of sexual abuse has been identified as an important antecedent, someone may have been abused during their childhood, and their self will always inform them to revenge. Those yester decade victims then become perpetrators of CSA themselves. Sometimes, it is due to a sense of hatred, which stems from them not having their biological parents. If someone had a normal childhood, she may not have been a perpetrator of CSA. If the social workers unearth their upbringing, like what this research is attempting to do, they will realize the seed of abuse germinating in the current behavior. Abuse should be eradicated in society. A normal person will not do such ills in the society.”

The Local authority officer 2 went further to link female sex work with female-perpetrated CSA and highlighted that poverty is the main underlying course and that the population of female sex workers is ballooning because, generally, the levels of poverty in society are now quite high.

In addition, the Ceshhar participant added this to the discussion;

“This brings a situation where the child is skeptical about reporting cases of CSA, as the parent is concerned about the fear. The fear is mainly caused by the child's worry about their own welfare, as children face the wrath of the law after their parents or close relatives have faced it. Most children resort to silence. It also comes from the community itself discriminating against victims of CSA. A child may fear discrimination from society after opening up against CSA. They then resort to being mute. And not disclose. Some do not even know if their encounters are a challenge or abuse. There are also cases where a child may be raped from the tender age of around 3 or four. As the child grows up and the abuse keeps recurring, they end up convinced that the abuse is normal. They may know later on in life that what they encountered is abuse from educators. The child may not see it as abuse because the mother may have convinced the child that it is a normal scenario, as this conviction comes from family,

community, and sometimes schools. The topic of female perpetrated CSA, if analyzed from this angle becomes very broad, with diverse social, economic, psychological and physical factors being brought into the puzzle.”

In view of the cycle of CSA in Mazowe, the FSWs shared their experiences of how they contribute to the commissioning of female perpetrated CSA. They told the research that the women who come to Mazowe from outside areas are doing business using the young adolescent children, as they construct wooden cabins and rent them out to the young girls and their sexual clients. The FSWs expressed that these elderly women are the ones who pocket the money from this devious act, and then, in turn, they give wages to the young girls who are child sex workers.

During the FGD session, a FSW said;

“Because of such practices, the community silently oils and enables the continuous CSA by females in places like Mazowe-Jumbo mine, Rosa, Glendale and commercial farming areas. We cannot out rightly mention that these activities are allowed, but due to the fact that there is no authority that is prohibiting it, it means it's allowed. Mazowe Mine is a big company, and they are aware of all these social ills, but they remain quiet, which means they are enabling such behaviour. Sometimes people die due to violence in these cabins and obviously it will get to their attention as mining authorities, and no meaningful action is taken by the mining authorities.”

Another FSW in the FGD session said;

“Still, we can see that the community in the area promotes these acts and acts like it is a normal scenario, and it is also quite normal in this society that these young women end up going there. Some children are being recruited from the schoolyard straight to the cabins, and they are not shy to be seen doing such practices whilst in school uniforms. The practice is heartbreaking, particularly to the parents of these children.”

The study findings also imply that the adverse effects of female-perpetrated CSA, both at individual and societal levels, should be explored, and response designs must consider and

accommodate them in all spheres of the socio-ecological system. The finding that the victims of CSA are more likely to experience the same and themselves develop into perpetrators of CSA is consistent with Muridzo (2017), who also observed that if intervention services are extended to other societal systems, including the family members will have a positive effect of breaking the cycle. These findings from the study agree with the theoretical base of the research, that is, the self, the object theories and the socio-ecological model there because of the environment, the individual perpetrator is caught up in the misty of poverty and immediately and unconsciously joins the adverse teams of female perpetrators of CSA. The main environment influencing a person's growth is their own biology. An individual's growth is fueled and guided by the interplay of elements in his or her developing biology, immediate family (including significant others), community environment, and societal landscape. It is envisaged that multi-level intervention models targeting CSA are inspired by a bio-ecological model and seek to create change on various levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1990); quoted in Socio-ecological Model (Adapted from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion,,2020).

According to the study's findings, there is a constant and strong connection between adolescents and FSWs, who are always conversing, sharing information about negative acts, and advocating for CSAs in general. This affects these children's overall development, which includes social, educational, and career paths. The infiltration of FSWs from outside communities into Mazowe is heavily promoting the cycle of sexual abuse over decades and generations and compromising any child protection efforts by government and development partners. According to the study findings, underage marriages, prostitution, and sexual abuse are all perpetuated in the district as a result of CSA.

4.5 Mazowe status of female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The results of the study, from the three FGDs, that is, the parents of adolescent children, female sex workers (FSWs) and adolescent children; the interviewed key informants and adolescents (in-depth interviews), provided their views on the community perceptions, beliefs and people's attitudes regarding female perpetrated CSA which agreed to each other. The study's findings included the following: women are sexually abusing children, and they know more about the issue than do government and development partner/CSO professionals. The study also revealed that participants understood that the social ill—the female-perpetrated CSA—is seen as a silent phenomenon and that the larger community holds FSWs primarily responsible for the problem.

The mature FSWs themselves confirmed this, stating that they can no longer draw clients for transactional sex because of their advanced age, even though they sometimes commit the act ignorantly. The perpetrated CSA is perceived as a taboo, not acceptable, as the community views women as protectors and nurturers of children, and to imagine the same gender inflicting pain on a child is unbearable (Zack et al., 2018 and Tozdan et al., 2019).

One adolescent girl participant, during the in-depth interview said;

“Indeed, these sexual abuses are prevalent in our communities. But they are kept silent, nobody wants to talk about it; I don't know what made you bring up such an important subject. Our leadership, parents, and guardians do not talk about it. Teachers sometimes talk about it, here and there during guidance lessons, but those lessons we do not have them frequently. So, it is something in the periphery. NGOs working in our areas, like “Sinovuyo”, always talk about it only to the girls who are members of the groups. The challenge is that no one knows the magnitude of the problem.”

The study, through the FGD with parents of adolescent children, acknowledged that CSA by female perpetrators is evident in the Mazowe District. One parent reported that;

“The FSPs, who are mainly the FSWs, influence the dress of these young girls. Even young boys, it is being seen that they end up being sexually abused by elderly women and may end up contracting HIV and STIs after indulging in unprotected sex. We, as parents, are very much concerned and worried as a community because of these happenings in this area since we have male and female adolescent children. The village heads and headmen are failing to handle this situation of female-perpetrated CSA in their areas. When stepfathers sexually abuse a child, the wife may convince the child to drop the case as the father will be the sole breadwinner, resulting in the child dropping or withdrawing the case. This entails that CSA is happening in Mazowe.”

According to the Msasa Project participant;

“In the district, it is still silent, but it's there; we have cases where the abuse is still done in families. An example is a mother who is a sex worker; the child will see the mother engaging in multiple sexual relations. The challenge is that Mazowe is a mining district, and because of that, there are a number of sex workers. Children are now engaging in the trade, and in some cases, the mother is the one advocating for that. The perpetrator

is even solicited by the mother or close relative. The abuse is indirect to the girl child. When it comes to the boy child, the majority of the victims do not report these cases.”

The ZRP participant also agreed with the FSWs that the FSWs are part of the female perpetrators of CSA. They reiterated that the district has quite a number of female perpetrators of CSA who are in the category of FSWs. The ZRP participant indicated that this issue is always discussed in their district stakeholders’ meetings with the DAAC committee, but there are no meaningful intervention strategies that are suggested, save for the donor-supported activities in the district. The district has very young girls who are even going to that trade. It means that the young girls are the ones who are going there to get paid for sexual activities, the police added. The results from the research showed that the community itself does not condone such behavior and is not in support of that. These results were consistent with an analysis by Abeid et al. (2014) of a study on community perceptions of child sexual abuse and rape carried out in rural Tanzania, which showed that CSA and rape are acknowledged as health, human security, and rights issues in Tanzania and worldwide.

The study's findings from the FGDs, KIIs, and the in-depth interviews offered their opinions on how the public views, thinks, and feels about women who commit CSA, and these opinions essentially coincided with one another. The study also showed that participants recognized that FSWs are largely to blame for the problem and that the social ill—the female-perpetrated CSA—is perceived as a quiet phenomenon by the general public. Even while they occasionally engage in transactional sex ignorance, the mature FSWs themselves attested to this, saying that their advanced age prevents them from drawing clients for such encounters. The community sees women as children's caregivers and defenders; hence it is unacceptable to think of one gender inflicting harm on another. As a result, the perpetration of CSA is seen as taboo and unacceptable.

4.6 Dimensions of gender relations associated with female-perpetrated child sexual abuse

The study revealed the four common gender relations dimensions associated with female-perpetrated CSA, which are sociocultural, power and status, poverty and emotional attributes. This is consistent with an examination and interpretation of a qualitative study conducted in rural Tanzania by Abeid et al., (2014), who propose four aspects of gender relations/dimensions that are connected to women abusing their sexual positions. These were the symbolic,

economic, power and emotional dimensions. This current research supports the argument by Abeid et al., (2014) in that the identified factors were also instrumental in this current research because they assisted in examining the depth of minute factors that surround female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe, as this implies that these factors are a common feature in the district communities that are affected by female perpetrated CSA.

4.6.1 Symbolic attributes associated with female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The social and cultural barriers that kept victims from contacting the right agencies for help were linked to the symbolic dimension. When this phenomenon occurs, both the victims' and the Mazowe communities remain silent about it. This finding implies that issues of culture, belief systems, attitudes, and societal values are key in the commissioning and prevention of female-perpetrated CSA.

ZHI Participant informed the study that;

“The communities have a positive attitude towards accepting reproductive and sexuality education within the education system but certain traditional cultures and values remain an inhibiting factor. It is the role of government to collaborate and coordinate with key stakeholders in order to promote effective prevention strategies. In 2011, WHO (2011) brought forward recommendations to involve the health sector and facilitate the creation of programs that reduce the commission of CSA, and these included the considerations of community values, beliefs and their overall culture.”

The ZHI participant added that;

“As part of this conversion, the struggle of upholding culture and traditional values was stronger, as they expected women to maintain a submissive position, and this brings in the notion of gender dynamics.”

The research findings acknowledge the literature gathered that discussed the issues of gender. Emphasising that gender is a social construct rather than a biological one, determined by the norms, values, and roles of a particular society, culture, and era. It is defined by the economic, social, political, and cultural characteristics and opportunities associated with being a woman

or a man. Gender is a sociocultural manifestation of specific traits related to a person's sex and sexual orientation that are connected with specific social groups. Gender affects people's interactions, allocation of power and resources, and self- and other perceptions. Gender relations are integrated into social structures and wider power structures, involving interpersonal and intergroup interactions and dynamics (Chrisler & Lamer, 2016; Barr et al., 2024 and Achyut et al., 2015).

Chief 1 highlighted that the communities tend to hide their criminality through culture justifying that the Zimbabwean culture embraces that. He emphasized that the majority of Zimbabwe cultural practices are not bad, and added that those cultures that are adverse are in the process of being weeded out with the aid of NGOs working in the area. He said;

“Criminals who are abusing men and women, boys and girls in the name of culture should be dealt with. Anything cultural is good. We can't hand over a young girl for marriage in the name of culture. Its abuse. People are abusing women, and it's very wrong.”

In this vein, the FGDs with the parents of adolescent children expressed concern regarding the issue of CSA by females in their community. To elaborate further, while the study participants acknowledge the existence of female-perpetrated CSA, the implications of these findings are that the issues of culture, values and beliefs need to be cautiously handled as there are some values that affect the communities and society and there is need to educate the community in their diverse forms, considering the involvement of all stakeholders like traditional healers, leadership, government and development partners particularly the community-based organisations operating at local level. The study confirms that female sex work is illegal, and the community frowns at these sex workers. The Zimbabwe culture does not uphold sex work, and people are not comfortable seeing children with sex workers and even the minors who stay with them (Criminal Law-Codification and Reform Act-Chapter 9:23, 2007; The Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013).

4.6.2 Economic attributes associated with female perpetrated child sexual abuse

In terms of the economic aspect, poverty became apparent as a significant barrier to care services accessibility, making women and children the most susceptible groups to experience

sexual abuse. According to the FGDs with FSWs at Mazowe Mine and Glendale, women and girls were sexually abused as a result of individual exposure to prostitution. The study also showed a strong correlation between young women's economic survival and sex, which is ultimately caused by disadvantage, poverty, and a lack of opportunities (Abeid et al., 2014; Wangamati et al., 2018 and Achyut et al., 2015). In support of this statement, the DSD participant said;

“The low economic, poverty status of victims of sexual abuse contributed to them (victims) opting for economic compensation from perpetrators rather than pursuing justice through the legal system. In this view, the aspect of power and authority is brought to the fore and is reflected profoundly at different societal/ecological levels.”

The Ceshhar participant added that;

“On rich people, CSA, poverty, and corruption, if one is stable, financially, they can easily escape the law because of their financial muscle. If one has a better status financially, it means that the respect they receive from the community is that high to the extent that some parents even offer their children to the rich men, and thus poverty and the economy of the various levels of the social system significantly contribute to the presence of female perpetrated CSA or reduced number of cases.”

One FSW participant during the FGD said;

“Poverty and laziness are the major factors that course CSA by the FSPs. The FSWs and parents elaborated that some children are sexually abused because they are lazy. If a child has something to do and work on after completion of their studies, they will not be prone to abuse. The other dimension is that there is no employment, and because of that, our children suffer.”

Another FSW also added that;

“As Female sex workers, we have a queen mother who recruits these young girls as she is no longer marketable. This is the major reason why people will point fingers at us and always blame us for CSA perpetration. Your future interventions must also address the issue of young girls who are joining sex

work and discourage the rate at which young girls are joining the trade. The development partners, who include the CSOs, should genuinely join hands with the government and community leadership in the proper socialization process of an expected normal Zimbabwean girl.”

The body of research suggests that, when considering the economic aspect, poverty became a significant barrier to receiving care services and made women and children the most susceptible group to experience sexual abuse. According to the current study, prostitution exposed women and girls on an individual basis, which resulted in sexual assault. The study also showed a strong correlation between young women's economic survival and sex, which is ultimately caused by disadvantage, poverty, and a lack of opportunity for youth, especially for girls. Research has demonstrated a strong nexus between sexual abuse and poverty. Sexual abuse affects a person's economic well-being, resulting in unemployment, homelessness, dropping out of school, and ill health in all forms, and all these brought together increases the victim's risk for re-cycled sexual abuse and indiscriminate irresponsible sexual behaviour (MoHCC, 2019 and NAC, 2020).

4.6.3 Power attributes associated with female perpetrated child sexual abuse

According to the study, there was a strong belief in male supremacy, which contributed to the rise in sexual abuse. Nonetheless, as norm systems evolved, so too were the power dynamics between men and women observed to be shifting. The study also revealed that some of the conventional gender and societal norms that condone sexual abuse have begun to be questioned by members of the community.

The DSD participant informed the study that;

“As part of this conversion, the struggle of upholding culture and traditional values was stronger, as they expected women to maintain a submissive position. At institutional level, the study revealed that power relations were seen between the law enforcers and the sexual abuse victims, and the law enforcers would reject a case or refer the victim to community leaders for informal settlements such as compensation, assuming that the victim would have entered into some negotiations with the perpetrator, hence depriving them of justice.”

This study suggests that, in order to develop effective preventative initiatives, government should work with key stakeholders to coordinate and collaborate. The WHO (2012) has made suggestions for involving the medical community and assisting in the development of initiatives that do not worsen CSA.

The Local Authority participant 1 also added that;

“Power dimension is reflected profoundly at different levels. The ideology of male superiority is quite pronounced, leading to an increase in sexual abuse. However power relations between men and women are also seen to be changing as the norm systems change. Community members have started challenging some of the traditional gender and social norms that support sexual abuse.”

Though traditional customs continue to be a barrier, parents and guardians seem to be in favour of reproductive and sexuality education being taught in schools. This study contends that because the fourth level of the bio-ecological model examines broad societal elements that contribute to the development of an environment that either encourages or inhibits CSA, it fits in well with the preventative model that has been offered (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These elements include societal and cultural standards that condone the use of CSA as a means of resolving disputes, achieving sexual gratification, or asserting one's dominance over the victim (Muridzo, et al., 2021; Abeid et al., 2014; Wangamati et al., 2018 and Reynaert, 2015). According to Reynaert (2015), CSA is always a form of abuse of power.

4.6.4 Emotional attributes associated with female perpetrated CSA

The study found that, both intrapersonal and interpersonally, emotional dimensions frequently clashed with symbolic and economic dimensions, resulting in poor behaviour when seeking care services, especially those provided by the government and those involving parents, guardians, and even the adolescent children themselves.

The MOHCC participant 2 said;

“The majority of the CSA victims who report their ordeals narrate and display the emotional, psychological and physical reactions. Emotional reactions include, among

other signs and symptoms, fear, mistrust, embarrassment, shame, guilt and self-blame, sadness, vulnerability and isolation. Psychological reactions that we have experienced here in Mazowe include PTSD, depression, difficulty in concentration, flashbacks, and nightmares.”

One participant in the FGD with FSWs said;

“The women who come to Mazowe from outside areas are doing business using the young adolescent children, as they construct wooden cabins and rent them out to the young girls and their sexual clients. They don't care that their adverse sexual activities are causing emotional damage to parents of the community. They always think about quick money only. Of course, sometimes we receive income-generating projects (IGPs) from government ministries that do not cover all the communities of need but are sporadically allocated and thinly spread, but that does not heal the emotional wounds for life. This has resulted in minimal impacts at the population level in terms of economic strengthening and empowerment.”

The results of the current study are consistent with a cross-sectional study conducted in rural Tanzania by Abeid et al., (2014) on knowledge and attitudes regarding rape and child sexual abuse. The study revealed that the communities had tolerant attitudes toward sexual abuse and had limited understanding of the subject. This study finding is inconsistent with what Bee (1990:40) says that “they are educated but not educated; they are apathetic, downtrodden and fatalistic in their attitudes.”

The community members of rural Tanzania, although they displayed poor knowledge of sexual abuse, have an accepting attitude towards the social ill; they like the practice. With this kind of attitude, they will not make any efforts to move away from such adverse practices. The study did find, however, that becoming older and having more education were linked to better understanding and less tolerant views regarding sexual assault. The research participants from Tanzania believed that CSA and rape were common, although concealed social phenomena. A number of factors that contribute to the commission of sexual abuse as enunciated by (Abeid et al., 2014) came out from the study participants, and these included poverty, exposure of

children, alcohol and drug abuse, erosion of social norms, poor parental guidance and care and rapid, radical social changes due to globalisation, and this is also confirmed by this study in Mazowe. As such, the same recommendations apply, particularly the government interventions and those that involve the parents and guardians.

Coyle et al., (2014) state that CSA has the ability to impact a victim's emotional development, leading to more difficulties controlling emotions. This is a psychological problem that is important in the development of psychiatric disorders that CSA victims may experience. Consistent with the emotional dimension, CSA entails interpersonal trust issues during pivotal periods of self-development (Coyle et al., 2014). As part of the community perceptions that take on board the community attitudes and beliefs, the study findings revealed the various settings that exacerbate the commission of female-perpetrated CSA. It emerged from the study that the FSPs recruit these children into the sex work trade, thereby exposing them to sexual abuse as they are underage. Sometimes, this abuse is in the family, and it's mainly caused by indecent accommodation (an example is that of the case of Raina Chauke from the Tilder Moyo Foundation documentary series *Behind Bars* (2022)). Revenge by spouses and leaving the children with no care. There are some cases where step-parents are in the picture through negligence. Sex workers are the main culprits according to the views of the community (Bourke et al., 2014).

This finding implies that for all actions to be taken to avert female-perpetrated CSA, some unique considerations have to be made that suit the identified characteristics of the individual perpetrators, underlying factors and the typologies of the CSA. The power struggle, economic, symbolic and emotional dimensions, including the issues of corruption and bribing remained eminent, particularly among government officials, CSOs and the general community. Additionally, the other implication of this finding is that the dimensions suggested by Abeid et al., (2014) are in line with what is prevailing in Mazowe in terms of underlying factors and their diversity, and therefore, intervention programs have to consider that when assisting communities to prevent female perpetrated CSA before it happens, so as to realize transformation and conscientisation among the affected communities.

The study findings highlight that the four dimensions of culture, economy, power, and emotions resemble the characteristics of sexual perpetrators who commonly present features of concealing/hiding the abuse while publicly presenting as loving, kind, likeable and charming, but in private, they show cruelty, violence undermining and being manipulative. The research findings are in line with the characteristics of sexual perpetrators, which are highly impulsive, resulting in them not thinking deeply about the consequences of the act before it happens (Lim et al., 2021). Meanwhile, other perpetrators premeditate and plan before they act. A lack of healthy coping skills is often cited among sexual perpetrators and offenders (Lim et al., 2021).

Sexual perpetrators, male or female, tell themselves and others that this behaviour is not harmful and go further to claim that the victim enjoyed and liked the act or initiated the sexual contact. This distortion grants permission to the sexual perpetrators and offenders to perform a bad behaviour that they know is wrong but prevents them from feeling bad about it, and psychologists have defined this as anti-social personality disorder. This is a common phenomenon that is usually associated with sexual perpetrators, known as cognitive distortion and is usually brought in (by the perpetrator) to avoid the feeling of guilt about what would have happened. This kind of scapegoats are also associated with self-statements that condone sexual abuse behaviours, resulting in them continuing the sexual abuse and re-offending, since conviction would not have been achieved (Lim et al., 2021 and Rosenhan et al., 2000).

Sexual perpetrators lack empathy or the ability to have feelings for other persons, while other perpetrators enjoy dominating and controlling their victims and others will seek to harm and/or terrorize them-anti-social personality disorder (Lim et al., 2021). Reflecting on the same topic, McLeod (2015) argues that based on their observations, the multifaceted mental and behavioural health needs of FSPs manifest in unique risk factors that are different from those faced by men; this idea incorporates gender and the variations that go along with it. Additionally, there is currently a dearth of empirical data on the effectiveness of therapies for women who commit CSA (Gannon & Ros, 2008; Grayton & DeLuca, 1999). In this view, this study argues that a lot more has to be done as precursor to any interventions that may be instituted in a community regarding female sexual perpetration of CSA, and it is envisaged that with the introduction of the community empowerment model, some improvement will be realised.

The four common gender relations dimensions—sociocultural, power and position, poverty, and emotional attributes—that are linked to female-perpetrated CSA were identified by the study. Since this suggests that these elements are a common feature in the district communities that are afflicted by female perpetrated CSA, the identified factors were crucial to this study's examination of the intricacies surrounding female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe. The community of Mazowe District was impacted by all four gender characteristics, which were taken into account when designing the intervention strategy.

4.7 Contribution of colonial history to the committing of female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The parents and the two Chiefs also highlighted that, as part of their view, there must be laws that reinforce and integrate into the local traditional values, desirable practices and culture. They added that they must be allowed to discipline their children. This statement was stressed by Chief 1, who described female-perpetrated CSA as prevalent in Mazowe, and that it is quite bad, taboo and socially unacceptable by all threads of the society.

Chief 2 linked the problem to colonial machinations;

“The colonisers realised that we have a strong spirituality. Therefore, they decided to educate us that English is good and anything traditional is bad. This is how the backbone of Africa was broken. These things need to be revived and moderated. Our culture must be revived.”

According to the two Chiefs, the district has too many female perpetrators of CSA, and the issue of CSA by female perpetrators is hidden. People do not talk about it. It is silent. There are many repercussions of female-perpetrated CSA, and as traditional leaders, they are approached by their subjects so that they can solve these issues peacefully. Some cases stem from the churches, particularly those from the Apostolic Faith church sect. They indicated that they really wish to see these issues be brought to light, the perpetrators tried and ultimately have a reduction of such social ills because women are sexually abusing children, and the various government ministries must be engaged by the DDC as the prime coordinator for all developmental work in the district.

Chief 1 confirmed to the research that women are also perpetrators of CSA due to silent beliefs in the community. However, he highlighted that CSA response initiatives sprouting from the community themselves are unheard of because of their culture of not opening up on the adverse subject. They only open up through gossiping because the initiative is to rectify these issues, thereby nipping abuse in the bud. When the few CSA cases are finally brought to the Chief, or the magistrate and justice is not served, it becomes a hard nut to crack, resulting in the cases being lost.

Chief 1 added;

“Political will is rather minimal, which is linked to local belief systems and attitudes of our political leadership. If political will was present, it would manage multiple human areas that relate to CSA and other social ills. FSPs are taking advantage of the bad side of the current economic crisis and luring the children to go out of the country and into female sex work (FSW), including other ill practices like sodomy, which the practicing communities end up giving them nice names most of them that come from the countries of the north.”

To emphasize this issue of politics, cultural erosion and belief systems that have been molded by colonialism, I will quote the sayings by Lord Macaulay of 1835.

On colonisation, in his address to the British Parliament on 2nd February 1835, Lord Macaulay (1835) said;

‘I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief. Such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such calibre, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem, their native self-culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation.’

This quotation, which was mentioned by Chief 1 during the discussion, relates to the culture and local values. The significance of this discussion to the study is that in this country, having been colonised by the British, the line of thinking was the same among the colonizers, and the current generation has since been dominated by the foreign language and values of the

colonizers and neo-colonizers. He related Lord Macaulay's utterances to the current erosion of IKS and the indigenous culture, language and the value system.

The parents added an appeal for the government to intervene seriously so as to reduce the number of FSWs in the district. They, however, cited that, some time back, sex workers were told to vacate the areas of operation, but in a short space of time, they returned. These FSWs do not just engage in CSA but even cause havoc as they date married men and cause family disintegration.

Still on community perceptions, the CSOs and the ZRP added that the female perpetrators of CSA are rampant in the district, but it's just that the community is in denial; they do not own the problems, and hence, there are no meaningful prevention strategies for these social ills. The issue here is about silence. People are mute to the abuse, and yet these things are happening. They do not want to talk about them, and they normalise them. When CSA is talked about, most people refer to penetration, and yet it is broader. There are so many typologies of CSA, and these include fondling, even sexual harassment in schools, and the use of phonographic video material, among others. Female teachers can even harass the boy children. Anyone is a potential sexual abuser. Sadly, the community still harnesses the belief that it is only the male perpetrators who sexually abuse children.

According to the ZHI Participant;

“Things are different now in this modern life. The culture is now diluted. Everything is now more money-oriented than the desire to preserve the values of our culture. We talked about Ubuntu, and it's now scattered. If someone is given a village to lead, they mainly look at projects that enable them to milk money more than the well-being of the people in that community, and in this country, with the prevailing economic challenges at family and community levels, it's difficult because people are struggling and they opt to do anything for money generation, and if someone can kill for money, then it means that they can do anything for the love of money.”

The ZHI participant also added that;

“The term socialization in the community refers to the assumption that cases of female-perpetrated CSA are not discussed, which in turn contributes to the pandemic's continuation. Then comes the family set-up. Most families should have a father and a mother. If we look at it, most families of today do not have that set up. They have single-

headed parents, mostly women, resulting from break-up marriages and death. Sometimes the grandparent is the one taking care of the children.”

The ZRP participant also said;

“We normally handle cases where the males are the perpetrators of child sexual abuse, and the females are the victims of that abuse. There are few cases regarding female perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Of the few cases of female perpetrators of child sexual abuse, we realize it normally involves children as perpetrators. These are the school-going ages of very young girls ranging from 12- 14. They entice the young boys into having sexual intercourse with them.”

The study demonstrated the magnitude of challenges related to culture, values and belief systems posed by the KIIs and the FGDs in Mazowe. The rapid and radical technological and social changes, the history of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as important attributes to the perpetuation of female-perpetrated CSA have been discussed. The education system that is currently being used takes an insignificant portion of the aspects of IKS, which subsumes issues of culture and identity of the local people; this is mainly due to the promotion of foreign languages and looking down upon the indigenous languages in most if not all, educational institutions. These findings are in line with the submissions by Nyota and Mapara (2008), who argue that the value of IKS need to be assessed and mobilised for use in prevention of female perpetrated CSA (Masenya T. M., 2022; Sillitoe et al., 2006; Altieri, 1995 and Nyota & Mapara, 2008). As part of promoting the community values and their culture, including IKS, Chambers (1983, p. 89) argues that ‘the strength of the, marginalized, or poor people’s knowledge is the module that corrects, maintains, extends and transmits it. These faculties may include; transmission through teaching and story-telling, apprenticeship, good memory for details and observation.’ Chambers (1983) has also observed that this knowledge can be lost through death and on another positive note it can be continuously renewed and corrected through observation. It can therefore be noted that the aspects of observation and dialoguing are critical for social perceptions shifting in the female perpetrated CSA.

The results of this study align with the theories of SEM, self-theory, and object/relations, as proposed by the psychodynamic and socio-ecological models. These theories suggest that in order to create tailored intervention activities for each stage of development, it is important to analyse each child's environment and developmental stage. As the study discussed the multi-

sectorial coordination by the DDC, it is prudent for intervention program designers to also practically consider the component of monitoring and evaluation. The study illustrated the extent of cultural values, and belief systems, colonial history influence and minimal political will. It has been noted that the history of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as well as the quick and drastic changes in technology and society, are significant factors in the continuation of female-perpetrated CSA. Because most, if not all, educational institutions promote foreign languages and denigrate indigenous languages, the current educational system only covers a small portion of the aspects of IKS, which encompass issues of culture and identity of the local people.

4.8 Community silence on female perpetrated child sexual abuse and the associated attributes

The study established from the Msasa Project Participant at Dambatsoko Drop-in Center (DIC-Muchirikuenda Village), Ward 8 of Mazowe RDC that the community maintains silence on female perpetrated CSA, and they do not benefit from keeping silent about it. However, it is a practice and culture that is embedded in society that they try to embellish reality and cover it with a veil of fallacy exhibiting the impression that such abuse is not happening. They believe talking about these CSA issues exposes them as individuals, families and the community at large.

In addition, the Msasa Project participant highlighted that;

“In most cases, the CSA that people in the community normally talk about is the abuse by male perpetrators. Child sexual abuse by female perpetrators is a silent phenomenon that happens in villages, compounds and institutions at the local community level. The reason is that women are known to be nurturers and caregivers, and they are not normally expected by society to instill harm in children. However, on a sad note, some females are perpetrators of CSA.”

According to the study findings, the concept of silence, which is strongly fused in the societal values, demand for a unique and holistic intervention approach. This practice also falls under the symbolic dimension, and according to the Msasa Project, this is a critical area for scrutiny if the society is to realize meaningful results in developmental interventions. The Gender Focal Person (GFP) confirmed that there are always cases of CSA in the district, although the

community remain silent. On community-based response initiatives, the GFP indicated that some individuals are not concerned because the victim involved is not related to them. Some will direct the victim to areas where they can get assistance. Some are not educated enough to know the route to take when they are faced with such a scenario. They are even afraid of reporting to the police. The community may be afraid of the effects of the abuse, in terms of following the court hearing processes, if they report such cases. It will be important for the community to know that whistle-blowing also helps the victims of CSA. The DSD has a rapid response mechanism where issues of child sexual abuse are addressed reactively, which is minimally utilized.

The MoHCC participant 2 also acknowledged the presence of CSA by female perpetrators in Mazowe District. He said;

“As health professionals, we hear about these practices, though it is not that common, but historically, this is something that wasn't happening in this community. It's a taboo for the people where our norms do not condone such behaviors; hence, the communities loudly say it is not happening. Such cases have been reported with the dialogue that we, as MoHCC, have had with the community leaders; once that has been noticed, the community has the capacity to report, but they are not. It is not acceptable in our society.”

Additionally, the community believes that most perpetrators are male. Some families from the apostolic sect were reported to have facilitated CSA, and this was talked about in the church. However, it is also seen as a misfortune in the family. Religion has played a pivotal role in justifying CSA. Areas, where artisanal miners are dominant, believe that cases of child sexual abuse happen because of rituals. They think that the persons inflicting CSA are doing so for monetary gains. The other dimension is that people engaged in CSA so that they can be cleansed from HIV and other STIs as they believe, from the discussions with the traditional healers, that these diseases will just vanish if the perpetrators engage with youngsters sexually. These perceptions are usually not talked about; they remain silent for time immemorial. It's unacceptable in Mazowe communities, and these cases, if heard, are tabled and deliberated in the traditional courts of the local Chiefs.

This finding resonates with what emerged from the FGD with the FSWs and parents, who confidently informed the study that some professionals lack the granular data regarding the

female-perpetrated CSA in Mazowe. This implies that the professionals need to work innovatively and go the extra mile to establish the hidden truth of the communities they are serving before any intervention is initiated, which is currently lacking in their programs, as most of them are prescriptively pushed from outside in the name of models. The FGD conducted with parents of adolescent children acknowledged that CSA by female perpetrators is evident in this area and is silent, and they expressed that they require watchmen in the area who will then go and report to the police if such cases are unearthed. They further confirmed that CSA by FSPs is happening, and at Rosa, older women take the young girls and give them out to older men. The young girls are then sexually abused. The sad part is that it is the older ladies, who are commonly FSWs, who take a lump of some of the money after the children are abused while the children get less. The parents indicated that they used to hear that it happened in the townships, but sadly, even in their own rural areas, it is now happening. They mentioned that these FSWs and elderly women do not have remorse for a child as they are too lazy to engage in ordinary work. Some are single parents who feel that it is better to go to local townships and engage in a lot of sexual acts than to work and take care of themselves, as some women do. The local village heads are failing to handle the situation. They also reported that the police are not doing much; in fact, they engage the FSWs for their sexual services. On a positive note, the ZHI Project called “*Sinovuyo*” in the area is helping young boys and girls not to be sexually abused in whatever form through continuous engagements and dialogues with them during programmed times when they get free space from their routine work. Parents reiterated that due to the love of money, what used to be values of society have been eroded, and today, they are no longer of any significance. Since most societal values have been polluted and eroded, there must be laws that reinforce on the Zimbabwean traditional values, meaning for example, parents should be allowed to beat their children as a form of discipline. Additionally, there was a mention by one parent in the FGD that;

“Statutes that prohibit and arrest prostitution/ sex-work must be reviewed. The local authorities, through the ward councillors, should be active in crafting bylaws and recommending to parliament for laws to be adjusted so as to reduce these adverse social ills from happening. Another dimension is a scenario of young boys getting abused by women, and it's mainly cultural. The whole district has a culture of ‘nyau dance’ where young girls are exposed to mature men and vice versa; there is a need for intervention and education since children end up abandoning school to pursue that culture. Some perpetrators are females. It's just that the community is in denial. And when the district

talks of sexual abuse they are not only referring to penetration. It starts from fondling, even sexual harassment in schools. Female teachers can even harass the boy child. Anyone is a potential abuser. Sadly, the community still harbors the belief that it is only the male perpetrators who sexually abuse children.”

The implication of this finding is that according to Zimbabwean laws, the Criminal Law Act of 2007 does have the provision of witchcraft, which is an acknowledgement that such a phenomenon does exist, and upon production of adequate evidence, the issue may be tabled before the court of law. Traditional healers have also been accused of prescribing adversary measures to treat certain challenges that affect people and yet that bring human suffering at both micro and macro levels, and there are no formal laws that assist the society, and special example is on CSA by female perpetrators who harvest sperms from boys and sometimes facilitate the commission of murder of someone for ritual purposes and all this coming from silent prescriptions by traditional healers (Abeid et al., 2014; Wangamati et al., 2018; Criminal Law Act, 2007- related to witchcraft part vi; chapters 98 to 102).

Local NGOs also highlighted that this topic of discussing female sexual perpetrators is quite interesting. Generally, when development practitioners talk about CSA, it is normally male perpetrated. They also confirmed that these practices are silently rampant, particularly in Mazowe District. The community maintain silence on such practices because they do not want to be involved in court processes and would want to maintain family cohesion. Additionally, the rich people in society receive a lot of respect from ordinary people, resulting in parents pushing their own girl children to them, and they end up being sexually abused, and, in this vein, poverty becomes a major underlying factor. As long as people are getting something in the form of livelihoods, they can do anything, including sacrificing their own children; GBV also becomes rampant, especially during the times of harvesting and auctioning tobacco (Abeid et al., 2014; Wangamati et al., 2018). The study found that the community remains silent regarding CSA committed by women and that doing so serves no useful purpose. But, there is a culture and practice that is deeply ingrained in society that attempts to distort reality and obscure it with false information in order to give the appearance that abuse of this kind is not occurring. They feel that discussing these CSA problems exposes them as people, families, and the community as a whole.

4.9 Development partners, CBOs and CSOs perceptions on female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The NGOs agreed that the district has so many organizations that cater for both boy and girl adolescent children in the community, including in schools. However, when they intervene in CSA, the focus is on the female victims mostly, while the male victim is left in the terraces, at reaction level not being proactive before the female CSA is experienced. It is never mentioned.

In this regard, the ZRP participant stated that;

“In our program, we had a case of a young boy, 13 years old, reporting a case. When the case was referred to the higher offices of the police, for them, it was an alien scenario. The boy was just referred for a counselling session and went back home. This makes the boys not come for reporting nor engage in general discussion relating to female CSA. The socialization in the community makes them not to report such cases, though the district is experiencing such happenings.”

These sentiments were also echoed by the parents during the FGDs. They highlighted that the female perpetrators are not from local, but they would have travelled from outside areas and districts across the country, coming to Mazowe to do business with local children, and hence they do not have a heart for the child victims because of extreme love of money. The NGOs also informed the research that they are not familiar with government-initiated CSA prevention activities, save for those that are brought by projects like the DREAMS and the government departments ride on those. The study established that there are so many CSOs and CBOs who are supported by development partners in Mazowe District, but they are not directly supporting CSA interventions, mainly due to their perceptions and foreign based baseline information that informs their concept proposals. The implications of these findings are that in order for the CSA response to be successful, the government needs a well-coordinated multisectoral approach. This is supported by the submissions by Muridzi and Chikadzi (2020); Judiciary Services Commission, (2012); Kewley et al., (2021) and National AIDS Council Strategic plan 4 (2020), who suggest that multisectoral forums in response to CSA, stakeholder engagement and review and use of protocols are key in achieving meaningful results.

4.10 Summary

This chapter presented, analysed and discussed the social perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA, highlighting the community attitudes, their belief systems regarding the subject at hand

and the gender dimensions associated with the commission of female perpetrated CSA, which also included the identify underlying factors and typologies of female perpetrated CSA that are prevalent in Mazowe District. The study findings match with the four identified gender dimensions, which are symbolic, economic, power and emotional dimensions.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BY FEMALE PERPETRATORS IN MAZOWE DISTRICT

5.1 Introduction

The chapter defined the effects of CSA on the individual victim, the family, the society and the nation at large, according to the set study objective two. It emerged from the study findings that the effects included the destruction of the individual victim's self-esteem, psychological and physiological health (HIV and STIs transmission, including unplanned pregnancies), economic power, and cultural and societal values and belief systems. The chapter also discussed the effects of female-perpetrated CSA on the family and the community in terms of the disintegration of society, with issues of corruption and bribery during the attempts to intervene in CSA also emerging. At the end, a summary concludes the chapter by highlighting the link of the effects and the response mechanism.

5.2 Effects child sexual abuse on the individual victim

The study established, through the key informant interviews (KIIs), the in-depth interviews with the adolescents, community FGDs, and reviewed related documents, that female-perpetrated CSA affects the individual victimized children, their families and the entire community in the form of reproductive, physical and mental health, as well as affecting their social and spiritual wellbeing and increase in disease burden at a societal level.

During the in-depth interview with one adolescent youth, he had this to say;

“We are really affected by this adverse practice as youth and children of this community. After one is abused, what follows is the issue of substance and drug abuse, child prostitution, and marriage and mental health problems at a very tender age. It is really sad. Our leadership, the councilors, and village heads are not proactive to this social problem; in fact, some of them are silently into it as well. What worries me most is the kind of job these youngsters will perform in the future in pursuance of their own lives and whether they will be able to fend for their own children. These are likely to be the beginnings of shutting down on the family as an institution.”

The enunciation by the KIIs informed the study that the effects of the social ill cuts across all the socio-ecological system. To begin with, the individual victim is affected at the self-level. According to the ZHI Participant;

“CSA affects the victim by destroying their self-esteem, that which gives individual confidence of doing anything as a normal person; if someone is sexually abused, they are emotionally affected, and their confidence is mutilated, the mental health is damaged. This is the main effect of CSA on an individual victim. The individual is further affected physiologically, as they are injured during penetration and the contraction of HIV and STIs, sperms are being harvested from adolescent boys by FSPs and sold for ritual purposes.”

Sperm harvesting on the adolescent male victims was highlighted by several key informants during the interview sessions. However, they could not elaborate to the researcher on how this is being done, but they highlighted that the FSPs lure the pubescent boys and give them some money, pretending as if they love them, have sexual intercourse and then harvest the sperms. The FSWs added that other effects at the individual level include unwanted pregnancies, premature marriages that do not last, and sometimes they get attacked.

Chief 2 said;

“It is possible to acquire STIs, including HIV, after experiencing sexual abuse. Sexual intercourse is closely related to drug abuse and addiction. One needs drugs to get into that kind of CSA-perpetrating behavior.”

The ZRP participant also added that;

“There is psychological and physical damage. School dropouts and early marriages are also a common feature. In some cases, a victim can be reported first as a case of rape, and other subsequent cases are consensual sex.”

Additionally, the Local Authority Participant 2 said;

“Abuse inflicts fear on the child who has been abused. The end result is that the child will end up not trusting anyone. The child will not be stable in life. We may lose that child because the child is mentally affected by the incident. If a child is abused by a specific gender, they end up resenting that gender. The victim may end up normalising

abuse and end up indulging in sexual acts because they believe that it is the normal thing to do. Correcting this behaviour may be a mammoth task.”

The mature FSWs confirmed that they have such encounters with very young girls who come to their constituency to be engaged as sex workers. One FSW said;

“As sex workers, there is no criteria to choose who one gets intimate with. These young girls end up being sexually abused. The young girls are, therefore, prone to contracting STIs and HIV if the condom tears up during intimacy or even when one chooses to have unprotected sex. These men will have returned, and the girls suffer on their own. Even young men suffer from STIs, too. The prevalence of STI in this area of Mazowe mine and other mining settlements is quite high, and it is continuously being transmitted to other young men as well as to us FSWs in and around the district. These perpetrators damage the children as some people do not disclose their HIV status.”

This finding implies that, given the physical, psychological, mental, spiritual and social health of the individual CSA victim, the likelihood of an increase in national budgets being directed by the government towards health increases, and it becomes a burden to the nation and fiscus is observable. The study also established the cycle of sexual abuse that affects the victim at the self and individual level for a lifetime. The individual with this history will end up engaging in extra marital sex for the rest of their active sexual life. The study, therefore, suggests that there is a need for empirical evidence all the time regarding female perpetrated and general CSA so as to bring accuracy to budgetary estimates and equitable distribution among program areas.

Existent literature, notably MoHCC (2019); NAC (2020); Jewkes et al.,(2002), show that CSA, as perpetrated by females, affects the victimized children, their families and the entire community in the form of reproductive, physical and mental health, as well as affecting their social wellbeing and increase in disease burden. This matches with the findings of the study in Mazowe District, where CSA perpetrated by females also resulted in physical and psychological harm with lasting consequences for the individual victim as in the case of similar findings by Kendall-Tackett et al., (1993) and Kendall-Tackett (2013). The findings suggest that these effects should be considered in any response mechanism. The study findings are in sync with Senn et al., (2008), who also finds out the implications of these effects of CSA exert

beyond the sexual and reproductive health, rather affect the physical health and social well-being of its victims and ultimately affects the economic and social welfare of a nation. By being survivors of sexual abuse, with its associated psychological long-term sequelae, children are involved in negative behaviours like smoking, use of drugs, truancy, running away from homes, and sometimes marrying early in order to escape the abuse (Browne & Finkelhor, 1986).

The study observations were consistent with Mathews and Collin-Vezina (2019), who presented the traumatic experience of CSA as one of the risk factors in the development of a broad array of mental health problems affecting both the current and future well-being of victims. This is also in line with the WHO (2003) observation that for all humanity, mental, physical, and social health are closely interwoven and important strands of life. The understanding of the phenomenon from this perspective provides social practitioners with the significance that mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of individuals, communities, and societies (Freud, 1905, cited in McLeod, 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This finding implies that there is a confirmation of a link process between the self, the object/relations theories, and the SEM model that have to be considered when designing CSA intervention programs at both micro (individual) and macro (community) levels.

The study determined that female-perpetrated CSA affects the reproductive, physical, and mental health of the individual victimized children, their families, and the entire community. It also affects their social and spiritual well-being and contributes to a rise in the burden of disease at a societal level. These findings were derived from key informant interviews (KIIs), in-depth interviews with the adolescents, community FGDs, and a review of relevant documents.

5.3 Effects of child sexual abuse on the family

The NAC participant informed the study that CSA perpetrated by females brings a lot of disharmony, family disintegration, and accusations to the family system. The NAC participant said;

“There will also be a lot of mistrust and manifestation conflicts. However, sometimes, issues of CSA are not discussed openly and are kept under the carpet. Children have resorted to being street children, citing that it is better to be sexually abused in the streets

than to be abused at home. The FSWs also cause havoc as they even date married men and cause family disintegration.”

The adolescent youth also added their voices during the in-depth interviews, and one of them said;

“As children and youth, we are affected by our families. We can actually see that our parents and other members of the extended family are in intense conflict because of a case of CSA. Sometimes, our parents or guardians, as couples, are also disintegrated due to the cases of CSA, blaming each other as the primary causes of the abuse. The majority of times, the abusers are not brought to book, with no evidence, and that is the beginning point of manifesting conflicts resulting in the fragmentation of family members. This issue of CSA is not small, it goes beyond the individual victim into the whole community and beyond. Now with all these challenges, the question is: what is the community doing about it and who is to initiate it?”

The Msasa Project Participant, in addition, informed the study that;

Child sexual abuses are done at the family level. The chances that the abuse is perpetrated by other people is quite slim. This then results in conflicts and family disintegration for a long period of time to come in the future. The source of perpetrators is the family members, and reporting is skimpy. This information I am narrating is in line with various scholars who confirmed the effects of family disintegration and conflicts among members of the family as implications associated with female-perpetrated CSA.”

The ZRP participant added that;

“In terms of family perception of the effects of the CSA, sexual abuse that happens within families has a lot of effects, including, among others, the case may be swept under the carpet as the perpetrator may be the breadwinner. Even if the community brings the case to the police, the victim may be convinced to drop the case, thereby protecting the perpetrator. The perpetrator goes back to the community and continues to sexually abuse those who are vulnerable.”

The ZHI Participant also said;

“The community is affected but never wants to get involved in such issues because of the protracted processes involving the judiciary system, and that affects their competing interests as adults; the police testify that there are so many cases happening, even perpetrated by women. An individual may not want to be a part of the reporting of CSA. The community then becomes silent because of these cultural or religious and structural beliefs and values.”

Both the MOHCC participants (1 and 2) highlighted the effects of CSA on the significant members of the family. The MOHCC participant 2 said;

“Stigma and discrimination, including issues to do with financial constraints, are key to this practice of female-perpetrated CSA. A family can keep a case of abuse under the carpet because of financial constraints, including not seeking medication and judiciary services. Lack of knowledge is an important attribute since this also displays ignorance and poor health-seeking behavior regarding CSA cases, which do not charge clinic/hospital fees. Some families do not know about what they are supposed to do if they face such a scenario.”

The mentioned effects by the health care participants were also confirmed by Chief 2, who emphasized that;

“The practice of female-perpetrated CSA has a negative impact, especially when the child is from a good family. CSA brings about disgrace to the family, and their reputation is compromised. There is also the disintegration of the family from the abuse; relationships are destroyed, especially when the perpetrator is a relative, and the cat gets out of the bag, it leads to family disintegration.”

The MOHCC participant 2 further stated that;

“On depression, stigma and discrimination, especially at school, are quite common if the other children get to know about it. Issues to do with injuries during penetration, transmission of STIs and HIV, and unwanted/unplanned pregnancies are inevitable. Abortion also comes in as well as complications during delivery, and it affects both the victim and family members.”

This statement was also supported by the DSD participant, who mentioned the shortage of AMTO resources to be disbursed for treating the victims, as it is the obligation of the government to do so, but they currently lack the capacity.

The Msasa Project participant said;

“This family disintegration is closely linked to conflict, and when it manifests, the rights of the child victim are undermined. This is two-sided as it depends on the financial triceps of the perpetrator, and in the majority of times, the child loses the battle.”

The *Newsday* (2022) reports that severe childhood sexual abuse is related to later self-destructive behavior. Some of these sexually abused children end up with low self-esteem and start to look down upon themselves as rejects. There is a danger that the abused child is introduced to sexual life and promiscuity at an early age, and female victims of sexual abuse are often thought to be at risk of teenage pregnancy and child marriage. In some cases, because someone the child trusts and depends on has caused them great harm or failed to protect them, some children may become suicidal.

According to media reports captured by the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ) (2010), the cases that are before the courts reflect the magnitude of the problem. CSA causes suffering to children and has long-term consequences. The spike in CSA cases, some of which result in minors becoming pregnant and then dying while giving birth, is disturbing. What is more disheartening to note is that in the majority of these cases, parents and guardians who are expected to be protecting these minors are being found either as perpetrators or as facilitators of the abuse and even concealing these issues to protect the perpetrators.

The implication of these findings is that there is a strong nexus between the female perpetrated CSA, the victims, significant members of the family and the surrounding community, which demands a sequential interwoven response mechanism touching on all levels. The findings of the study also display a link between how children develop social and emotional skills across their lifespan, commissioning of CSA, thus the cycle of the social ill, and overcoming trauma; hence, it works better with equipping all citizens to recognise the signs of CSA so that they can report the abuse and afford the victims the benefit of early and proper intervention, given that the majority of victims themselves often do not engage in early reporting of such abuses (Harracksingh, & Janagan Johnson, 2022; Borja et al., 2006; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Schumm, et al., 2006). The results of the study showed that CSA committed by women causes a great

deal of discord, accusations, and family breakdown. It also increases mistrust and evident disputes. Most of the time, CSA-related issues are ignored and not publicly highlighted. Due to the belief that being sexually assaulted on the streets is preferable to being mistreated at home, kids have resorted to becoming street kids. The FSWs wreak havoc as well because they even go out with married men and break up families.

5.4 Effects of child sexual abuse at community and societal levels

The study revealed that in Mazowe District, there are both male and female perpetrators who are also coming from many divergent areas, which cause immediate and long-term effects, with direct and indirect adverse impacts on the individual, families, and communities.

The NAC participant informed the study that;

“CSA affects child protection. Females are expected to be protectors of the children and are not expected to be the ones perpetrating child sexual abuse. Children end up losing trust in adults. Teenage pregnancies are also evident, and even the children end up becoming perpetrators themselves.”

The MOHCC participant 2 also added that;

“In other instances, the artisanal miners and the young girls use substances and drugs, resulting in them being lured to being sexually abused after they lose control of themselves. The FSWs’ dressing also lures the young girls as they are usually skimpily dressed; they then go to their usual secluded posts where they operate, removing those same clothes and exposing their bodies to the adolescent young boys and girls, who are then attracted to experiment having sexual intercourse prematurely. The issue of substance and drug use was also echoed by parents during community dialogues, appealing to the government that there is a great need for the law to assist communities, which is not happening currently. The laws are there, but they are not adequately implemented for the benefit of the children.”

Chief 2 also added that;

“For now, the idea is to revive the concept of padare/ dialogues of young people with their elders. Though it's a challenge to bring people together to discuss these issues, it is a very good concept. We must also invite young people to discuss the consequences. Padare should be an initiative by the community and it should be funded by

stakeholders. It must be a part of the life system. We need to revive and resuscitate this system where we knew that men and young boys would sit at padare and discuss these things. We need modified ways of going back to our traditions. We must have the community bylaws. These are laws formulated by the community, which are well-tabulated. We will then know the consequences of people who perpetrate child sexual abuse. It helps.”

According to the Local Authority participant 2, there are also adverse effects that spread and affect the community, and she said;

“The community may end up reprimanding other children not to socialize with the abused child. Thus, stigma and discrimination. They shoulder the burden of the CSA on the victim. Stigma is one challenge, and yet the child needs help, which they do not get from the neighborhood, including the relatives. There is a need for the government and partners to educate the communities so that they know how to handle such scenarios.”

The MOHCC participant 2 added the aspect of labelling and gave an example of a certain family who tried to hide a case of CSA. He said;

“The chief needed a heifer, and the family didn't have it for the cleansing ceremony. He claimed that the family had tarnished the reputation of his community. It also hinders them from reporting such information because they are sceptical that the chief may end up requesting so much for them to get help. This then brings in the issue of corruption and lack of transparency on the part of the whole social fabric, including the government system.”

The Newsday of 26 November 2022 reported that His Excellency, Mr. Edward Kallon, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Country Coordinator, said gender-based violence affects socio-economic development in the country. He stated that:

“There is no doubt that GBV causes regression in the socio-economic gains and investments made for sustainable development. We desperately need transformative measures to accelerate ACTION to END GBV, especially against women and girls”.

Chief 2 said;

“A child may be disrupted in their education as well as their social standing. Even if they have dreams of who they want to be when they grow up, it is compromised. Their education is disrupted as some fall pregnant, and some of them will end up taking drugs.”

The adolescent men and young boys hire the services of an FSW, and they are asked to go to a secluded place by the male perpetrators. They will sleep with the FSW and end up taking their money and other belongings. The challenge is that as FSWs, they are not privileged to do any other work apart from being a sex worker. The FSWs are also being abused. The sexual encounters that they have sometimes are not consensual, but they are rape. They will have sex with an FSW at knife point. Furthermore, the FSWs have no say on how they want to be intimate. For example, even when a 45-year-old FSW hooks up with a 21-year-old male client, the male client does not even give the FSW the opportunity to determine whether they will use protection or not. Sometimes, they may even transmit the FSW with an STI. In some cases, the FSW can have all their belongings stolen from them by their young clients, some of who are violent. If the FSW dumps the violent client who is familiar with their place of residence, there will be no peace as the client will continue to harass the FSWs in their place of residence. These are the many ways in which the FSWs are abused.

The research also, through the FGD with parents and FSWs, revealed that even if these issues are reported, nothing much is being done because of corruption/bribery. One participant in the FGD with FSWs said;

“As a way of community response, residents in the area are afraid of being murdered since some people have rifles in their homes. Reporting such issues may mean that they may be attacked by the perpetrators as they may end up having feelings that they want to disturb their source of income. If a young girl is seen with a married man, only then will the community act to reprimand the young lady from dating the married man. This is how female sex work is being promoted in this area, and those are some of the effects of the CSA by the FSPs, who apparently are experienced FSWs.”

The FSWs explained that the community enables such behavior, and nobody talks about the ethics and the values of the society. The FSWs also confirmed that the moral fiber of society had been eroded. Before the gold panning activities, the community used to preserve the local culture. As of now, the FSWs’ daughters are now sex workers and any opportunity that they

get, they will bring clients at home in the FSW's absence. The study has further confirmed that the FSWs with daughters who have been abused and engaged in the same trade, and after taking care of the grandchild, the child also goes back to the trade, and it becomes a vicious cycle, which ultimately affects the community, wide society and government.

The women who are coming to cause such havoc, who are from outside Mazowe, have similar situations there in their home areas, and these are the effects at the societal level (NAC Periodic reports, 2019). FSWs have observed that their daughters are also promiscuous. Some are still at school, while others dropped out of school at the tender age of thirteen years, and they do not bother to sleep outside of the home. Therefore, the catastrophes that follow after these children have been abused are affecting them in their studies at a tender age and engaging in sex work. Regarding the wider stakeholder involvement, the FSWs highlighted that they have plenty of different churches in the area, but because of the love of money, their children have been tamed, and they now like to always take substances and drugs. Additionally, some of these young adolescents are raided and robbed and their belongings are taken away from them. The study, through the FGD with adolescent children, has confirmed that young children are going to the beer halls situated in business centres like Rosa and coming back very late at night or even very early in the morning.

One adolescent said;

“The greatest challenge is that the beer halls are there, and they operate even throughout the night. These children enter these beer halls and spend the whole night with the FSWs/mature women whom they meet there. These old women do not initiate dialogue with the children, but the children themselves, particularly the boys, are the ones who trigger dialogue with the elderly women, and these children would have changed their behavior.”

It emerged from the study that these young adolescents do not fear or mind anything since there will be many people there and nobody minds what the other person is doing. Some will be drinking beer, and some will be interacting with the old women. Adolescent children are allowed to be in these premises, and the age restriction is no longer observed since some of the adolescents are entering these public premises at Rosa and other business centers where there is a hive of activities due to artisanal mining. Since the money that is earned through these mining activities is not spent meaningfully but only for their entertainment (through

promiscuous sexual engagements and taking drugs), it always vanishes without meaningful personal developments.

The FGD with the adolescents also revealed that the young children are now succumbing to peer pressure, and they now say they cannot be left behind. Sometimes, these women do not have a lot of money, but it is actually the boy child who has the money to offer to the women. The research also revealed, through the FGD with adolescent children, that school-going young boys first engage in gold panning, and later they then enter into the sex work trade despite them still going to school. Sometimes, students spend a maximum of three weeks absent from school because they would have gone to Rosa to do gold panning and engage with women there. Adolescent children sometimes steal money from their parents for them to perform these adverse social activities, and resultantly, they contract STIs after getting intimate with someone who is already infected. These adolescent children will further transmit the disease to their next sexual partner since they will be afraid to go to the clinic for treatment.

One adolescent respondent had the following to say on the matter during the FGD;

“Sometimes they steal from their parents. The other big issue is I may go to Rosa and gain access to the beer halls. After entering the beer halls, as there are prostitutes in these areas, I may end up hiring their services. After coming back, I will come and share with my friend, who will be motivated to come with me on my next trip. This is what triggers more young children to go to the beer halls. They end up sleeping with the sex workers in these premises.”

This affects the mental well-being of children going to school, as another FGD participant indicated;

“It surely affects them as they will be so behind when they decide to resume their studies and this affects their grades, they end up just coming to school for formality’s sake, but their minds will be occupied with the pleasures of going back to the beer halls. Concentrating on school work becomes an uphill task.”

This finding is consistent with the results from Matutu and Mususa (2019), who observe high levels of substance and drug abuse and alcoholism among young adolescents in Zimbabwe. According to the Liquor Act (2016), section 84;

(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Act, but subject to this section, no licensee or approved manager shall—(a) sell, deliver or supply liquor to any person who is under the age of eighteen years; or (b) permit any person who is under the age of eighteen years to drink any intoxicating liquor upon his licensed premises; or (c) permit any person who is under the age of eighteen years to be at any time in the bar of his licensed premises except during such hours as the bar is closed.

The implication of such experiences is that the FSWs are hardened and, in turn, recruit young girls for sex work, and the cycle is perpetuated. In addition, the aggrieved FSWs who meet these violent clients would need revenge, and this will now be directed to the child female sex workers, and they become vulnerable both to the CSA and GBV (Abeid et al., 2014 and Wangamati et al., 2018). The above statements from the study are also consistent with the submissions by Senn et al., 2008 and Dassylva et al., 2025), when they highlight that CSA is associated with a wide variety of adverse psychological and health outcomes, including negative sexual health outcomes that impact the societal and national resources. The other implication of this finding is that although the statutes regarding the age limits of consumption and entering bars are quite clear, they are not being adhered to. However, the law is not a panacea for all societal problems, and integration is key to holistic intervention. The government appears not to be in control of this practice, which has adversely affected the moral fabric of the society in Mazowe District. Apart from community education, there is a need to design strategies for strengthening the enforcement of these laws at all levels of implementation by security agencies, including the police.

The study, through the FGDs with adolescents, also revealed that parents end up having conflicts in the household because of such behavior, since the victim is a girl child, the fathers may end up blaming the mother that she is aware of the behavior of the child and that fuels conflict in the home, resulting in GBV. The results of the parent's FGD also revealed and reiterated that the behaviors of FSWs influence the dressing of the young girls. Even young boys realize they end up being sexually abused by the FSWs and may end up contracting diseases as they may find themselves having unprotected sex. Chief 2 added that these effects spread to the community as well. Traditional leaders are aware of what is happening, and the initiatives that they suggest can be done to curb the adverse practice, including having awareness through community dialogues.

The parents of adolescent children also added and confirmed the effects at the community level. Female-perpetrated CSA has led to the disintegration of the family and community fiber, dumping of newborn babies, unwanted pregnancies, and suicides, and these will affect even the mental health of everyone involved. The parents went further to explain that, sometimes, they end up losing their children to death either by diseases or committing suicide when they feel they have reached a dead end. A child may have low self-esteem from the sexual abuse, and they are derailed from normalcy permanently. The victims, whether a boy or girls, are unable to stand on their feet, and they need the support of their parents. They lose their self-esteem, and it is derailed, and they can be misdirected from their life targets.

The study observations were consistent with the qualitative study on communities' perceptions of factors contributing to CSA vulnerability in Kenya by Wangamati et al., (2018), which established and confirmed other earlier studies that CSA is a global public health concern, including in Kenya, but there is information deficit on empirical evidence regarding factors contributing to CSA vulnerability in that country. The study findings revealed that people living in these communities perceived CSA as being influenced by multiple factors that include peer pressure, gender disparities exacerbated by damaging social norms and cultural practices, developmental stage (Bronfenbrenner,1979), the HIV epidemic and social media platforms that circulate sexualised images.

It also emerged from the Kenya study that poverty was regarded as exacerbating CSA. Minors from poor families engaged in transactional sex for social status and survival. Other community members perceived girls' dressing in short skirts and tight clothing as warranting CSA and other anti-social sexual advances that include rape. Although gender roles and relations, and poverty were viewed as increasing vulnerability to CSA, the community associated this anti-social practice with victims' modes of dress or behaviour. The researchers concluded the study by suggesting that there is a need for a comprehensive community education programme on CSA, its effects, and the rights of women and girls.

The implication of this finding, as shown by several other studies (Matutu & Mususa, 2019, and Nyirenda, 2018), is that there is a linkage between substance and drug abuse, CSA, STIs (including HIV) transmission, gender-based violence, as well as child marriages. Some of the long-term effects of substance and drug abuse include: depression, anxiety, and, worst suicide. Rehabilitation centers and community reintegration systems are among other strategies that can

be employed in communities by the communities themselves to combat these effects (Matutu & Mususa, 2019; Freire, 2012; Nyerere, 1968; Nyirenda, 2018; and Mbogoma, 2018). The research has established that there is a resemblance and a number of attributes associated with the study done in Kenya. These findings imply that there is a need for programmers to consider multiple factors when studying female-perpetrated CSA. We argue that a holistic community-based approach has to be taken to address the social ill. Advocacy strategies for all levels of community gatekeepers, including government systems, should be designed and actioned.

In their study on CSA in Zimbabwe, Mantula and Saloonjee (2016) highlighted both the immediate and long-term effects that indirectly and directly impact the physical, behavioural, psychological and social development of the CSA victim, the immediate family and the community where they are domiciled (Webster, 2017). This is confirmed by the current study which goes further to proffer long-term solutions in the form of primordial prevention. The study also supports the arguments by Abeid et al., (2014) that CSA has health, human, and rights effects and is of the view that a design for more holistic and multi-barrelled intervention strategies is of significance in translating knowledge into action. The study revealed similar findings to the study by Harracksingh and Johnson (2022), which discussed the underreporting of CSA, which is sanctioned by the local culture, belief systems and values, and this practice becomes cyclic and the society is continuously affected over generations.

According to the study, there are male and female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District who originate from a variety of diverse backgrounds. These perpetrators have negative direct and indirect consequences on individuals, families, and communities, as well as immediate and long-term effects. The protection of children is impacted by CSA. Children eventually come to distrust adults. There are also clear cases of teenage pregnancies, and even the children end up being the ones who perform the CSA crimes.

5.5 Summary

The chapter empirically presented and discussed the effects of CSA on the individual victim, the family, the society and the nation at large. The study findings revealed that the effects included psychological, physiological, economic, power, and cultural and societal values and belief systems. The research findings also showed that the identified effects have an impact on family, societal, and national resources, as more will be required to be allocated to health care.

The chapter also discussed the effects of female-perpetrated CSA on the family and the community in terms of the disintegration of society in general.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 PERCEIVED COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BY FEMALE PERPETRATORS IN MAZOWE DISTRICT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter of the thesis presents, discusses, and analyses the study findings relating to the Mazowe community response to female-perpetrated CSA and the role of organizations and government in CSA prevention, concerning the third objective of the study. The section follows the thematic areas from the study objectives and related areas that emerged. The current response, targeting adolescents and children, established by the study, is presented. It emerged from the study findings that there is a need for integration, between the communities and the various stakeholders with emphasis on sustainability at the onset planning stage of the project. The study also established that when the donor completes their program, there is no continuity but it comes to a standstill as the community cannot take up from where the donors left. Each presentation is also followed by a scholarly discussion based on the reviewed literature, and theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

6.2 Protection of adolescent youth of Mazowe District from female-perpetrated child sexual abuse.

The study established a community passive position, donor syndrome and lack of locally based initiatives with regards to interventions on the prevailing silent female-perpetrated CSA pandemic, targeting the adolescents and children at the primordial level of the prevention continuum. The district lack community-based initiatives to protect their youth from CSA, either as vulnerable victim targets or future potential sexual abuse perpetrators. There has been many NGOs in the community for decades, resulting in communities having donor syndrome. For everything, the community depend on handouts.

The NAC participant informed the research that;

“As a district we have structures that were put in place by the social welfare on child protection, and community volunteer workers who work to curb these issues of child sexual abuse, but they are not functioning, they are just on paper. These are supposed to report and inform the authorities, but they have their own shortcomings because the people who live together may be skeptical about reporting each other because the

person is powerful or is a witch. Traditionally, the government had these structures, but for them to be functional, the NGOs play a pivotal role, especially in funding and other support systems, and therefore, any initiative by the government is overshadowed.”

Regarding the donor syndrome and NGOs' operations in the district, the NAC participant further highlighted that;

“The community initiatives are very crucial, but the donor syndrome has crippled all the communities in Mazowe District, leaving them in a passive position. The belief is that someone should come and disseminate that information as well as initiate. There is a need for integration between the communities and the various stakeholders with emphasis on sustainability at the onset planning stage of the project.”

The ZHI Participant shared that;

“If the current players create an environment where they operate as partners in protecting the child, including the adolescents, then as a district we will be meeting the needs of the children. An example is that of Community Schools Education Partner, which we are piloting, as an organization, works hand in glove with all the partners to protect the needs of the children and the DREAMS project, which has been in the district for more than seven years now and has registered a multi-sectorial integrative approach that is commendable. However, such initiatives are alien and remain as outside ideas from the people who are domiciled in Mazowe, and this is a weakness on the part of the people owning the problem and propelling for the desired ownership.”

The study, through the FGDs with parents and FSWs, established that adolescent youth are future potential FSPs in the community of Mazowe and beyond, and therefore the community capacity building to involve those youth in community empowerment activities to enhance disclosure and prevention of CSA is critical. In this view, the NAC participant also shared that;

“There is a need to invest in capacitating the community through holistic media approaches that include pamphlets, posters, and community dialogues using the local languages so that everyone has access to that information and has an opportunity to provide their ideas, but currently, it is being done at a small and sporadic scale.”

Responding to the same issue of community capacity building, Ceshhar participant said;

“The religious leaders really need to play a crucial part in curbing this pandemic but currently they are not doing much. Mazowe District has multiple denominations and among them is the Apostolic Faith church, of the white garments, which happens to dominate the bigger part of the district. The area also has people from different origin including foreigners from neighboring countries like Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique, hence the different types of religious denominations, belief systems, culture and values. This has a bearing on the way the communities respond to CSA, including the related norms that are dominating in the area.”

The ZRP participant also added that;

“One important underlying factor is that the various laws are not aligned and this situation causes the perpetrators to walk free always, leading to recurrent commission of the female perpetrated CSA. The traditional leaders, local, political structures at community level and the church should channel the CSA issues to the higher offices using various routes. Even if the traditional leaders are aware of the challenges of CSA in the community, and if the laws are operating in a fragmented way their actions will always remain in vain.”

These findings are also in line with the study findings by Abeid et al., (2014), in their study that observed lack of knowledge regarding sexual exploitation and rape. The above enunciations from the KIIs show some deficiency in activeness by the communities to initiate emancipatory measures for their adolescent youth and children, primarily due to the approach by the CSOs and this according to Freire (2012), CSA dehumanizes a particular segment of the population, those affected directly and indirectly, and this distortion is associated with the history, background and culture. Therefore, those who are affected by dehumanization through female perpetrated CSA which is associated with despair, poverty, mental health, death and on the part of the perpetrator; the false generosity, should then employ a humanistic approach to emancipate themselves from the adverse practice, (Freire, 2012). As argued by Freire (2012); Cant et al., 2022 and Kruger et al., 2024) the socio-ecological model, invites the holistic approach that subsumes the public health prevention continuum series, dialogical and dialectical approaches to community awareness and vocation. Regarding interventions on the ongoing silent female-perpetrated CSA pandemic, the study found a passive posture in the community, donor syndrome, and a dearth of locally based efforts that target teenagers and children at the primordial level of the prevention continuum. The district does not have any

community-based programs to shield its young people against CSA, either as prospective sexual abusers or as easy candidates for abuse. Communities have donor syndrome as a result of decades of having numerous CSOs in the area. The neighbourhood is dependent on handouts for everything.

6.3 Role of parents, adolescent youth, and community leaders in the prevention of female-perpetrated child sexual abuse

Regarding the community response initiatives on adolescent and child CSA, the study established that there are no tangible initiatives the community has so far. Chief 2 said;

“The communities used to have desirable practices regarding the proper upbringing of children a long time ago, and these include, for example, that a child would inform their elders where they may be going, which was a way of protecting the child. Though it is still being done, it's not to a greater extent. A child may leave the house for gold panning for a couple of days and return home with some money. The challenge is that people cannot account for where exactly the money came from. They may even have been sexually abused to milk these finances. The children may end up not being honest about where the money came from.”

All the KIIs and the FGDs conducted by the research revealed that there is a lack of knowledge among the communities regarding CSA perpetrated by females. People in these communities of Mazowe have seen and heard that this practice is happening but with minimal proactive action. Even if they acquire the evidence that there was CSA by female perpetrators, they do not take the appropriate action due to the prevailing norms and values at family, community and societal levels, as they strive to promote relationships but at the same time silently suppress child rights and protection issues. It also emerged from the study that the communities lack some mechanisms of educating each other regarding the female perpetrated CSA. The Msasa Project participant said;

“The community education and campaigns should not follow the current community values. Responding to the issue of community action regarding the prevailing multiple underlying factors associated with the commissioning of CSA, we try by all means to channel continuous output of knowledge. The more people have this knowledge, the better, but they always desire to stick to their values, which is another course of CSA

in the area. Sadly, the community, including the white garment churches, also deny their children information that they are being sexually abused, and they remain not empowered on CSA prevention.”

The MOHCC participant 2 additionally confirmed that the intervention campaigns and awareness should not follow the communities’ values, which might be promoting CSA, but they try to channel continuous output of knowledge in the form of repetitive learning, taking on board the various segments of the population.

The MoHCC participant 2 emphasized that;

“The more people have this knowledge the better. This is the reason why some men feel women are undertaking masculine roles of taking care of the family. The knowledge is out there for consumption. Sadly, the community does not want the children to be empowered on child sexual abuse. The same of the white garment churches, they do not want the children to know that they are being abused.”

The research has established that there is a resemblance with a number of attributes associated with the study conducted in Kenya (Wangamati et al. 2018). The study findings in Kenya further revealed that people living in these communities perceived CSA as being influenced by multiple factors that include peer pressure, gender disparities, lack of knowledge exacerbated by damaging social norms and cultural practices, developmental stage (Bronfenbrenner,1977), the HIV epidemic and social media platforms that circulate sexualised images. This study supports that multiple of factors have to be considered when studying female-perpetrated CSA, and argues that a holistic community-based approach has to be taken to address the social ill (Cant et al., 2022; Wangamati et al., 2018; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child-UNCRC, 1989; Bronfenbrenner, 1979 and Children’s Protection and Adoption Act; 2002).

The community FGDs (parents, FSWs and adolescents) also informed the study that the delays in concluding CSA cases and the effecting of bills that relate to this social ill, and those that are related is critical to the overall prevention of CSA continuum. The study suggested that government, through the JSC and parliament, should expedite these processes and avail financial resources to enable the victims and witnesses to come for the court hearings since

some of the cases are dying a natural death primarily due to these factors at the governance level.

Chief 2 stated that:

“What is happening is that this aspect of political will, will manage a lot of things that politics does not lead the gun but that the gun should lead politics. Female perpetrators of CSA are taking advantage of the bad side of our economy and lure the children to go out of the country and into prostitution and other socially ill practices like sodomy, and they end up giving them nice names.”

The study also learnt from the chiefs, that the majority of the CSA cases are even not talked about. Chief 1 shared that;

“If the traditional leadership and other social players continue to hammer these issues, the community will learn that it is abuse and will be educated. The synergizing should be bottom-up. We should see traditional leaders taking part in many deliberations. The Chief’s Council should deliberate on these ills and what can be done. Chapter 15, section 282 of the supreme law of the land, the Constitution, clearly states the functions as well as the roles of the chiefs. Just to add, in the performance of our functions, as traditional leaders, we are not subject to the direction or control of any person or authority except as may be prescribed in an act of parliament. The Ministry of Local Government and Public works is responsible for the functions of the traditional leaders in the country. It is very clear but no one wants to do that. Everyone wants to be in control of the Chief. We must have an integration and ethics committee. This committee was to bring to book the female perpetrators of CSA. It should also work with ZACC but that is not happening.”

According to the Herald (2012) and Newsday (2022), Zimbabwe is witnessing a surge in child sexual abuse cases owing to a myriad of factors, and this research has just confirmed the statement from the media through in-depth and key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

The study has revealed that the different community perceptions depend with the local communities and the level of knowledge on the subject of female-perpetrated CSA. They want to discuss these issues at a lower level. The issues of child sexual abuse are talked about but never brought to light. Mostly, they come through social media platforms. They use

pornographic videos and show a young child, thereby luring the young child. Some of them touch the child's private part, thereby arousing the child. The silence on CSA is an important underlying factor and can spread to the individual victim's future and beyond.

The ZRP gave a strong contribution on the causes of female perpetrated CSA, tapping from their experience with community work, as shown by the ZRP participant's contribution below:

“The Community mentions that the reason why the child becomes the perpetrator is because of the social well-being of that child. The child may have been abused as a child, and the issue was never brought to light. That same child may end up normalising abuse as something that is normal. They may also take it as revenge. If the young girl is also a witness to sexual activities, she may end up wanting to experiment with other children. For sex workers, the belief is that someone is negatively influencing the young girl into sex work, not knowing that the girl may be the perpetrator of CSA in the future.”

The implication of these findings is that the economic issues, poverty, hyperinflation and the impact at the micro family and community level should be addressed by the government, communities and the wholesome stakeholders' teams. Financial resources should be disbursed through the relevant ministries to facilitate the various interventions that relates to CSA prevention, both reactively and proactively. Since the female perpetrators are taking advantage of the prevailing bad economy, the government should also avail seed money for IGPs for women and empower them for self- sustaining through socially acceptable means not abusing children. Therefore, the current research seeks to understand the gap in the social perceptions of taboos that are related to female-perpetrated CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe so as to develop a comprehensive community-based intervention strategic plan to address the underpinnings.

According to FSWs in Mazowe, as a community, even if such cases are reported to law enforcement, the perpetrators will not be convicted as they end up bribing the police agents. The mature female sex workers view this as a lucrative business of taking these young girls. They take advantage of the young girls' desperateness as some of them would have run away from their homes and parents and these women (*'serengeto'*) and mature sex workers demand payment from the young girls, who go to the extent of sacrificing their well-being by having unprotected sex with the imposed male clients and often they end up exposed to STIs, unwanted

pregnancies and GBV. All this is done because they want accommodation and a small payment of USD5 for the whole night from a client. Some of these old women have even purchased vehicles from trading these young girls. The study established that the community does not currently have any concrete strategies in place to address the CSA of adolescents and children.

6.4 Communities' proposals for response to female perpetrated child sexual abuse and the likely associated challenges

The study established that the communities have a potential of responding to the female-perpetrated CSA, with some proposals or means to reduce the problem but there are indications that they are crippled due to a number of silent factors that include lack of knowledge, norms and values in those communities.

The ZHI Participant proposed that;

“There is a need for a revolutionary shift. The community needs to be educated, and awareness campaigns should be implemented. For a society to normalize a habit, it's because they do not have the knowledge. If they are empowered through education, then they will know and take an appropriate action.”

This was supported by Chief 2 who said;

“There is a need to mobilize my fellow colleagues, the Chiefs and headmen to discuss the agenda of resuscitating the Zimbabwe culture, which in my view is eroded by other cultures, especially among the young generation. I am trying to mobilise along that track. If we do not go back to our own culture, we are doomed. We need to revisit ourselves as a nation.”

The FGD with adolescent children also revealed that as the community, they have a role that they should play to end CSA by female sexual perpetrators, but it is not happening. According to the NAC participant as a community response to ever-mushrooming brothels, which are another contributing factor to CSA, the local authority by-laws must be enforced. She cited examples in Glendale and Mvurwi towns, and mining settlements like Mazowe/Jumbo and Iron Duke.

The NAC participant added that;

“The council has the right to demolish these areas as they promised to cancel the licenses. The Police Officers were also tasked to intervene and enforce the relevant laws, but they have not started doing meaningful work in this category of work. If the community acts, it helps them to be proactive. Some people have the information but they are afraid of reporting for various reasons, hence the need for suggestion boxes at strategic points in the community.”

Regarding the participation of traditional leaders in the CSA response in Mazowe, the Ceshhar participant said;

“When it comes to the traditional leaders are not there, they come to the area as visitors and are not stationed in their areas of jurisdiction, but only come for the court sessions, and basically what this means is that they only react to the issue of CSA and lack pro-activeness.”

This statement pointed to the fact that the working relations of the CSOs and traditional leaders is not positive; there appears to be a silent conflict and friction which was also confirmed by Chief 1 when he mentioned that NGOs are not comfortable to work with traditional leadership citing issues to do with politics. The FSWs vowed to educate communities on reproductive health, issues to do with cancer screening, etc., and they specifically mentioned that they mobilize the community and talk to them, educating and sharing ideas on how to stop child sexual abuse.

A participant in the FGD with FSWs said;

“But even if our-selves as sex workers go to assist the young sex workers while the sex clients are there, we will be attacked. We must also promote the support groups where they deliberate on the issues of CSA, and for such groups they are good because they end up doing IGPs, and this time around after working for some years they are now running tuck-shops and some have since stopped being sex workers and are running their small-scale businesses on full time basis. However, their current challenge relates to acceptance by the communities who are familiar with their prostitution, as they define them. Who then will accept to be educated by an FSW, will be the fundamental question.

These study findings are in line with the perspectives proffered by Brennan (2023), whose submissions posited that the local cultures, norms and values provide a sense of identity for the

local people. This identity brings people together, and facilitates common understandings and solidarity (Phillips, Brennan, & Li, 2020). The commitment among local residents serves as a valuable tool for shaping development plans and practical action that is owned by all the people domiciled in the area. Such commitment based on the existent social norms, IKS, and commonality in purpose is also viewed as a potential tool for social improvement efforts, community empowerment and sustainable development (Phillips et al., 2020; Brennan, 2023, and Cant et al., 2022). According to the study, the communities can respond to the female-perpetrated CSA by offering suggestions or ways to lessen the issue, but there are also signs that these efforts are hindered by several silent factors, such as a lack of awareness of local norms and values, and the effects of CSA in their broadest sense.

6.5 Role of CSOs/ development partners in the prevention of child sexual abuse continuum

The study also revealed that the district has a consortium of development partners who are implementing the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) model project. The DREAMS consortium, which is operating in Mazowe and providing non-biomedical and medical services to adolescent girls and young women, does not have a component of CSA primordial prevention response.

The NAC participant indicated that;

“This DREAMS intervention avenue mainly focuses on HIV and AIDS response and is not specific for female perpetrated CSA, although the issues are inseparable. In addition, this model mainly concentrates on the girl child, leaving out the boy child. It is about whom it was designed and the approval by the donor. Therefore, the community-based initiatives specifically for the CSA response do not exist.”

It has, however, emerged through the study that the communities are undertaking HIV prevention behavioral models like Sister to Sister, parent to child communication, and brother peer dialogues, which are being implemented in most parts of the district to empower young mothers and youth out of school on critical life skills, effects of drug abuse, sexual reproductive health issues, through the National AIDS Council and Ministry of Health and Child Care and not a direct or specific response to female perpetrated CSA (National AIDS Council periodic

reports, 2021; Mahiya, 2016 and Matutu & Mususa, 2019). The model project is limited to the following HIV prevention services; HIV screening, testing, and counselling (HTS); school and community-based HIV, and violence prevention programs, Education subsidies, Comprehensive Economic Strengthening, Post-violence Care for Survivors of Gender-based Violence, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), condom promotion and provision to AGYW and their partners; Improved access to youth responsive sexual and reproductive health care, including equitable access to contraception, parenting/caregiver programs and community mobilization and norms change programs. The package of services is determined and based on the specific sexual reproductive needs of each adolescent girl and young woman.

The NAC participant stated that:

“These activities are being led and implemented by a team of development partners who receive their support from multi-lateral donors, with a specific prescription of not being allowed to deviate from the dictates of the model proposal. This implies that the project cannot be flexible to respond to other locally identified social ills like female perpetrated CSA. Neither can they cross over to another segment of the population in Mazowe District. They feel grounded and are not able to move a single step further but to wait passively for other donor resources and NGOs to come and continue from where the previous NGO has left.”

The study revealed that the community of Mazowe do not have stand-alone CSA prevention activities that are initiated by the communities themselves. The existential activities are associated with HIV and STI prevention, which are mainly at the tertiary end of the public health prevention continuum (Cant et al., 2022). The study findings are consistent with the submissions by Shepherd et al., (2011), in their discussion of social assistance, poverty and dependency syndrome that with poverty and social assistance, the assisted communities will always look forward for the helping hands and are not proactive to have themselves empowered. Dependency syndrome has been described as when communities look forward to others to be sources of their survival, avoiding at all costs, personal responsibility and pushing it to other people.

The study has established that the DREAMS project and other donor-supported community development activities are important projects in improving the lives of the local people, but

they lack some pro-activeness in community response to CSA (Shepherd et al., 2011). The study findings are also in line with the argument by Mhango (2017), who argues that Africa must avoid at all costs dependency, beggarliness and narcissistic behaviours that are brought about by the influences from her former colonial masters, which when current generations view it they celebrate as cheap resources and continue to promote laziness. Mazowe District is putting the DREAMS model project into practice with the help of a group of development partners, according to the report. There is no CSA primary preventative response component in the DREAMS consortium, which serves young women and teenage girls in Mazowe by offering non-biomedical and medical treatments. However, the study has revealed that communities are implementing HIV prevention behavioural models, such as brother-peer dialogues, parent-child communication, and Sister to Sister, through the National AIDS Council and Ministry of Health and Child Care rather than CSA interventions directly. These models are being implemented in most parts of the district to empower young mothers and youth who are not in school on important life skills, the effects of drug abuse, and sexual reproductive health issues.

6.6 Issues of transparency, integrity, and fighting corruption

The study revealed that Mazowe is still underdeveloped in terms of civic knowledge, and this leads people not to believe that females can be perpetrators of child sexual abuse. They believe that only males are the perpetrators of the abuse. The community needs to be educated that females can also be perpetrators of child sexual abuse. They are still in denial. It even starts with the terminology of the word abuse. It seems the community is not educated enough to be able to understand what abuse entails, especially to grasp the idea that females can also be perpetrators of child sexual abuse. There should be alignment of laws.

The adolescent children informed the study that their elders in the community have not acted against this sexual abuse of children. If the children are reprimanded for such behavior, they feel that they have been wronged, so they end up leaving home and only coming back very early in the morning. They added that the people in this community are mute to such behavior by the children; they are not talking about it. They have not encountered a situation where the community airs their concerns about the sexual abuse of the children. On community initiatives to curb the young people's behaviors, the adolescents reported that there should be a meeting

where elders in the community sit down and discuss how they can eliminate such type of behavior by the children.

However, such type of community dialogue meetings has not been organized and conducted; as it is their desire as young people to have such engagements. They also highlighted that they have not discussed with the village heads of the area. They look forward to organizing themselves and bringing these issues to the table of the village heads. From their experience and knowledge, the adolescent youth clearly indicated that the community is not affected, apart from conducting meetings to discuss ways of stopping the behavior of children in the community, to put to a halt to this shenanigans by parents, the school and their fellow peers who are involved for the sake of their stray counterparts, they suggested that the schools, the responsible authorities and parents should be very strict to ensure that students are not absent from school. The FSWs have indicated that the community is not taking much action to avert CSA. Society is not embracing such acts, and it is declining the existence of the problem of CSA in their areas. When they hear of CSA cases, they refer them to NGOs working in the area. The NGOs are the ones helping the children. Even law enforcement is not doing much to assist because of corruption.

Government Ministries mentioned, during the KIIs, that there must be stiff penalties against perpetrators of CSA, which resemble those associated with stock theft. Government should take responsibility for equipping traditional and other leaders with appropriate CSA response information. Well-coordinated community dialogues to harmonize the competing interests of adults and youths must be done regularly. This enables the unlocking of the current myths of silently believing and practicing in female-perpetrated CSA. There must be handouts as well on information for reference's sake. When programmers develop the strategies, their desire is community empowerment and that innovative suggestions on improvement of the response should emanate from the community themselves. It also emerged from the study, through the NAC participant, that the judiciary has an important role in planning educational sessions with communities regarding the operations of the legal systems, but their outreach sessions are minimal.

The NAC participant said;

“The judiciary has a role to play. They do have educational sessions that educate people on what is right and what is wrong. They must not just appear to pass judgment but also to educate the communities.”

The ZHI participant revealed that when the community receives a CSA case report, they refer that child to NGOs that will assist reactively with the situation. The participant added that;

“This is the only contribution of the community in terms of the response to CSA. As a community, they may end up involving the local traditional leadership. Sadly, because of the love of money, these issues may be buried under the carpet. Even law enforcement is not doing much to assist because of corruption. The NGOs are the ones helping the children.”

To enhance community participation in the prevention of CSA, the parents further suggested that there is a need for self-introspection as parents. The parents should raise children and accept that their children can be reprimanded by other people who are not their biological parents in the village and community, and this will assist on unit and community integration. The parents requested government, through the study, to allow the neighborhood in the community to reprimand the children who will be misbehaving and these laws should be reinforced by the Chief, the Headman and the village head.

A participant in the FGD with adolescents added that;

“Each absenteeism should be accounted for. If it's the fact that someone is ill, there must be a medical report to verify and authenticate the absenteeism. They agreed that this measure is not being implemented currently in schools, highlighting that sometimes other children may spend three weeks away from school, and everyone is shocked when they resuscitate back at school. The local religious leaders must be involved and engaged so that they can impart lessons to different segments of the population on female-perpetrated child sexual abuse. Parents should strive to provide for their children. Sometimes, children resort to gold panning because they lack the necessary resources. They end up not returning to school after going into gold panning.”

The Ceshhar Participant also said;

“With sexual orientations that is going on, people are becoming gays and lesbians so it may be easy for a female to sexually abuse a young girl. They sometimes influence the girl child to be a lesbian. Some of these FSPs will think that they are loving, and yet they will be sexually abusing the child and grooming or initiating her into a lesbian character forever. Society does not believe that they have active and practicing lesbians

in their area. These women have the potential of abusing both the male and the female children, and if a female abuses the male child, it may be difficult to identify but with time it will come to light. The same applies to FSP abusing another female it may be difficult to establish as well. There is a need for society to know that life is evolving, with diverse changes being brought about by technology and globalization.”

The NGOs also proffered that there is need for the introduction of a holistic community-based education system that starts with them realizing that they have a problem then they proffer a possible solution. In schools, there is a lot of CSA that includes that which is female perpetrated. Most intervention models have always protected the girl child from male teachers and sadly the boy child was left behind.

Regarding the issue of community ownership of awareness and education campaigns, the ZRP participant, added that;

“If the traditional leaders are the ones voicing against female perpetrated child sexual abuse, the community will understand better and take ownership over time. For the government to work with the communities, they must first engage the chairperson of the areas, explain the agenda, and seek how the issue of CSA can be eradicated. They then merge the ideas from the chairperson or village head and the theories from their desks in order to map the holistic way forward.”

Commenting on the marriages practice, Chief 2 said;

“The area has other Indigenous knowledge systems, including the informal education system, where children are educated on key ways of life. Currently the community does not have initiatives for CSA response, and I therefore, suggest dialogues with various segments of the population (padare). The idea is to revive the concept of padare/ dialogues between young people and their elders. Though it's a challenge to bring people together and discuss these issues, it is a very good concept. I strongly stress the point that the young people should be invited to discuss the consequences. Padare should be an initiative by the community and funded by stakeholders, particularly the government. It must be a part of the life system. Communities need to revive and resuscitate this system, through the facilitation of the traditional leaders at various levels. There is a need for modified and innovative ways of going back to the local traditions, values and certain cultural practices that promote

morality and humility. Community bye-laws must be up held always. These are laws formulated by the community which are well tabulated, and enable the local people and their leadership to be aware of the consequences of people who perpetrate CSA. This means that as leaders we must be able to nurture home grown initiatives.”

Having discussed the calamities that are associated with CSA, Chief 2, went further to share the indigenous knowledge systems that the society has put in place or that need to be revived, and he said;

“We need to respect the marriage system. People must be encouraged to marry in a traditional way. This helps build the family fiber. People are now cohabiting without cementing the marriage constitution. Most families do not have a father figure who is physically present. Cultural disintegration comes from the absence of a father figure. My wish is for the issues of rights to be addressed. Reprimanding certain behaviours may be deemed as infringing the rights of someone, so people end up turning a blind eye to certain behavior.”

In order to revive the IKS at local community level, Chief 2 informed the research that there is need to initiate and coordinate with the government from the community so as to fuse some of these concerns that include CSA response. The traditional leaders are capable of assuming this task, and in addition, Chief 2 said;

“It is possible but it depends on the caliber of people who are on the forefront. Do they have the muscle to convince the government ministries? Chiefs are limited to the senate and not the parliament so our voices are not so audible. The colonizers realized that as Africans we have strong spirituality backgrounds, so they decided to educate us that English is the only good and anything traditional is bad. This is how the actions of the colonizers also broke the backbone of Africa. These things, including our culture, need to be revived and moderated. As a Chief here in Mazowe, I have started mobilizing my fellow colleagues (other chiefs), so as to intervene on the resuscitation of culture in Zimbabwe, which has seriously been eroded.”

This was echoed by the MOHCC participant 2, who shared their observation and practice during awareness sessions with communities that;

“As MoHCC we have valued indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) as a way to aid in building the communities’ capacity or cascading information, and when we are disseminating information, we give it to the traditional leaders or religious leaders, and as the community members and congregates see the involvement of their leader, on the forefront they will be convinced and participate. It used to be done by the elders, uncles and aunts, and it was very critical. Children would be comfortable discussing issues of sexuality with their aunties and uncles. Sadly, they are no longer there. The formal education system is the one that has replaced these aunts and uncles. However, there is a need to use the schools to help curb this. The teachers should have their curriculum drafted during their training so that they are able to train the children on issues to do with CSA. Guidance and counselling (G&C) lessons are there in schools, but they are not as effective as they should be. Schools are not that serious when it comes to this sexuality, G&C including comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). There must be a specific teacher who is trained to take the role as the aunt and/or uncle in every school.”

The parents also made an appeal to government to introduce and implement many programs that train young children and even train parents to be close to our children. This helps the children to open up to parents where possible cases of CSA. The study has revealed that government is not enforcing the laws that restrict children from entering beer halls, if they are below 18 years of age (Liquor Act, Chapter 14:12, 2017). The FSWs also added that since they have the mining companies who are resident in their areas, they will engage them to assist in curbing the problem of CSA. They can resuscitate some strategies that were put in place to empower women and further engage the different government ministries to help them put an end to female perpetrated child sexual abuse.

One FSW emphasized that;

“If people are fully aware of the effects of child sexual abuse, they may own the problem and engage in some sound initiatives to put an end to it. Our selves as sex workers we do not want sex work to be prohibited. We want sex work trade to be done well and put to stoppage the practice by mature FSWs who engage and employ up to an average of fifty young girls to do sex work, and that is CSA.”

The implications of these findings are on political will to promote the values that will significantly assist Zimbabweans in shaping their future generations. If there is a cultural value, it must be repeated on different platforms. The area of governance then comes in, at local

community, local authority, national and global levels, through strengthening of by-laws, policies, statutes and conventions, including international laws, should be strengthened in terms of implementation, so as to promote values that are of importance to the local communities. (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013; The ACRWC, 1999; UN General Assembly, 1989 on UNCRC; Zimbabwe Children's protection and adoption Act, 2002). These and many other pieces of legislations are instrumental in parental protection and human/child rights values. The study revealed that the communities of Mazowe District need community education of various pieces of legislations, policies and issues to do with ownership of the programs that work out on their side.

This research is of the view that the structural model, as precursor to the object relations (interpersonal relations theory) and self-theories is key in responding to the community perceptions and response to female perpetrated CSA objectives as we see people navigating from id, at humble beginnings through to ego (rationalising behaviour) and finally settling at superego that responds to the moral guidelines, social rules and prohibitions on behaviours associated with CSA perpetration and how the victims respond (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rosenhan, at al., 2000; Camp, 2001; McLeod, 2017 and Grant & Osanloo, 2015). According to the study findings, Mazowe District's civic awareness is still lacking, which makes people doubt the possibility of females abusing children sexually. They think that the abuse is exclusively committed by men. It is imperative to educate the community about the possibility of females engaging in child sexual abuse. They continue to act in a delusional manner, which leads to their corruption and lack of moral character. The community lacks sufficient education to comprehend the nature of abuse, particularly the notion that females are capable of abusing children sexually.

6.7 Government interventions on female perpetrated CSA.

Community program ownership, government interventions, the role of organisations and government in the prevention of CSA, underlying factors and evidence of female perpetrated CSA, being the sub-themes emerging from the main themes were presented and analysed as the chapter progressed. In an in-depth interview, one of the adolescent youth shared a concern about the commitment of government line ministries and parental role in providing guidance and care to children. The adolescent said;

“Most government ministries just exist on their desks, as youth, we are not experiencing meaningful results of them being present; we need guidance and also awareness to our parents about the normative importance regarding child protection, guidance and counselling, instead of leaving that role to the Ministry of education alone, who also have their own core business of teaching. I do not agree with the issue of parents just sourcing for livelihoods for us they should also sit down with us and provide the necessary guidance. We are as doomed as those born after the year 2000 (ama 2k); we are even losing out on our Indigenous languages. This sexual abuse by ladies with money is happening, and some of the boys will never live a normal life after it has happened. The NGOs are present here and are assisting here and there but the roots of the problems we are experiencing require the local people, with assistance from government ministries. The local authority and the police do not assist on restricting young boys and girls from entering beer drinking places, instead they will be drinking with the young boys. Lough. We need a whole community approach that is my thinking.”

Newsday (2023) and the Herald (2012) report that, preventing child abuse before it starts is possible and requires Government, non-governmental and private organizations, community groups and individuals to join hands.

The Ceshhar Participant revealed that;

“The government should be more at the forefront, but they are not. Although currently the government is partnering with the DREAMS consortium partners at all levels the issues of sustainability are questionable, no quarterly meetings with DDC but mainly with NAC.”

This was supported by the Chiefs, who mentioned that the community empowering method of awareness, a holistic approach to CSA and other social ills interventions, avoids siloed approach by individual organizations (competition rather than complimenting each other for a common goal), empowering the traditional leaders through resources allocation improvement and restructuring systems that recognize the role of the chief in preventing and presiding over these social ills including CSA, are critical components to be considered. From a media report by the South African NEWS Central, the study further established that the Zimbabwe Vice

President Honorable Comrade Chiwenga called on the government of Zimbabwe to effect stiffer penalties of CSA perpetrators and confirmed offenders. This followed a true story of a nine-year-old girl who got pregnant after suspected sexual abuse, which was later confirmed at the hospital, where the girl gave birth through a caesarian section since she was too young to give birth through the normal process.

The CSOs also called on the government to strengthen CSA prevention activities which should be done proactively and not reactively. This was also echoed by the MOHCC participant 2, when he said;

“As Government Ministries, we should strengthen our activities of educating the communities about the scourge, through the various leadership structures.”

To avert female-perpetrated CSA and the resultant consequences, the ZRP participant also added that;

“The community initiatives should be enhanced through the strengthening of child protection committees at village and cell levels, which currently is at a dormant position, but rather active with frequent meetings at district and provincial levels only. This committee should educate each other and the community at large on the prevention of CSA.”

The MoHCC participant 2 also highlighted to the study that the multi-sectorial committee structures at all levels are important for the promotion of health and educating the communities on CSA and other social ills.

“Our entry point, as MoHCC are the traditional leaders, and we also go via the schools and it's a faster way of disseminating information. Technically, in the public health approach we use the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Committee (RCCE) approach, and all this work can be achieved through community dialogues. Since this issue involves women, women's affairs should take the leading role. Some wards are not represented, and they are not capacitated enough. We have the Msasa project, which takes up that role in this community. There is a need for them to show up.”

In addition, the ZRP Participant said;

“The traditional leaders are aware of the challenges of CSA in the community, but because the laws are not aligned, they end up channeling the cases to higher levels that may not go anywhere. It also takes time for the judiciary services to attend to and conclude cases, with the victimized families and witnesses losing large sums of money to transport. The current related laws must be reviewed so as to include how government can support the victims and their families as they come for the court hearings, as a way of enhancing child protection. The laws must be rectified. The traditional leaders and local government and even the church should channel these issues to the higher offices and be considered for debates in parliament. A lot of things on these issues are stagnant and yet the social ills that demand for government interventions are escalating.”

These are an important aspect for this study as they emphasize the role of government, community leadership (in their diversity) development partners and parents in the protection of children from any forms of hazards, including CSA. It is, therefore, crucial to consider in the holistic multi-sectorial net of interventions the aspect of domestic violence and conflict resolution at the family level to enable parents to promote responsibility in this area. The implications of these findings are that, there should be a concerted effort by all parties, being led by government in the fight against CSA. What is enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe about child protection should be operationalized (World Vision, 2018). The Constitution of Zimbabwe, section 19 (1) and (2) states that;

The best interests’ principle: The State must adopt policies and measures to ensure that in matters relating to children, the best interests of children concerned are paramount- and; 19 (2c); the State must adopt policies and measures, within the limit of the resources available to it, to ensure that children are protected from maltreatment, neglect, or any form of abuse.

The Zimbabwe Government has ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and is a member of the UN and the AU. As highlighted in Article 31 of the ACRWC, which addresses the aspect of the development of a responsible child with desirable morals, calls for every child to have the responsibility to help their family, respect their parents and guardians,

and serve their communities and country well, supporting their African culture and contribute to their country's overall development. Sub-themes arising from the primary topics were given and examined throughout the section, including community program ownership, government interventions, the role of organizations and government in the prevention of CSA, underlying variables, and evidence of female perpetrated CSA. Instead of leaving that role to the Ministry of Education alone, which also has its own core business of teaching, the youth need guidance and awareness to their parents about the normative importance regarding child protection, guidance, and counselling. The majority of government ministries merely exist on their desks, and the youth are not experiencing meaningful results from their presence.

6.8 Indigenous knowledge systems that relate to female perpetrated CSA and response

Regarding Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), Chief 1 emotionally mentioned the erosion of Zimbabwean people's culture, giving an example of young people who move around skimpily dressed, defining that as being fashionable. On knowledge and community education he said;

“Not much knowledge is coming from the communities save for the few areas that they used to do, which are gradually vanishing as elders die without transmitting those values to the remaining youngsters. The country still using colonial systems, approaches and syllabi, and questioned why not go for our own indigenous knowledge syllabus? The country needs to introduce another new way of educating our communities to begin to appreciate their own identities not foreign ones.”

The study stresses through the KII with Chief 2 the need for defending the local indigenous cultures by all traditional leaders, and should stand firm to defend our identities and culture, giving an example of refusing the foreign practice of gays and lesbians, CSA in general due to the love of money saying that such ill practices should be prohibited in this country.

The Chief 2 further said;

“If children are exhibiting that they are not proud of their norms, as Chiefs we should not promote, CSA, homosexuality and other social immorality behaviors in the name of alleviating poverty. The traditional leadership systems should teach local indigenous children the norms, belief systems and values of Zimbabwe. However, some of my fellow colleagues, as Chiefs, fail to execute their duties as enunciated by the constitution since they are afraid of labelling and being chucked out of the system.

There is the fear of the unknown that comes from the colonization mentality. If the Chiefs continue with what they are doing of letting it loose, the perpetrator will gain victory. Chiefs should do their duties and help restore the values, and I therefore demand that all chiefs get support from the government. There should be continuity of doing well, the media should also play its critical role of informing and educating the nation.”

Chief 1 added that;

“There should be closer monitoring and evaluation of these aspects of female perpetrators. However, as Traditional leaders we do not have a budget from central government, for any interventions related to CSA and other social ills, although there is an allocation in the form of grants that should be channeled through local authorities but it is not coming, on another positive note the NGOs and other parastatals like NAC assist us with some budget items here and there. Although the NGOs do not work with Chiefs at full throttle because they fear to be politically labelled, at international level where their funds are coming from. There are some people who are contributing to the demise of the families by turning a blind eye to problems they should be actively involved in, instead of fostering unity, promoting dialogue and holding family members accountable for their actions.”

The Msasa Project participant supported the Chief’s comments by highlighting that mostly the abuses are coming from a family member. The chances that the abuse is perpetrated by other people is very slim. It is in the family. It can be a relative. She gave an example of a mother’s brother who may be abusing the child, and if the child reports, conflicts arise. When the abuse comes to light, the family that is supposed to protect the victim is divided. The child is left unsure on which direction to take. Traditional leaders reiterated during the KIIs that poverty has and makes these children more vulnerable to abuse. Some perpetrators use money to abuse.

Chief 2 said;

“This compromises the values of the community. We also want women's rights to be taken into consideration as Chiefs, but because of the prevailing economic situation characterized by hyperinflation young adolescents and children continue to be abused.”

The CSOs, parents and the adolescent children shared the observation that, although female perpetrated CSA is adverse, it is normalized, and there is always justification where CSA by female perpetrators is concerned. Parents further highlighted that CSA is common not only at Rosa business centre alone, it's everywhere. Some surrounding farming areas also encounters the same challenges. Women are the ones who bear children, so for society to believe that they are equally capable of abusing these children is difficult. Women are natural mothers, and it then follows that all they do is with good intentions; in this view, there is a need for a revolutionary shift. The community needs to be educated, there should be some awareness campaigns. For a society to normalize a habit, it's because they do not have the knowledge. If they are empowered through education, then they will know and act appropriately.

This was echoed by the FSWs, when one participant said;

“People in Mazowe are mainly money oriented and extremely weak on social activities that enhances their moral lives. Meanwhile women in Mazowe do not accept this adverse social ill of CSA by female perpetrators, as it has been normalized. There is always justification where CSA by female perpetrators is concerned. Women are the ones who bear children so for society to believe that they are equally capable of abusing these children it is difficult, and hence there is no meaningful interventions that they can initiate, women are seen as motherly and it then follows that all they do is of good intention.”

The implications of these findings are that the Mazowe community has been immersed in colonial values which have been passed on from generation to generation over the years, being formally promoted by the current laws of the country, for example the education Act and is imbedded in the way people live their lives and define it as normal. As a people of Zimbabwe there should be a way of inculcating a sense of identity that defines them as a people (Freire, 2012; Nyerere, 1968; Nyirenda, 2018 and Mbogoma, 2018).

There is a need for community dialogues for them to realize the problems surrounding them and suggest practical solutions to them, that are based on their indigenous knowledge base, (Freire, 2012; self and object/relations theory and the SEM as propounded by Freud (1905), cited in McLeod, (2017) and Bronfenbrenner, (1979). These endeavors should be put into practice for the benefit of Zimbabwean future generations and the departure point is now. The study found that Zimbabwean people's culture is eroding in terms of Indigenous knowledge

systems (IKS). Communities are not producing much information, with the exception of the few areas where they once produced knowledge. These IKS areas are slowly disappearing as a result of elders passing on without transmitting on their values to the surviving youth. This undermines the community's ideals. The nation continues to use colonial methods, approaches, and curricula. In order to teach our communities to value their own identities rather than those of outsiders, the nation must adopt new educational methods. According to the study, all traditional leaders in the area must protect the indigenous traditions of the people living there. We must also stand firm in preserving our identities and cultures, and these components of female-perpetrated CSA interventions need to be closely monitored and evaluated.

6.9 The joint role of organizations and government in child sexual abuse prevention

It emerged from the study (KIIs with the NAC participant) that the norm is that the government should be at the forefront, but with the current DREAMS project in the district, it is leading at the community level, and they are known more than the coordinating Ministries. The NAC participant added that community dialogues are necessary as they assist in crafting initiatives, and these should be led by the relevant ministries of government. The FSWs mentioned that the government ministries are doing minimal work compared with the NGOs. The government departments are not stepping up to respond to CSA, and law enforcement should do the same, which currently is not happening. There is no effort from this government department except MoHCC, who are always working with the FSWs. The ministries of women's affairs, youth and home affairs (the police force) do not do anything concerning female-perpetrated CSA prevention. They also highlighted that, for the police the female sex workers have since given up relying on the Police. They do not even report cases of sexual abuse to the Police. The traditional leaders appealed for the government to implement community dialogues for them to realize the problems surrounding themselves and to suggest practical solutions to the problem of female-perpetrated CSA. However, they highlighted their limitation that as traditional leaders, they do not have any allocation from the fiscus.

As a way of addressing the points of community non-responsiveness, the NGOs informed the study that the VFU is assisted by the Ministry of Youth only during their outreach awareness activities, as they engage in various activities and then talk about issues to do with CSA. Sadly, it is not enough as it may be done a couple of times per year and also not targeting potential perpetrators but general population because it will not be based on empirical research evidence.

It is an initiative they have just started and being spearheaded by the DREAMS project which is led by the development partners and not government. In schools they have suggestion boxes for child sexual abuse survivors and guiding and counseling is being taught in all schools. The DSD have a social development initiative in training foster parents for the safety of the children, though it is not covering all the wards of the district. This is an important technique that is useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA.

As part of the local authority's contribution to the CSA response, the Gender Focal Person (GFP) in the Mazowe RDC indicated to the research that they receive 2% of the total annual budget, where 1 % is for junior councilors and the other 1% is channeled towards the issue of gender. Over the years, this figure has remained inadequate given the related social ills that include the female perpetrated CSA that is silent in nature. The one percent budget only allows a single awareness campaign. The GFP also mentioned that when they talk about the issues of gender to the wider community and general population, there is always a misconception that they are talking about the equality of men and women in marriage, so some people do not attend. Educated people may not even comprehend the issues of gender balance.

The MoHCC indicated that when they have awareness campaigns; they incorporate local stakeholders and implementing partners who have facilitators within the community. The community takes the lead on a reactionary approach, taking the NGOs and government authorities as the superior position of knowledge. The government, through the MoHCC, give enough information, which will then be cascaded down, and they are confident to empower others. The community dialogues try to make the community to be part of the program, and their action becomes sustainable and broad-based. In addition, the MoHCC indicated that they need more awareness campaigns targeting women through community dialogues, but the limiting factor is the financial resources, which are always inadequate. People assume that males are the only perpetrators of abuse. Even females can be perpetrators. There is a need for a multi-sectoral approach. There must be a collaboration of all key stakeholders working together to empower the community for the purposes of sustainability. The support of the DREAMS project comes in on the referral pathway of the cases.

The research was further informed by the MoHCC about the public health approach continuum of prevention and he indicated that they provide health education and, together with their partners, they work with communities and schools, giving information with regards to CSA.

In the event that someone has been abused, they offer health services, PEP, family planning, and the morning-after pill. One can present late, and if they have an STI, they are treated for the STI. If one gets pregnant and is still young, they are booked and advised to visit doctors where they can get assistance. Community dialogues are used as methodologies to reach out to the target population. Further elaborating on the role of government in averting CSA by female perpetrators, the ZRP is doing crime awareness programs and also encouraging victims to report cases of child sexual abuse. They also have tip-offs where someone can report cases to the police through suggestion boxes and the WhatsApp platforms. They have grouped campaigns to the children separately and then to the parents. They are also advising the children on how they can avoid CSA in general. They also sensitize the community not to train anyone as these could be abusers/perpetrators. Additionally, the police indicated having dialogues with traditional leaders and church leaders, during which they were told about information to be disseminated. According to the study has established that the DREAMS project and other donor-supported community development activities are important projects in improving the lives of the local people, but they lack some pro-activeness in community response to CSA (Shepherd et al., 2011). CSOs and the community FGDs, the court takes a long time to conclude CSA cases, resulting in the perpetrator paying just two beasts to the Chief or headman, and the case is closed.

The study found that although it is customary for the government to take the lead, the district's DREAMS initiative is leading at the community level and has gained greater recognition than the coordinating Ministries. The study has also demonstrated the importance of community dialogues in developing programs, which ought to be spearheaded by the appropriate government ministries. The study also showed that, in comparison to CSOs, government ministries are not working as hard. The government departments that attempt are MoHCC, NAC, and DSD, who are collaborating with community representatives, few other government departments' attempts in terms of significant prevention of female-perpetrated CSA.

6.10 Government Commitment, political will and practical implementation at the community level

The FGD conducted with adolescent children revealed to the study that the government must show commitment to the governing of beer halls and other illegal beer outlets that it must ensure that they are closed at night and that they must have stipulated times of operation. The

beer halls must have security guards who do the vetting on all entry points so as to screen if one is eligible to enter into those premises. If it is possible, documentation should be carried out to verify the age before they are permitted to enter the place of beer drinking. This area should be put into practice and enforced by the government as it is the only way CSA behavior can be eliminated or reduced. They also lamented that their age-mates are getting into this mess and are not completing their education, resulting in them not accomplishing anything in life and they end up abusing drugs and substances. They emphasized that for the district to rectify this issue and nip this behavior in the bud, the government should strengthen their efforts in all service ministries. To achieve this, the government must reprimand those children with such behaviors in the school and not only rely on guidance and counselling lessons that are conducted by the MOPSE in schools, because in the majority of schools, it is not being taken seriously. On the same note, the adolescent children indicated that their schools are not visited by outside government or NGO officers whose mandate is the conscientization of children on female perpetrated CSA and child sexual abuse in general.

The FGD with parents of the adolescent children also emphasized to the study that the laws that stipulate that underage children who get into beer halls should be prohibited from doing so should be implemented, and it is the responsibility of the government to enforce these laws. They added that they need relevant authorities who tackle issues related to CSA. On law enforcement by police, they indicated that they rarely act, and they appealed to the police to strengthen their operations of community law enforcement in all areas of the law, which currently is lacking. They also added that the children need to be empowered and petition the government that female perpetrators of CSA be dragged to the courts and face the wrath of the law so that the nation may progress well. The parents also mentioned that the government should decree that children be reprimanded by their parents. The challenge is that the parents are being prohibited from disciplining their own children, using the Criminal Law Act, 2007 and because of that, if they reprimand their own children, the latter rush to the police as the law protects them. This law should be eradicated.

Furthermore, the female perpetrators of CSA should be brought before the law. The implication of this finding is that there is an indication that the communities are not fully aware of the fundamentals in government statutes and policies that legally guide their conduct with regards to child protection and rights as propounded by the UNCRC (1989); Children protection and adoption Act, 2002; Liquor Act,(2016). This gross lack of information about the laws of the

country and that the government is lacking the initiative to provide awareness is an area of concern when it comes to the issue of female-perpetrated CSA and other social ills that have affected most communities of Mazowe District. The government is encouraged to scale up efforts on civic education through the relevant line ministries and not the development partners.

According to the parents, ironically, the government also questions why parents have failed to instill the values and ethics in their modern children, and the response is the same as looking into the current laws that relate to child protection, rights and awareness. The parent's group also informed the research that the police are not doing anything to deter children from going to beer halls and other outlets. Instead, they chat with FSWs, and some of them even hire the services of these young FSWs, and, therefore, it becomes a paradox. The parents also suggested that the government needs to introduce courses for adolescent children and avoid discrimination of the children who are to be enrolled for the training. They, however, highlighted the issues of corruption during the recruitment exercises. They also highlighted that they have seen some positive changes in the children who are trained. However, the parents are still confused about the participation of NGOs in community development activities, thinking that they are government agencies. For example, ZHI, Msasa Project and others are CSOs, and not government departments.

On this note, the parents highlighted that the confusion is caused by that the role of government is only talked about during election time, and on the ground, they see NGOs and some community members would think the government has brought development projects, which is not the case. Ministry of Women Affairs, gender, small and Medium Enterprises Development only provide projects to selected areas and not all, and in other areas, they are not known. However, on the part of the children themselves, laziness featured out during the parents' discussion as an important underlying factor, resulting in blaming the government for the lack of funding projects. The study, through the KIIs and the community FGDs, revealed that the government was reported to be working closely with NGOs. However, it is sad to note and mention that whatever they are doing is not significant, as it may be done a couple of times per year. The greatest question is on the community ownership of such initiatives, or it remains an alien language.

Chief 1 suggested that the country needs to improve its statutes, particularly those touching on social issues, and that there must be a sound integration process of related statutes. The

government still has a lot of work to do on improving and amending statutory instruments that relate to sexual reproductive issues, including the rights of women and girls. The implication of these findings is that although the government is presently available in the communities through the line ministries, the desired intended results are not being realized. Most government ministries are quite familiar with what is supposed to be done to achieve their goals, but it remains on paper and is not practical. There is, therefore, a need to strengthen the whole government approach at every level; local authorities should have by-laws that guide them in terms of budgetary contribution rather than do a thump-sucking figure of 2%, which does not have a basis for its origin. The study identified a serious communication gap between the operations of CSOs and those of the government, stemming from project proposals, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes, resulting in CSOs becoming more popular in the communities than government line ministries.

The aspect of having the relevant government laws is one thing, while that of enforcement is another, and the component of communities appreciating the presence and value of those pieces of legislation is another. The government should not only talk of the legal statutes, as they are not the panacea of all problems in society; other community interventions and engagements are important for achieving a holistic approach to avert female-perpetrated CSA. The study picked that these important related components are currently not speaking to each other. The study further revealed that a multi-sectorial approach, through the coordination of the DDC, the traditional IKS of a family and community in Zimbabwe, will bring back the value in a child and reduce the female perpetrators of CSA (Bronfenbrenner, 1979 and Freire, 2012).

The other implication of this finding is that the participants perceived the need for educating the communities to raise their knowledge on sexual abuse and its consequences and also their roles as agents of prevention. The participants also suggested the need to engage community traditional leadership and utilise the local IKS in educating the whole spectrum of the society, hence the suggestion of dialogical and dialectical (Freire, 1972). Therefore, there is a need for a practical engagement in the form of a dialogue with the community gatekeepers. However, it is not always that when knowledge is raised, people will change their attitudes and healthy social behaviour, and this is where this research came in to examine further the social antecedents that may lead to raising people's consciousness on female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe (Freire, 1974 and 2012 and Stubbs & Hullinger, 2022). This study is in support of the arguments proffered by Abeid et al., (2014) that CSA has health, human and rights effects

and is of the view that a design for more holistic and multi-barrelled intervention strategies is of significance to translate the knowledge into action.

For enhanced child protection in Mazowe, a holistic community response mechanism, including community education, should be designed and implemented with the communities on the lead. This study in Mazowe argues that interventions in the area of female-perpetrated CSA need to be cognizant of how these differences can impact the execution of community education and awareness (Kendall-Tackett, 2013 and Webster, 2017). According to the study findings, the government needs to demonstrate its commitment to controlling beer halls and other illegal beer outlets by making sure they are closed at night and have set operating hours. In addition, the study covered the topic of political will and the ineffective existing community-level application of legislation.

6.11 Sustainability of the current interventions on social ills

The study findings revealed that the issue of sustainability of developmental programs in Mazowe is questionable. The majority of the donor-supported projects, being implemented by the CSOs, are controlled by them, and the government has minimal grip. NGOs informed the research that they have heard of some social services ministries, but they are not doing any meaningful work at the community level. Instead, they mentioned that they are only familiar with NGOs that work as a consortium for the DREAMS model project.

The ZHI Participant argued that;

“The ministries have not done anything so far and we appeal for government to strongly intervene. However, through our community-based sinovuyo project for the youth, we provide resources for IGPs, and hence, we embrace the coordinators of the ministries who work as community volunteers in the operational areas as they are representatives of the government. We have done projects like mushroom farming as well as dishwashing liquid making, and these are supported by donor funds, with minimal, if not non-from, government directly. The government ministries have been reported as randomly hand-picking the beneficiary participants of the projects; the other partners and stakeholders will not be aware of the criteria they use. The issues of corruption are associated with such practices, but the evidence of such practices is always lacking.”

The ZHI Participant added that;

“To promote sustainability, the ZRP-VFU must get into schools to raise educational awareness among both teaching staff and schoolchildren, which is currently not happening. The children need to be sensitized that not everyone/adult has desirable intentions, this will create awareness on the part of the children that they should not be careful on MSPs only but should include females as perpetrators as well.”

The DSD Participant also highlighted that;

“As a way of rehabilitating the CSA victims, we receive reports from implementing agents, and in schools, there are also sessions that cover such topics, and as DSD, we also link the referral pathway. In the overall CSA response mechanism, we, as DSD, come in to coordinate the referral pathway and make follow-ups.”

The NAC participant highlighted the need to interpret to the community various pieces of legislation, those who are protected by those statutes and she suggested a holistic approach with an active coordination of this activity by the judiciary arm of government. There is a need to help the community know the statutes.

NAC participant added that;

“The judiciary also have educational sessions that they are supposed to conduct with the people and must not just appear to pass judgment but also to educate.”

According to government departments, integration has started off the ground but with minimal sustainability strategies since the CSOs and the donors have full control of the project goal, objectives, methodology and reporting; however, the DREAMS project, though foreign and not community-based, is facilitating the process of integration in a small way.

The NAC participant revealed that;

“The DDC is the overall coordinator of all developmental programs in the district followed by sectoral coordination by organisations like NAC, JSC, and DSD and so on.”

The parents from the FGD revealed that the laws that stipulate that underage children who get into beer halls should be prohibited from doing so are not being implemented, and they

appealed to the government to enforce these laws. Regarding the role of the local authority, the Local authority official 1 said,

“We implement government policies that are in line with the prevention of CSA according to the Rural District Councils Acts of Zimbabwe of 2017. In addition, we allocate a 2% annual budget that goes towards gender and child participation in governance.”

However, the GFP under the local authority clearly defined the budget allocation as grossly inadequate to carry out community-based CSA prevention activities sustainably. On this point, the Local Authority participant 1 further highlighted that;

“As a council, we carry out some workshops and disburse financial resources to beneficiary communities upon request. When setting up council by-laws we don't do that in isolation, but work with various stakeholders that help shape these practices and challenges. When we craft the by-laws, we consult relevant technical professionals for finalization and suggest amendments whenever needed. With regards to laws governing the operations of beer halls, as the local authority, our beer halls are safe, and we always stick to the dictates of the laws of this country, particularly the Rural District Councils Acts of Zimbabwe, 2017, and Liquor Act, 2017. The majority of sexual abuse cases happen in the township where there is illicit brewing of beer and it's sold in the streets by people you think are responsible.”

The Local authority participant 1 did not want to comment on the loose enforcement of beer hall operational laws. He evaded the issue by just saying;

“If councils are given arrest powers that will assist. We, as local authorities, also point to the policing by ZRP, which means that they need to strengthen their operations since the statutes relating to that are there. This should also apply to the operations of shops that sell illegal items, and the council should be permitted to regularize that and hand over the culprits to the judiciary. There is a need for a multi-disciplinary approach, which is holistic in nature.”

On monitoring mechanisms against behaviors of business operators who permit female perpetrated CSA in their premises, as council, being the authority that offers stands to various communities, the Local Authority participant 1 said;

“We have set up committees where local leaders sit down with the police so as to discuss these issues; however, the practicality and effectiveness is another issue. For residential stands, we have a housing policy. There is no structure to be put in place unless there is an approved plan. We have councilors in the area who also monitor this aspect of council by-laws.”

The local authority also proffered a comment on the need to strengthen community interventions and educational programs, since they observed that children end up abandoning school to pursue sexual activities, and abusing drugs. According to Zimbabwean laws, there is no witchcraft, but at this point, it is high time our leaders face the reality as Zimbabweans that these silent practices do exist, and parliament should look at crafting such laws.

The Local authority participant 1 added;

“A traditional healer can prescribe the murder of someone or CSA for ritual purposes, and they get away with it smart. Regarding the localised committees and the facilitator of legal issues in the council, our legal officer is not domiciled in the council but has an office in the Ministry of Local Government in the head office.”

The study revealed that the local authority is defensive about its actions regarding what is prevailing in beer outlets and urban settlements regarding shebeens. The study also established that officials in government are not abreast with the current developments in national laws and policies. For example, the Criminal Law Act, 2007- has since been repealed to accommodate such beliefs, provided you prove beyond doubt. This finding implies that government laws relating to the operations of such businesses are not enforced, which has resulted in adverse effects associated with the local adolescent children.

According to the statement by Chief 1;

“The Zimbabwean constitution is explicitly clear on all social issues of citizens. The government should know the rights of the people in the community. There is no willingness to enforce it. Our courts, to begin with, are lackadaisical. Let us nip corruption in the bud. Let us not perceive wrong as right and vice versa.”

ZHI participant said;

“The only lesson that is common is the one on guidance and counselling, and students are mainly taught that they should whistle blow when they meet CSA. This is a pointer to say the component of Guidance and counselling is rather limited. The Government

should be more at the forefront, but they are not. Although currently the government is partnering with the DREAMS consortium partners at all levels, the issues of sustainability are questionable. There are no quarterly meetings with DDC, but mainly with NAC participant, which are rather limited to the HIV prevention arena and are strictly guided by the Zimbabwe National AIDS Strategic Plan (ZNASP IV).”

Parents of the adolescent children added that there must be laws that reinforce our traditional values, and to be specific, the government must allow the beating of children so as to have discipline and promotion of moral values.

One parent during the FGD sessions said;

“The government must continuously, through campaigns, educate the community on the effects of CSA. Some diseases can be avoided if these cases are reported on time. The affected communities also need safe shelter that accommodates victims of abuse to avoid being converted to drop cases. The government can also help to provide such shelter.”

The implication of this finding is that the traditional leaders’ structure system is not connected to the systems of government in terms of their operations to assist the communities. Hence, there is no financial support system to their stream of community work, save for the monthly recognition allowance that they receive from the government. They are not even familiar with the child protection committees (CPCs) which the government (DSD) claims is decentralized and operational in all districts of the country, and this is the reason why they are suggesting to have yet another coordination structure. This further implies that the government ministries (in particular, the DSD and Ministry of Local Government) do not adequately communicate the fundamentals of community operations that relate to their constituency. This is a pointer to this research that the government systems of coordination should be strengthened not only at the executive level but, most importantly, at the community level, that is, at ward and village/cell levels, to achieve sustainability of initiated projects. The government is obliged to strengthen its coordination role if the impact of developmental projects is to be realized at the community and household/family level, which currently does not exist.

The NGOs and community adults, through the KIIs and the FGDs, highlighted that the communities in Mazowe lack initiatives for responding to CSA, and this stems from their

perception that female-perpetrated CSA is not a problem to them. They react to sporadic cases that come out here and there. The majority of programs and projects like the DREAMS, community health (village health worker program) and other government-initiated programs remain outside initiatives that are imposed on the communities which they do not own. All the traditional leaders, including the village heads, headmen and the Chiefs, only take a reaction approach, where they ensure that the legal route is adhered to, working closely with the village health workers (VHWs) who take the first step.

The study stresses that people should be educated on their rights and then report if there is a case of abuse, and this should be the responsibility of the government to ensure sustainability. The big issue is that people should open up and that laws should be reinforced. The law enforcement should do their job well. These should be paid well to avoid corruption. If they are not paid well, they may not execute their duties effectively. Civic education sessions were emphasized which should be guided by international and national statutes and conventions, and community values from the traditional leaders are critical in averting female perpetrated CSA (UNCRC; ACRWC; Children's Protection and Adoption Act (Chapter 5: 06) 2002; Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act (Chapter 9:23) 2005 Constitution of Zimbabwe amendment (No.20) Act; 2013; Cant et al., 2022; Freire, 2012). The study has shown that there are doubts about Mazowe's developmental projects' sustainability. The CSOs oversee most donor-funded initiatives that are being carried out, with the government having very little influence at implementation level since the CSOs are guided by the approved proposals. The results of the study showed that although respondents were aware of several social service ministries, they were not carrying out any significant community-based activities. Rather, they are acquainted with CSOs solely through their collaborative work on the DREAMS model project.

6.12 Summary

This chapter of the thesis presented, analysed and discussed the community response to female-perpetrated CSA and the role of organizations and government in CSA prevention. It emerged from the study findings that there is a need for integration between the communities and the various stakeholders with an emphasis on sustainability at the onset of the project's planning stage. The chapter also discussed the issues of sustainability that are associated with the current siloed approach among the diversity of programs in the district. Each presentation area is also

followed by a scholarly discussion based on the reviewed literature, theoretical and conceptual frameworks appropriately.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 A COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT MODEL TO REDUCE CASES OF FEMALE-PERPETRATED CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter suggests and discusses an intervention model to avert female-perpetrated CSA. The model is entitled; Community Empowerment Model: The model has been developed from the ideas the study revealed. The study that explored the social perceptions on female perpetrated CSA, and specifically examined the community attitudes and beliefs towards female perpetrators of CSA, the effects, and community response to the social ill, concluded with a suggested model of intervention. Hence, the study borrowed ideas from the KIIs and FGDs that were done and reviewed related documents during the data collection period. The chapter discusses the aetiological models and theories that relate to factors, typologies and effects of female-perpetrated CSA, followed by the multisectoral response concept enunciated by Muridzo and Chikadzi (2020), planning, advocacy, coordination, resource mobilization, related theoretical base, practical community awareness approaches-including communication for development concept, research, documentation and monitoring and evaluation, mobilizing community values, policy change and amendments of related laws and community empowerment.

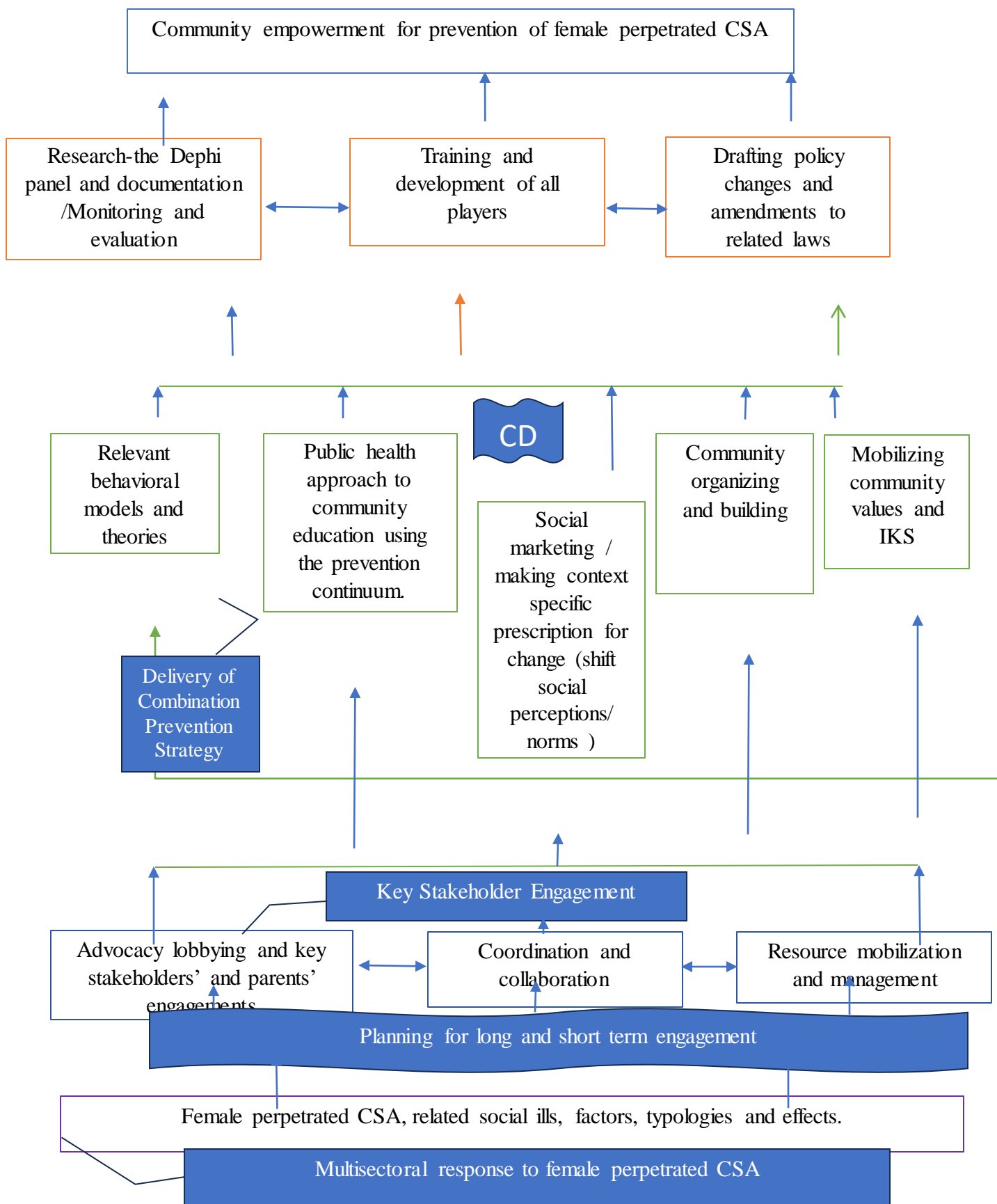


Figure 7.1 Community Empowerment Model for prevention of female perpetrated CSA

7.2 The Community Empowerment Model

This is a multisectoral community empowerment model, which is my brainchild that came into existence through some ideas from the findings of this study in Mazowe District. The model is multi-sectoral in nature because it will involve various social sectors during implementation at various levels. It is about a multi-layered community-based awareness, engagement and education approach that starts with the factors, typologies, and effects of female perpetrated CSA in the district, by the communities themselves, using participatory dialogues and moving to a practical transformative system, tapping from the local Indigenous knowledge that exists or used to exist in Mazowe community, with a strong government coordination and collaborative structural system that uses the whole government approach through the DDC. The notion behind this model, emanating from the research discussions and the documentary literature, is that the model is characterized by constant communication and repetitive learning, dialoguing for conscientization, participatory game plays, and team building-inquiry with other people, multi-layered (level) and multi-voiced perspectives of action-oriented interventions (Schneider et al., 2022; Nyirenda, 2018; Allman, 1994, and Bee (1994).

The model is taking on board the different attributes and factors that came from the research findings that include, among others; social norms/perceptions regarding female perpetrated CSA, structural systems that retards and sometimes deter meaningful progressive community program outputs, and these include cultural, legal, governance and programmatic structural systems. The study findings confirm the submissions by earlier researchers regarding CSA perpetration, who have observed and emphasized that victim and offense/perpetrator characteristics differ between men and women (although in some cases there are some overlaps (Nathan & Ward, 2002), resulting in them suggesting that all interventions should be tailored accordingly, and in this model, segmentation of the population according to gender, occupation and age, will be considered during implementation at community level, including the active participation of all relevant stakeholders and development partners (Bourke et al., 2014). As has been proffered by Bronfenbrenner (1990) in the socio-ecological model that has provided guidance to this research, the proposed approach, “Community empowerment model,” is multi-layered in nature, existing at all levels simultaneously with appropriate intervention activities for each level. Community dialogues, constant communication, and respect for indigenous knowledge are key attributes of the model at each level.

7.3 Female perpetrated child sexual abuse factors, typologies and effects

Understanding why CSA occurs and how it develops and changes over time is of utmost importance to help us prevent it. Such understanding helps programmers in the design of intervention programs, hence in this research I found it prudent to discuss briefly one CSA theory as propounded by Finkelhor et al., (2016), namely, the preconditions model theory of CSA (Finkelhor et al., 2016). Finkelhor et al., (2016) argues that a complete CSA theory needs to provide an adequate explanation as to why some adults are capable of being sexually aroused by children, why sexual desires and impulses/instinctive motives are directed towards children, and why the individuals involved fail to be inhibited from acting on their impulses. In this vein, it is necessary to explain why individuals who are unable to have their emotional needs (for intimacy) met by adults turn to children for sex, and not just for supporting and befriending them.

The key idea in Finkelhor et al., (2016) precondition theory is that the identified four groups of factors that fit into the four preconditions must be satisfied before the sexual abuse of a child occurs. Finkelhor et al., (2016) first identifies the four factors as; that sex with a child is satisfying emotionally to the perpetrator and this is termed emotional congruence. Second factor is that perpetrators who offend are sexually aroused by a child (sexual arousal), thirdly, perpetrators who have sex with children are unable (blockage) to meet their sexual needs in a more socially appropriate way. The fourth factor is that the perpetrators become disinhibited and behave in ways they would not normally behave (dis-inhibition). The preconditions model asserts that four preconditions are needed and that dovetails with these factors have to be met in order for sexual abuse to occur: 1. Motivation to sexually abuse a child, a perpetrator with a predisposition to sexually abuse a child; 2. The ability to overcome any internal inhibitions against acting on that motivation/ predisposition; 3. The ability to overcome external barriers, such as lack of access to the child or supervision of the child by others; and 4. The ability to deal with the child's possible reluctance or resistance to the abuse. It is, therefore, against this theoretical background that this research proffered the mould of a multi-layered intervention model entitled; "Community Empowerment Model". The Community Empowerment Model is characterized by constant communication and repetitive learning, dialoguing for conscientisation, team building-inquiry with other people, multi layered (level) and multi voiced perspectives of action-oriented interventions (Nyirenda, 2018). This research has proposed and adopted the critical community awareness and engagement, primarily based on

the identified factors, typologies and effects that envisage the provision of a unique philosophical principle to underpin female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District.

7.4 Planning for long- and short-term engagement

Strategic, medium, short term and implementation plans are key to achieving the desired goals and objectives of the model. Therefore, the coordinating Ministry of Health and Child Care, will lead this overall planning process, starting from the strategic planning through to the crafting of the detailed implementation plan or Gantt-Chart, which will be designed from a computer-based software system. The model will continue to consider the theoretical framework used for this study as a guide, (thus the self, and object/ relations theories and the SEM), together with other health promotion, participatory methodology assessment tools and community development theories to guide the planning process through to implementation at various levels. The majority of strategic plans stretch for three to five years. Planning for a long-term engagement is paramount. Although there is no specific time set for community programs it solely depends on the nature of the intervention. This model suggests a strategic plan and an annual implementation plan for a five-year period, which is adequate for a sustained social norm change, and is exposed to a quarterly formative monitoring system. This, basically forms the initial road map for the practical CSA prevention continuum, involving all key stakeholders to be in the playground right from the start point (Lilleston et al., 2017 and UNICEF C4D Technical Team, 2021).

7.5 Advocacy, lobbying and key stakeholder engagement

According to Nair (2019), advocacy for CSA prevention can be defined as a strategic utilization of wide means, that include media for advancing social or public policy initiatives to assist policy makers reach out to opinion leaders to understand how the process of opinion formation in society advances policy goals and objectives, shifting the social debate/ norms and discourse from individuals to groups, communities and the society at large. For the purposes of advancing the goals of CSA primordial prevention, using this model, advocacy is implemental at all proposed station levels. The use of media and other awareness strategies in advocacy will increase the society's awareness, alertness and responses to CSA and neglect. The wide media coverage and representation of CSA prevention approaches will broaden the community understanding of paedophile attitudes and behaviour, abuse of children's rights and neglect and further enhances the building of new perceptions that promote CSA prevention (Nair, 2019).

CSA response community buy-in and sustainability of the introduced practice can only be achieved through strong collaborating with key stakeholders at all levels. By so doing, the social norm change intervention, through the model, can enjoy the support of all key pillars of society. Stakeholders to engage with can range from, and include, religious and traditional leaders, CSOs, public and private sector, women groups (as potential perpetrators of CSA) and children (including pubescent- as potential victims of CSA), (UNICEF Technical team, 2021). Devries et al., (2015) share an example of the good school toolkit, which in their programming engaged the school teachers and administrators, as well as a team of members of the community who championed the program.

7.6 Coordination and collaboration with various players in the child sexual abuse prevention arena

This model places coordination and collaboration at the summit of integration and linkage. Coordination, in this context, entails the comprehensive and holistic organization of a complex enterprise or players, in which numerous people, from different institutions and organizational systems are involved and bring their contributions together to form a coherent and efficient whole in order to achieve a common goal. It is a mechanism that is designed and deliberately placed in order to make moving parts work together in sequence or in time with one another. It has also been argued that, through coordination, an integrated approach to female perpetrated and general CSA interventions using the multisectoral coordination systems reduces duplication and improves efficiency, and effectiveness capacity building of organizations and results in specialisation aimed at achieving a common goal (Muridzo & Chikadzi, 2020; Judiciary Services Commission, 2021; National AIDS Council Strategic Plan 4, 2020; University of Edinburgh, Childline Zimbabwe, UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2016 and Muridzo 2018).

In an effort to enhance collaboration, communication and coordination among stakeholders and implementing partners, the new model builds up on the already existing coordination frameworks at all levels with an emphasis on the two-pronged coordination by the DDC (leadership, management and governance) and the DMO and DHPO (technical). Effective coordination, monitoring and resource management are required by all partners and stakeholders in order to focus on the localized effects and typologies of female perpetrated CSA, prioritize, allocate and disburse funding to service providers and communities. While all

partners are committed to the prevention of CSA, it is imperative that coordination is implemented as a dynamic role and avoiding bureaucratic bottleneck to service scale-up. As such under the guidance of the DDC, the coordination structure as mechanisms will be flexible and appropriate to the local context at all levels, with full and active participation of all local leadership systems (Judiciary Services Commission, 2012; National AIDS Council Strategic Plan 4, 2020 and Muridzo, 2018).

7.7 Resource mobilization and management

Advocacy being the all-encompassing back bone of the new model, it is key in resource mobilization and management of all the needed resources at various levels of its implementation. Government, through their leadership from the DDC, must ensure that the mobilized resources are properly accounted for. The DDC must monitor the CSOs as they mobilize funding from the donor community, so as to ensure that the funds that are coming are targeting the problem at hand. The community can also assist, through building of their own capacity and organization for a purpose. Community organizing and capacity building is a process by which community group members are assisted to identify common social problems, mobilize the needed resources, account for those resources, develop and implement strategies to reach goals they would have set as a team (Laverack, 2022 and Postan-Aizik, 2022)

7.8 The public health approach to prevent female perpetrated child sexual abuse

The model proposes the public health approach of Glanz et al., (2024) and Green and Kreuter (2005; cited in Meilianingsih, and Sari, (2023) to prevent general CSA and those perpetrated by females. It entails the need to;

- a) Reflect on the diversity of individuals, families, communities and general society-integrate programs and services, aimed at CSA prevention with a strong consideration of the existential factors established in Mazowe, through this study, so that they are not discrete or stand-alone, but interconnected.
- b) Utilize the substantial knowledge from research and service evaluations.
- c) Recognize that providing programs at one level will have impact at other levels.
- d) Provide services that can address the different needs of people by addressing the grave gaps in services to individuals, families and communities from interventions thus far.

- e) Evaluate the effectiveness of preventive strategies and disseminate information about what works (Broadley & Goddard, 2015 and Cant et al., 2022).
- f) Appropriate theoretical models are engaged to provide the necessary guide to every stage of the Community Empowerment Model implementation.

7.8.1.1. Primordial prevention

The broad goal of primordial prevention in female perpetrated CSA is to stop it before it begins at population level. This research is of the view that, for a primordial prevention program to achieve the intended goals, it requires understanding of the factors that influence CSA. Policies and legislation are aimed at improving underlying social and environmental conditions, including cultural understanding of childhood, parenthood, adolescents and conduct in various institutions to prevent or reduce exposure to risk factors associated with adversity. This is a whole system approach to prevent the development of risk factors, and includes; advocacy, lobbying, (buy in of community leadership, including politicians and entire Government), community awareness for conscientisation regarding CSA as an adverse social practice/ill and the related statutory instruments, policies and intervention strategies (Ferragut et al., 2022). Community empowerment and reviving their energies for them to view CSA as an adverse social practice. Prevention of female perpetrated CSA should start, at micro level within the family system, analysing the granular factors that have contributed to the social ill, and this can be achieved by conducting educational social group work (dialogical) sessions on CSA with the family members (Muridzo, & Malianga, 2015; Rudolph et al., 2018; Masilo, 2018 and Freire, 2012).

7.8.1.2 Primary Prevention

Primary prevention measures are aimed at a susceptible population or group to prevent CSA from occurring by reducing exposure to risk or reducing susceptibility. They entail action to change social norms and the environment and to reduce victims' vulnerabilities and societal perception. The model follows the three types of primary prevention strategies which are;

- a) Those aimed at mobilization or education to raise awareness and change social norms, attitudes and behaviour (education for communities to take practical action against CSA);
- b) Situational prevention to create safe spaces; and
- c) Prevention combining empowerment with reducing risks and vulnerabilities.

7.8.1.3 Secondary Prevention

Secondary prevention measures are aimed at detecting risk of CSA and taking preventive action before it happens. The model uses the early level detection and intervention with at-risk populations approach.

7.8.1.4 Tertiary Prevention (including Restorative Justice)

Tertiary prevention of CSA is restorative justice and it facilitates individual and collective 'healing' (Kisling & Das, 2022; Cant et al., 2022). In addition, it also encompasses arrest, treatment (including provision of rehabilitation services) and prevention of perpetrating, offending reoffending, as well as preventing intergeneration of CSA. Ultimately, it provides opportunities for healing through restorative justice. Together these four stages, thus primordial, primary, secondary and tertiary, aim to prevent CSA, by reducing risk and also mitigate its consequences (Kisling & Das, 2022 and Cant et al. 2022). All stages are necessary for a whole of system approach to prevention. The model may assign ministries, departments and agencies to these stages of prevention accordingly, and hence a need for a robust coordinative approach headed by the DDC.

7.9 Delivering combination prevention strategies

The Community Empowerment Model for the Prevention of Female Perpetrated and General CSA will use the combination approach. Interventions that target different or multiple layers of the social ecological system of engagement tend to have a more positive effect, in terms of desirable results, as compared to those that target a single level (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Glanz et al., 2024; Green, & Kreuter, 2005, Green et al., 2022 and Sallis et al., 2000). Statutes alone, for example, do not suffice in changing social norms/perceptions. However, interventions that engage individuals (as opinion leaders, potential victims and perpetrators), families, organizational systems/institutions and communities, in addition to altering the legal system, can be effective in shifting social norms on female perpetrated CSA. According to Voices for Change in Nigeria, cited in Social Development Direct-UK (2014), this intervention program has successfully prevented violence against women and girls through supporting the passing of bills aimed at increasing gender equality, at the same time engaging community leaders to facilitate the spreading of messages condemning violence against women and girls at the community level (Social Development Direct -V4C Nigeria, 2014 and Rolleri, 2012). Community Awareness and education, dialogues and game plays are instrumental in the prevention of CSA.

7.10 Parents Engagement on Child Protection issues

Zimbabwe has a legal and policy framework to protect the right of the child within his or her parent's protection. These rights are enshrined in the Children's Protection and Adoption Act, the Child Justice Bill, and the Constitution. Paragraph (i) Section 2 of Section 81 of the Constitution, a child's best interests are paramount in every matter concerning the child. Children's rights include the right to health, education, family life, play and recreation, an adequate standard of living and to be protected from abuse and harm (Government of Zimbabwe Gazette; 2013 and Runyan, 2002). Additionally, community activities on education and awareness guided by policies and manuals like the Child Protection, Community Health Policies and the National Plan of Action for OVC-2016 to 2020, and the Parents-Child Communication and Comprehensive Sexuality Education Manuals provide the basis of community interventions in preventing female perpetrated CSA, if they are reviewed to improve on the aspects of funding, political commitment, coordination and monitoring and evaluation (World Vision, 2018 and Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare, 2016).

7.11 Communication for Development

Communication for Development (CD) for the prevention of CSA is a systematic, planned, and evidence-based approach to promote positive and measurable behavioural and social change. In this model, CD is an approach that will engage communities and decision-makers at local, national, and regional levels, in dialogue toward promoting, developing, and implementing policies and programs that enhance the quality of life for all without CSA. The CD approach in this community empowerment model for the prevention of CSA will use information and dialogue-based processes and mechanisms to empower populations, especially those that are marginalized and vulnerable, and to facilitate and build collective efficacy and actions against female perpetrated and general CSA. CD aims to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify their own development needs, assess the options and take appropriate action, and assess the impact of their actions in order to address remaining gaps. CD approaches and tools in community empowerment for CSA response will facilitate dialogues between those who have rights to claim and those who have the power to realize these rights (Hamann et al., 2024; Wallenstein & Bernstein, 1988; Aronowitz, 1993; UNICEF C4D technical team, 2021 and Freire, 1998).

7.12 Social Marketing

The community empowerment intervention model to prevent CSA also suggests the component of social marketing, following the public health prevention continuum, as an important aspect, suggested by the study participants and that it will be used to achieve its holistic approach. Community Empowerment for the Prevention of Female Perpetrated CSA Model, brings with it success to both targeted communities and social programmers. Intervening through social marketing, they accurately determine perceptions, needs and wants of targeted communities, and satisfy them through design, communication, message delivery and use of saleable appropriate competitive and visible messaging.

The social marketing process, in the Community Empowerment Model, is clientele driven and not just expert directed. This orientation is consistent with the principles of community organization highlighted by Glanz et al., (2024) and its approach matches the innovation development of diffusion theory. While I focused on the social perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA and the development of a suitable therapeutic model, the social marketing approach has overwhelmed this researcher's attention to issues outside individual change. The approach stresses on how communication can affect the targeted clientele structure itself, through policy, legislative and social normative change, thereby facilitating the adoption of beneficial and desirable social norms and behaviours (Bronfenbrenner, 1990 and Freire, 1974). In this model, the social marketing will identify and fulfil the demands of the people, starting where the people are. The Ecological Model has been quite instrumental in shaping the Community Empowerment Model that is aimed at averting the CSA. At its simplest, the ecological perspective emphasizes on two main options; that is, changing people and changing the environment. In this Community Empowerment Model, which is another kind of community education or innovative clientele-based approach, this author uses both of these options together (changing people and the environment) in marketing the identified desirable social norms in CSA primordial prevention (Cant et al., 2022 and Smedley & Syme, 2000).

Female perpetrated CSA is context specific. Interventions aimed at preventing female perpetrated CSA should adapt best practices and theory-driven programming so as to conform to the context in which they will be implemented, hence it was fundamental to study the community attitudes, beliefs, effects of CSA and response systems of female perpetrated CSA

in the Mazowe community as suggested by Freire (2012); Mathews et al., (1989); Matthews et al., (1991) and Bell et al., (2016). Making context specific programming designs includes understanding the social norms/perceptions about female perpetrated CSA, the nature of the system of delivering the desired message, and the social norms of the targeted social group, which in this instance, are the community of Mazowe's different settlements (Lilleston et al. 2017 and Berkowitz, 2003). These designs can be achieved through formal research and engaging local people for their valuable knowledge and experience.

7.13 Community organizing and building

Community organizing is a process by which community group members are assisted to identify common social problems, mobilize the needed resources, and develop and implement strategies to reach goals they would have set as a team (Wallerstein, 2006 and Wallerstein et al., 2015). In this proposed model, community organizing is an essential aspect of satisfying one of the objectives on interventions, in light of evidence that social involvement and participation can be significant factors in improving perceived control, empowerment, victims individual coping capacity and desirable social behaviours' (Link & Phelan, 2000 and Wallerstein, 2006). Community organization is important in community education for reducing female perpetrated CSA and related social ills, because it reflects one of the field's most fundamental principles, that of starting where the people are. Community building, as a component in the intervention model, is an orientation to how people who identify as members of a shared community group engage together in the process of community change to avert female-perpetrated CSA (Wallerstein et al., 2015, and Walter, 2004, quoted by Glanz et al., 2024). The four stages of group establishment, according to Tuckman's (1965) model, quoted by Janse (2024) of group formation will be used in this community empowerment model. The group formation sequential stages are: forming, storming, norming, and performing (Tuckman, 1965 and Janse, 2024).

7.14 Mobilizing community values and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS)

The model will incorporate the core values that are already shared in the community into CSA intervention messaging instead of using top-down negative messaging as recommended by Bell et al. (2016) and Freire (1988). UNICEF (2014) gave an example of a campaign on preventing the clapping of children, and 70% of adults highlighted that they do not believe corporal

punishment is necessary for raising a child properly. The value of IKS need to be assessed and mobilized for use in prevention of female perpetrated CSA (Nyamurera et al., 2025; Sillitoe et al., 2006; Altieri, 1995 and Nyota & Mapara, 2008). According to Chambers (1983, p. 89). The strength of the marginalized or poor people's knowledge is the module that correct, maintain, extend and transmit it. Chambers (1983) further argues that these faculties may include; CSA antecedents and effects transmission through teaching and story-telling, apprenticeship, good memory for details and observation. However, Chambers (1983) observes that this knowledge can be lost through death and on another positive note it can be continuously renewed and corrected through observation. It can therefore be noted that the aspects of observation and dialoguing are critical for social perceptions shifting in the female perpetrated CSA.

7.15 Research, documentation, monitoring and evaluation

The model implementation in all segments will be based on empirical and inferential evidence from global, regional and local studies. Documentation is also a fundamental activity, stage by stage and recording all the granules of the program in order to ensure tracking. This model takes the monitoring and evaluation component as a key process to the success of the various levels of implementation. The Community Empowerment Model to Prevent CSA describes monitoring and evaluation as processes that will allow the coordinators, program managers and the beneficiary communities to assess over time the swift evolving of the intervention (monitoring), and how effectively the program will be implemented, considering the planned and achieved results (evaluation), and whether the changes in the segments of the community are attributable to the program and to the program alone (impact evaluation) (Kabonga, 2018 and Teddlie, & Tashakkori, 2015). The research, documentation, monitoring and evaluation component will link up with the coordination and collaboration and advocacy sections in order to activate key relevant players like the academics, researchers, political leadership, and the legal system.

7.15.1 The Delphi Panel Technique

The CEM has suggested to use the Delphi Panel, to enable a sequential plan system of implementation, starting with an assessment that will produce empirical evidence and pave way for an evaluation of the model at every socio-ecological stage (Nasa et al., 2021; Benecke et al., 2025). The Delphi Panel works in situations when there is uncertainty, like the area of female perpetrated CSA response or no prior agreement.

A Delphi panel is a structured, iterative procedure for reaching consensus among a group of experts on empowering the various levels of responding to general and female perpetrated CSA. In order to prevent dominance and guarantee equal input, the Delphi approach controls the communication process through anonymous participation and iterative rounds of surveys with feedback. Though it is regarded as having a lesser level of evidence than other research methodologies, this strategy is used to produce guidelines, determine priorities, make policy decisions, or create projections (Fathullah et al., 2023; Hassan et al., 2025 and Nasa et al., 2021).

The Delphi study is useful in troublesome domains where human expert judgment is superior to individual opinion, knowledge is ambiguous and insufficient, or statistical model-based proof is unavailable, (Fathullah et al., 2023 and Hassan et al., 2025). Delphi panels are used in the healthcare system to develop both medical and non-bio-medical intervention guidelines, setting research agendas, and understanding best practices, Policy: Informing policy decisions and setting priorities on controversial issues; Forecasting: Making forecasts about the future impact of technology or other trends. This researcher has seen it prudent to use the Delphi panel technique as a methodological tool to operationalise the CEM to respond to female perpetrated CSA at different levels of the socio-ecological system, (Bronfenbrenner (1979) quoted in Socio-ecological Model (Adapted from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion,, 2020; Fathullah et al., 2023; Benecke et al., 2025 and Hassan et al., 2025).

The Delphi technique works in different sequenced stages that includes; panel of experts recruitment, open ended round one (this being the first round that typically involves open-ended questions to gather primary information and background from the experts), synthesis and feedback, where the researchers analyses the data and creates a list of closed ended questions for the next round. The next stages include the subsequent rounds of rating and proving feedback and the achievement of consensus (that stage which entails the continuation of the iterative process, with researchers refining their ratings and explanations through to the conclusion) (Hasson et al., 2025).

According to Nasa et al. (2021), the Delphi technique has key characteristics that enable the methodology to achieve its intended goals. The Delphi panel encourages anonymity, meaning

the study participants are anonymous, and this allows them to express their opinions without fear of being intimidated or influenced by other society members. Iterative activities are also an important feature. The methodology involves multiple rounds of collecting data and providing feedback, allowing for opinions to germinate, develop, and be refined. The process is also characterised by controlled feedback, where participants receive a statistical summary of the group's responses, and in turn are provided with controlled feedback on the overall perspective of the CEM (Fathullah et al., 2023).

7.16 Training and development agenda for all players

Implementation of the community empowerment model to avert CSA will also have a component of on-the-job training and development of all the cadres at every level of implementation. The modus operandi for this training will be strictly on the job, as more practice is considered, and with competing program activities, more time has to be apportioned to the activities on the ground instead of hotel-based workshops.

7.17 Review of laws and policies that relate to child protection and human/ child rights

Advocacy and lobbying for the appropriate review of current laws, policies and standard operating procedures in relation to the model implementation is critical for its effective implementation. It is envisaged that the social related statutory instruments and policies like the teacher education, parents-child communication (Masilo, 2018), traditional leaders, child and human rights laws, among others, need to be reviewed to accommodate a robust component of civic education and transformation to suit the implementation of CSA prevention activities at all levels of the socio-ecological system.

7.18 Community empowerment

In this model, community empowerment is an important desired end result of community organizing and building. It is generally viewed as an enabling process through which individuals and communities take control over their lives and environments through local power to make decisions (Heaton et al., 2024; Rappaport, 1984; Freire, 1988). Community empowerment for the prevention of CSA is a multi-level construct, involving critical awareness, participation, and control, and embodies both social change processes and outcomes of transformed conditions (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998; Zimmerman, 2000; Wallerstein,

2006; and Wallerstein, & Bernstein, 1994). Without empowerment, community organizing cannot be said to have taken place.

7.19 Summary

Chapter seven of the thesis presented and discussed the proposed intervention model to avert the female perpetrated CSA. The chapter provided a detailed explanation of the proposed intervention model to prevent female perpetrated CSA using practical examples. The model is entitled; Community Empowerment Model. The granular components of the model, that include, among others, community diagnosis, planning, communication for development, research and documentation, community awareness through dialogues and trainings, were discussed as fundamental aspects of the model.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

8.1 Introduction

The thrust of the study was to understand the social perceptions of female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. This chapter provides a summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations. The major findings relating to the social perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA are highlighted, and research questions that were posed in Chapter One are addressed. This will be followed by conclusions derived from the research findings. Recommendations based on the contemporary literature and the empirical findings of this research, following the study objectives, are presented and discussed.

8.2 Summary

This section presents a summary of the whole thesis. The main thrust of the study was to understand the social perceptions of female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe.

Chapter One served to introduce and provide the boundaries of the study. Background of the study, focus and scope of the study, problem statement, purpose, as well as objectives of the study, research questions to be answered, limitations and delimitations of the study, assumptions of the study, and the significance and contribution of the study, were all provided in this chapter. Definitions of key terms and the structure of the study were also given in this chapter.

Chapter Two provided a review of the existing literature on social perceptions, community attitudes, and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated CSA in the Mazowe District, including the theoretical framework. An explanation of the relevance of the identified theories was provided. A comprehensive discussion of the key and related concepts in the study was presented in this chapter. Key related concepts that formed the key terminologies of the study, which include

CSA, its causes, and effects, were also discussed. Sexual perpetrators and offenders (their characteristics, personal history, physical and mental health, including substance and drug abuse, offence patterns, motivational factors, and belief systems) were also discussed. Social perceptions that subsume norms and values covering the myths, misconceptions, and risks associated with female-perpetrated CSA were also part of the discussion in this chapter. International, continental, regional, and domestic response mechanisms, including policies, statutes, conventions, and prevention efforts, were included in this literature review.

Chapter Three discussed the research design and methodology that were employed in order to address the research questions and objectives of the study. This research was posited in the interpretive-constructivist paradigm. Qualitative research methodology and the case study design were used. The chapter further explained the study population, sample, and sampling techniques used for inclusion. A population sample of mature female sex workers, parents/guardians with young children and adolescents/youth in their homes, adolescents, community leaders, and stakeholders (from key public-service ministries/departments and civil society organisations) formed part of the study sample of the human participants. The six categories of human participants, drawn from four different settlements of the district, were identified and included using the purposive sampling procedure. A sample of forty-two (42) individuals and groups participated in the research because they formed part of the CSA potential victims, female perpetrators, service providers in the area of CSA and community/society gatekeepers (leaders). Secondary data was collected using review of related documents. Data collection methods and instruments considered to be objective and appropriate means of collecting valid information with regard to the social perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA were also described. The ethical considerations and issues of validity and reliability of both the data collection instruments and the collected data were explained. Data presentation for this study basically used textual or descriptive and tabular presentations. Themes were generated from the presented data, which were used to analyse and interpret the data sequentially, following the order of the research objectives. Data collected through face-to-face, focus group interviews and the documentary sources were processed using MAXQDA computer software for qualitative data analysis process. This study adopted construct validity. In order to ensure reliability, trustworthiness issues of credibility, conformability, transferability, and dependability were obtained through the use of multiple perspectives in

data collection, and a sample of respondents from various social and professional positions were interviewed.

Chapter Four presented, analysed and discussed the study findings, which dwelt on the perceived community attitudes and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated CSA as a silent practice. In addition, the chapter also looked at the study participants' profiles and the list of documents that were reviewed. The chapter examined the community perceptions of female-perpetrated CSA and the four identified dimensions associated with the commission of female-perpetrated CSA. The chapter identified underlying factors prevalent in Mazowe District, which is a contribution to new knowledge for the prevention of CSA in Mazowe District and, according to the study, matches with the four identified gender-related dimensions, which are symbolic, economic, power and emotional dimensions.

Chapter Five presented and discussed the study findings that concentrated on perceived effects of CSA on the individual victim, the family, the society, and the nation at large. It emerged from the study findings that the effects included psychological, physiological, economic, power and cultural, and societal values and belief systems. The chapter also identified and discussed the effects of female-perpetrated CSA on the family and the community in terms of the disintegration of society in general.

Chapter Six of this thesis presented and discussed the perceived community response to female-perpetrated CSA and the role of organizations and government in CSA prevention. The study revealed that the community of Mazowe lack the knowledge of strategic prevention of female-perpetrated CSA. It emerged from the study findings that there is a need for integration between the communities and the various stakeholders with an emphasis on sustainability at the onset of the project's planning stage. The study also established that when the donor finishes their program, it comes to a standstill as the community cannot take up from where the donors left and that the committee structures at all levels, which are multi-sectorial in nature, are critical for the integration process. The current study is consistent with the arguments by Abeid et al., (2014) in that similar findings have been established in Mazowe, and the same recommendations apply, particularly the government interventions and those that involve the parents and guardians so as to enhance the prevention of female perpetrated CSA.

In Chapter Seven the intervention model, entitled the Community Empowerment Model for the Prevention of Female Perpetrated Child Sexual Abuse, was explained in this chapter of the thesis. The ultimate result of the model is that the community endowments, upon realizing the pandemic, will be fully utilised to activate their own initiatives and efforts to reverse the impacts of CSA. This will essentially be accomplished through the use of a different type of community education strategy known as the public health prevention continuum approach—from problem-posing to practical transformation. This model was developed as a result of this research that looked at social perceptions of female-perpetrated child sexual abuse. The basic idea of the multi-sectoral response approach, planning, advocacy, coordination, mobilisation of resources, related theoretical base, and practical community awareness approaches—such as communication for development concept, research, documentation, monitoring, and evaluation, mobilising community values, policy change, and related law amendments—are among the model's components. It is anticipated that by combining these specific elements, community empowerment's main objective of preventing CSA will be accomplished.

Chapter eight provided a summary of the research. The major findings relating to the community attitudes and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated CSA, the effects, community response and typologies are highlighted and followed by conclusions derived from the research findings. Recommendations, my contributions to the board of knowledge and areas for further research are also outlined in this chapter.

8.3 Conclusions

The section presents the conclusions of the study. These conclusions are based on the objectives as outlined in Chapter One, the themes and sub-themes that match the objectives and some key related areas that emerged from the data collection process. The key sub-themes discussed in this conclusive section of the thesis include evidence of female perpetrated CSA, nature of FSPs, IKSs and the cycle of sexual abuse as an underlying factor to CSA.

8.3.1 Community attitudes and beliefs on female perpetrators of child sexual abuse in Mazowe

The first objective was concerned with the community attitudes and beliefs on female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe. It has emerged from the study the attitudes and beliefs of the

people, as they interact in social groups, is shaped, diffused and ultimately altered is essential in preventing female-perpetrated CSA. The study further confirmed that community attitudes, beliefs, values and perceptions are linked, that includes corruption and bribing, and together, they form social norms that are shared and exist within social groups and are maintained through the group's approval and/or disapproval, and there is this interactive process that applies to the perpetration of CSA by females. The study has established that the silent CSA perpetrated by females is happening and that the communities have sound and clear information about what is prevailing than the professionals, and they do not condone such a behavior.

This is consistent with the submissions by Clements et al. (2014), which revealed the same worrying outcomes from this perception that many paedophilia crimes committed by women may remain unreported due to society's view of such women and their victims. Under the community attitudes and beliefs regarding female-perpetrated CSA, the study confirmed the four factors that are associated with female-perpetrated CSA; these are symbolic, economic, power and emotional dimensions. This is consistent with an examination and interpretation of a qualitative study conducted in rural Tanzania by Abeid et al. (2014), who proposed four aspects of gender relations/dimensions that are connected to women abusing their sexual positions. The study supports the argument by Abeid et al. (2014) in that the identified factors are instrumental in this current study because they assisted in examining the depth of minute factors that surround female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe, as this implies that these factors are a common feature in the district communities that are affected by female perpetrated CSA.

8.4 The effects of child sexual abuse in Mazowe

The second objective posed was: What are the effects of CSA in Mazowe? This study showed that CSA has health and rights effects, at personal victim, family, community and ultimately affect the economic and social welfare of a nation. The study is of the view that a design for a more holistic and multi-barreled intervention strategy is of significance in translating the knowledge into action. The study revealed that CSA perpetrated by females brings about much disharmony, and family disintegration, while accusations also come into play. There will also be a lot of mistrust and manifestation conflicts. Participants also believed that radical social change due to globalisation and technological advancement, substance and drug abuse and descriptive social norms/perceptions are key in the cycle of commissioning of female perpetrated CSA, their effects and the ultimate intergenerational challenges.

The study observations were consistent with Collin-Vezina et al.'s (2013) findings. The majority of the time, issues of CSA are not discussed openly and are kept under the carpet, resulting in cyclic recurrence, where the perpetrators are not apprehended (Jewkes et al., 2002; Collin-Vezina et al., 2013). These scholars presented the traumatic experience of CSA as one of the risk factors in the development of a broad array of mental health problems affecting both the current and future well-being of victims. This is also in line with the WHO (2003) observation that for all humanity, mental, physical and social health are closely interwoven and important strands of life. The understanding of the phenomenon from this perspective provides social practitioners with the significance that mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of individuals, communities and societies, as propounded by Freud (1905), cited in McLeod (2017), and Bronfenbrenner (1979).

8.5 Mazowe community's response to female perpetrators of child sexual abuse

The third objective related to how the community of Mazowe responded to female perpetrators of CSA. Results of the study revealed that there is a lack of knowledge among the communities regarding the prevention of CSA perpetrated by females. People in these communities of Mazowe have seen and heard that this practice is happening, but with minimal proactive action, particularly for the adolescent youth. The role of parents, adolescent youth, and community leaders in the prevention of female-perpetrated child sexual abuse was not observed by the study. The government and joint interventions with CSOs are minimal; the study also established issues of corruption and bribery, with minimal sustainability, transparency, and integrity. This study is of the view that the structural model, as precursor to the object relations (interpersonal relations theory) and self-theories is key in responding to the community perceptions and response to female perpetrated CSA objectives as we see people navigating from id, at humble beginnings through to ego (rationalising behaviour) and finally settling at superego that responds to the moral guidelines, social rules and prohibitions on behaviours associated with CSA perpetration and how the victims respond.

This study argues that the interventions in the area of female-perpetrated CSA need to be cognisant of how these differences can impact the execution of community education and awareness so as to enhance child protection in the Mazowe District. Parents-child communication is an important aspect of community awareness and empowerment (Cant et al., 2022). The study, findings are in line with the government legal framework and the international conventions that talks about commitment to strengthening the interventions

regarding CSA in the country, through implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013; Criminal Law [Codification and Reform] Act [Chapter 9:23]), 2005; ACRWC, 1999; CRB-World Vision, 2018, and UNCRC, 1989). The study has also argued that the greatest challenge when it comes to attaining the UNCRC and ACRWC international agreements in Zimbabwe is determining where the country is on the journey towards attaining them. The study, therefore, concludes that for Zimbabwe to measure progress, there is a need for a clear starting point, an initial state, and the means of measuring how far the nation has covered and the remainder of the journey to the attainment of the goals (UNCRC, 1989 and ACRWC, 1999). The research aligns with the findings of Abeid et al. (2014), who proposed that unfavourable social norms perpetuate sexual abuse of women and children and prevent them from accessing support services. While societal and cultural standards must change in order to prevent sexual abuse, addressing the issues raised might encourage people to seek help and enhance the care given to victims of sexual abuse. The research further argued and concluded that there should be a clear link between the legal framework and the various aspects of social practice through an integrated sustainable civic education that stems from the community or localised knowledge base or systems of socialization, and is permanently assigned to a ministry for effective coordination and implementation (World Vision, 2018).

8.6 Community empowerment model for the prevention of child sexual abuse

The last objective focused on the development of a holistic intervention model that can be used to reduce cases of CSA in the Mazowe District. The discussed Community Empowerment Model is an all-encompassing, multi-barrelled and holistic intervention approach to avert CSA at various ecological levels, that is, one characterized by a multi-sectoral response mechanism, comprehensive strategic, annual plans and a monitoring system, including strategic CSA information. Approaches for implementing the holistic interventions to female perpetrated CSA community include, among others, advocacy, communication for development, participatory methods (Slocum-Bradley, 2003 and Srinivasan, 1992). These also include a combination of prevention of female-perpetrated CSA and community dialogues. The following attributes are instrumental in the implementation of the model; resource mobilisation and management, mobilising community values and IKS, drafting policy changes and amendments, training and development for all segments, research, documentation and strategic information management (monitoring and evaluation), relevant models and theories, the public health approach-prevention continuum, social marketing, stakeholder engagement and

coordination, advocacy and lobbying. The mentioned model components facilitate the process of community empowerment in preventing CSA. It is thus, concluded that the mentioned various step-by-step granular components of the intervention model should culminate in the achievement of community empowerment to avert female-perpetrated CSA (Cant et al., 2022 and Smedley & Syme, 2000).

8.7 Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered based on the study findings;

8.7.1 Ministry of Health and Child Care

In order to achieve the aspect of community empowerment in preventing female-perpetrated CSA, which is highlighted in the intervention model (chapter seven), this research recommends that the technical coordination and implementation management of the model should be directed to the MoHCC, and specifically managed by the District Medical Officer (DMO), with the Health Promotion Officer being on the shop floor for managing the various activities by the diverse implementation team. This submission is based on study findings relating to the existing social norms and perceptions regarding female perpetrated CSA and the associated antecedents that is the behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and moral judgements about those behaviours considered or defined as either desirable or undesirable.

This research has established that in Mazowe District, there is no direct and specific intervention that is aimed at females and /or the general perpetrated CSA despite the views by the community that this social ill exists and is affecting all levels of the population. The current intervention activities are not linked to each other, and the disintegrated approach has always resulted in the failure to achieve the desired goals. It is anticipated that the MoHCC, Health Promotion Unit, will achieve the area of integration of various program components at various socio-ecological levels. The research, being a base line study that is aimed at understanding the social perceptions on CSA female perpetrators in various social settings of Mazowe, community perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA have been an important variable to study as they affect the accurate design of interventions.

8.7.2 Ministry of Local Government and Public Works

For the purposes of ensuring robust leadership on the model implementation, this study recommends that the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, through the District Development Coordinator (DDC), assumes the coordination role, and the Local District Office of the President and Cabinet, leading the overall coordinative and collaborative function under the guidance of the Permanent Secretary for Provincial and Devolution Affairs. The recommendation is based on the existing governance structures, which places the DDC at the summit of leading all district development initiatives. Therefore, localised central government multi-sectorial coordination and collaborative structures initiate, implement and manage a strategic, sustainable and based on IKS, a community-oriented holistic program that addresses female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe. This recommendation is based on the Zimbabwean experience of interventions on other social ills and diseases like HIV, multi-sectorial response to substance and drug abuse and Gender Based Violence (GBV) by the National AIDS Council, the DSD and the Judicial Service Commission, who have, over the past decades, emphasized the multi-sectorial approach to community-based programs to realise sustainability. Zimbabwe should consider establishing a permanent Government mechanism at the national level for consulting on matters relating to policy development and implementation related to child protection with relevant NGOs and children themselves.

The study in Mazowe District confirms the recommendation proffered by the CRB Report that Zimbabwe need to adopt a more proactive approach and invest in its own resources to develop adequate response mechanisms and capacity to protect children from CSA (World Vision, 2018). In Zimbabwe, there is a significant gap between policy and implementation, and this shows that the country is in the right direction in terms of laws and policies to protect children from all forms of abuse. However, the gap indicates that the country is not doing well on the implementation of commitments to the UNCRC. Therefore, Zimbabwe needs to improve on the other weak dimensions to meet its commitment to the article 19 of the UNCRC.

The leadership and coordinative role of the DDC in these programs will lead the government to attain the ratified international and regional conventions and the local laws (Muridzo and Chikadzi, 2020). Conversely, the present position of the DDC, who is said to be the coordinator, has a coordination role and energy that is skewed towards governance activities lacking on socially based interventions. It is anticipated that this recommendation will dovetail well with the mentioned whole-government approach, which is currently still on paper and

mentioned in meetings, with minimal practice. The DDC is the central figure of government and has the power and authority to perform the coordination, leadership and collaborative function, bringing together all players from government line ministries, researchers, parastatals, CSOs, business community, and the community at large, as a consortium in pursuance of the integrated and holistic multi-sectorial response approach to female perpetrated CSA (Muridzo et al., 2021).

8.7.3 Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

The study recommends that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education lead the process of reviewing the education curriculum and policy on teacher training to include specialized teacher training in the roles of uncles (*sekuru*), and aunts (*tete*), and integrate them within the current guidance and counselling courses, which need to be strengthened in all schools. The recommendation will strengthen the role of MOPSE in pupils' attendance and discipline monitoring systems to avoid unnecessary movements of students during lesson time. It has emerged in the study that the guidance and counselling program in the schools under MOPSE are not yielding the desired results so far at the population or society level. The study made reference to the colonial intergenerational effects of the erosion of local culture and values. The findings showed that there is an erosion of Zimbabwean people's culture, giving an example of young people who move around skimpily dressed, defining that as being fashionable.

The study also revealed that there is a cycle of sexual abuse, which has been identified as an important antecedent; someone may have been abused during their childhood, and their self will always inform them to revenge. Those yester decade victims then become perpetrators of CSA themselves. Sometimes, it is due to a sense of hatred, which stems from them not having their biological parents (Muridzo, 2017). This is consistent with the study's theoretical framework, self and object relations theories, and the socio-ecological model that have assisted in the structuring of the research (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This gross lack of information about the laws of the country and the government's lack the initiative to provide awareness is an area of concern when it comes to the issue of female-perpetrated CSA and other social ills that have affected most communities of Mazowe District (Freire, 1974 and Children Protection and Adoption ACT, 2002 and The Liquor Act, 2016).

8.7.4 Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion

The study recommends financial and technical support from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment Promotion, which points to the government commitment, political will, and practical implementation of the CSA prevention model at the community level, which is directed to the traditional leadership from the village heads, headmen, and chiefs. This recommendation is based on the recommendations from earlier studies that proffered the ideas of the government to strengthen financial support to line ministries to uphold child welfare and protection intervention activities and to deliver on its commitment to the agreed dictates of the UNCRC. The recommendation is also based on the identified need to eliminate the inefficiencies and lack of resources in the justice system that have always resulted in extremely low conviction rates of perpetrators of CSA, causing the community to end up losing confidence in the justice system. Under service provision, there is a need to pay attention to providing services that aim at significantly reducing the prevalence of CSA, which includes the vulnerable children living in poverty.

The study has concluded that traditional leaders have several initiatives for use to conscientise the community regarding CSA. Conscientization should start with posing the problem by the communities themselves, then suggest ways of solving them, and then, as traditional leaders, inform the communities about the dangers of CSA through dialogic community meetings; however, the traditional leadership has been let down by the media and the entire government system's current approach (Freire, 1974 and 2012). The study also observed that the law is not a panacea for all societal problems and that integration is key to holistic intervention that subsumes a monitoring and evaluation component (Kabonga, 2018). However, it also emerged from the study that in cases of convicted sexual offenders being breadwinners, the government, through the DSD, should set aside a budget for the care of the child victims and/or other children to deter case withdrawals, which are often based on economic considerations (Judicial Service Commission, Zimbabwe, 2012).

8.7.5 Judicial Service Commission and the Zimbabwe Republic Police-Victim Friendly Unit

This study recommends to the Judicial Service Commission and the Zimbabwe Republic Police-Victim Friendly Unit, collaborating with the MoHCC, to lead the capacity building of

local community leadership structures, adopting a dialogical and dialectical community education system for the purposes of translating knowledge into action that is education for community empowerment and transformation and the achievement of the desired injunctive social norms that relate to the prevention of female perpetrated CSA in Mazowe District.

With regards to community knowledge of paedophilia prevention, the study revealed that not much knowledge is coming from the communities save for the few areas that they used to do, which are gradually vanishing as elders die without transmitting those values to the remaining youngsters, and the young people continue to adopt what the global community is advertising (Abeid et al., 2014 and Wangamati et al., 2018). The study is in consistence with the submissions by Freire (1974) and Slocum-Bradley (2003) regarding the use of participatory methods of community education. The study, therefore, suggested that the country needs to introduce another new way of educating the communities to begin to appreciate their own identities and take smaller portions of the foreign ones through community empowerment. Statutes and policies are important to guide all systems of humanity; however, they do not suffice in changing social norms/perceptions on their own (Glanz et al., 2024; Green, & Kreuter, 2005; Green et al., 2022 and Sallis et al., 2000).

8.8 The thesis' contribution to the board of knowledge

The study explored the various attributes of social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe and managed to proffer some practical suggestions for prevention that touch on a multiplicity of societal micro-systems. The study revealed several variables that are key to a holistic intervention program. The KIIs and the FGDS showed that qualitative methodology is key in interrogating the silent social aspect of how people live and interact. The study further shows systematic approaches that built a strong system of inculcating a sense of ownership among the various segments of the populace.

The study, therefore, suggested that the country needs to introduce another new way of educating the communities to begin to appreciate their own identities and take smaller portions of the foreign ones. This is an intervention model to prevent female-perpetrated paedophilia at the population level that has the possibility of influencing the systems of government and CSO operations, together with the affected communities, to produce meaningful outcomes in all their work. Further, the study developed and proposed the adoption and use of the following variables: community diagnosis and conscientisation, cross-sectional community awareness

through the use of dialogues, use of participatory methods of community education (Slocum-Bradley, 2003), coordination of various multi-players in the community development arena, and monitoring and evaluation activities.

In this model, the parent and technical ministry, the Ministry of Health and Child Care, and the overall coordinating Ministry of Local Government and Public Works, and the key stakeholders, are obliged to produce periodic reports that feed into one reporting stream, and likewise, the DDC should provide a progress report to all stakeholders and Implementing Partners (IPs), including traditional leaders, OPC and district heads of ministries, parastatals and agencies. In these coordination meetings, it must be emphasized by the DDC that the substantive district head is the one to attend unless a valid excuse has been presented and approved by the DDC before such a meeting.

8.9 Areas for further research

The research was carried out to explore the social perceptions of female perpetrators of CSA in the Mazowe District of Zimbabwe. In order to achieve this, the research specifically examined the community attitudes and beliefs towards female perpetrators of CSA, determined the effects of CSA at various levels, analysed the current community response mechanisms, and developed an appropriate model that can be used to reduce cases of CSA. The research recommends the collection of sex-disaggregated data on CSA, in general, and that being perpetrated by females, and childhood violence in general, and female-perpetrated paedophilia, particularly through community and population-based surveys using mixed methods of research. It is therefore recommended that further research, at much larger scales that relate to other attributes, and are linked to the committing of female perpetrated CSA, like substance and drug abuse, which has not been included in this study, be undertaken.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure 1: Authority seeking to carry out the research

 **BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION**

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF PEACE & GOVERNANCE
Dr D Makwerere - CHAIRPERSON
DPhil (Durban)
Cell: +263 772 596 562
+263 719 596 562

P Bag 1020
Bindura, Zimbabwe
Office: 066210 - 6229
E-mail: dmakwerere@buse.ac.zw

30 June 2023

The Permanent Secretary
Provincial Affairs and Devolution
Mashonaland Central Province

Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MAZOWE DISTRICT

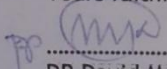
Title of Research: Social perceptions on Women as perpetrators of child sexual abuse in Mazowe district, Mashonaland Central province of Zimbabwe.

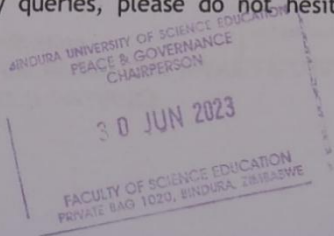
I would appreciate your cooperation with the above mentioned PHD research to be undertaken in Mazowe District. The research project will be undertaken by David Nyamurera (R943387R), a PHD candidate in the Department of Peace and Governance at Bindura University of Science Education.

The study seeks to understand the societal perceptions related to women who commit child sexual abuse when they are expected to be nurturers and caregivers. The research project will be conducted through administered key informant interviews and Focus Group Discussions which are designed to take a maximum of 30 to 60 minutes. The targeted key participants include Chief Chiweshe, Zimbabwe Republic Police Victim Friendly Unit, Resident Magistrate, Department of Social Services, and District Nursing Officer. District heads of the following NGOs will also be interviewed-Ceshhar, Justice for Children Trust, and Msasa Project. Focus Group Discussions will target sex workers, parents/guardians, and children.

The information that the participants will be asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise their positions or those of other participants. All the responses will be strictly confidential, all replies are anonymous and no individual will be named in any part of the report of the research. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed.

Your permission will be greatly appreciated as this will facilitate the success of the research. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

DR David Makwerere



"Promoting Science for Human Development"

Annexure 2: Authority seeking

Bindura University of Science Education

Department of Peace and Governance

P. Bag 1020

Bindura,

Zimbabwe

Tel +263 66 2106229/+263772 887591/+263 712 913 179

The Permanent Secretary

Mashonaland Central Provincial and Devolution Affairs

Mutungagore Building, Bindura.

Ref: Request for permission to carry out research in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central province.

Dear Mr Maregere

Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

I would appreciate your cooperation with the above-mentioned research project to be undertaken in the Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe.

The attached Interview guides are part of the Doctoral degree research project aimed at understanding the social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District, in a social environment where society expects females to be nurturers and caregivers of these children and generally to be on the fore of protecting this category of the population, the social structural system appears to be condoning the ill practice. The research is, therefore, important, especially at this time when the country is grappling with CSA

(including substance and drug abuse, which is a related social illness) among the adolescent youth as victims and an emerging issue of female perpetrators in Zimbabwe society.

The research project will be conducted mainly through Key Informants Interviews (designed to take a maximum of 30 to 45 minutes) and Focus Group Discussions (taking 45 to 60 minutes per FGD). The respondents will be comprised of the District Social Development participant , District Victim Friendly Unit participant , District Health Promotion participant 2 , Resident District Magistrate-JSC, Chief 2, and 3 participants from Civil Society Organizations (Ceshhar, Msasa Project and ZHI organization). Focus Group Discussions will also be conducted with 3 groups from the community: the adolescent youth (aged 15 to 18 years), Parents/Guardians and Female Sex Workers. The information that the respondents are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise their positions and social status or those of other respondents. Any information to be provided will be kept in confidence and used solely for the purposes of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed.

I thank you so greatly for your assistance in the completion of my research project.

Yours sincerely

MR D. NYAMURERA

PhD Research Candidate, Department of Peace and Governance, Bindura University of Science Education.

e-mail: dnyamurera@gmail.com

Annexure 3: Response and permission one.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND CABINET
MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE

TEL: (066210) 6971/ 7598

All communications should be
addressed to the Secretary for
Provincial Affairs and
Devolution



Secretary for Provincial Affairs and
Devolution
P.O Box 300
1st Floor Mutungagore
567 Thurlows Avenue
BINDURA

10 July 2023
The District Development Coordinator
Mazowe District


**PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MAZOWE DISTRICT
FOR NYAMURERA DAVID ID NO 77-000662W42 A PHD STUDENT AT BINDURA
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION IN MAZOWE DISTRICT**

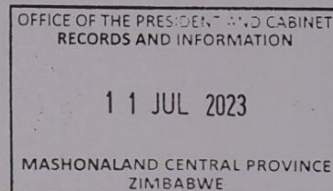
The above subject matter refers.

Permission has been granted to Nyamurera David a PhD student in the Department of Peace and Governance at Bindura University to carry out research in Mazowe district. The focus of the research is on '*Social perceptions on Women as perpetrators of child sexual abuse in Mazowe district*'. The topic requires him to use primary documents and to carry out focus group discussions and oral interviews with relevant key informants. Hence, your assistance and cooperation will be greatly appreciated as this will facilitate the success of his research project.

Please note that, the student is strongly obliged to adhere to all ethical expectations during the course of the research and as his research is purely for academic purposes only.

Thank you.

PP 
C. Chiringa
Director Provincial Coordination
FOR THE SECRETARY FOR PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS & DEVOLUTION
MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE



Annexure 4: Response and permission two.

MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS.



TEL: (0375) 2262/3

FAX: (0375) 2484

All communications should be addressed
to the District Administrator

ZIMBABWE

REF:

THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR
MAZOWE DISTRICT
P O BOX 100
CONCESSION

12 July 2023

To whom it may concern

PERMISSION TO CARY AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MAZOWE DISTRICT FOR NYAMURERA DAVID ID NR 77-000662-W-42 A PHD STUDENT AT BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION IN MAZOWE DISTRICT

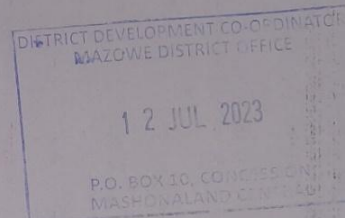
The above mentioned is a (PHD student) at the aforementioned University. He wants to carry out a research on "Social perceptions on Women as perpetrators of child sexual abuse in Mazowe District". In his research he wants to interface with Traditional leaders, community leadership, health personnel, victim friendly officers and any relevant persons necessary for his research to be successful.

May you please assist him in his endeavor.

M. Kadaira

District Development Coordinator.

Mazowe



Annexure 5: Permission seeking (JSC)

Bindura University of Science Education
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
Department of Peace and Governance
P. Bag 1020
Bindura
Zimbabwe
Tel +263 66 2106229/+263772 887591/+263 712 913 179

20 July 2023

The Chief Magistrate.

JSC Rotten Row Court,
Harare.

Dear Sir/Madam

Ref: Request for permission to carry out a key informant interview with the Mazowe District Resident Magistrate, Mashonaland Central Province, based on a research entitled: Social Perceptions on Female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

I would appreciate your cooperation with the above-mentioned research project to be undertaken in the Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe.

The attached Interview guide is part of the Doctoral degree research project aimed at understanding the social perceptions on female perpetrators of CSA in Mazowe District, in a social environment where society expects females to be nurturers and caregivers of these children and generally to be on the fore of protecting this category of the population, the social structural system appears to be condoning the ill practice. The research is, therefore, important, especially at this time when the country is grappling with CSA (including substance and drug abuse, which is a related social illness), among the adolescent youth as victims and an emerging issue of female perpetrators in Zimbabwe society.

The research project was conducted mainly through Key Informants Interviews (designed to take a maximum of 30 to 45 minutes) and Focus Group Discussions (taking 45 to 60 minutes per FGD). The respondents comprised of the District Social Development participant , District

ZRP participant, the NAC participant, Gender focal person-Mazowe RDC, Local Authority participant 1, MOHCC participant 2, MOHCC participant 1, Chief 2, Chief 1- Chairman of the Provincial chiefs' council, 3 Officers from Civil Society Organizations (Ceshhar, Msasa Project and Zimbabwe Health Interventions-ZHI). Focus Group Discussions will also be conducted with 3 groups from the community and these are the adolescent youth (aged 15 to 18 years), Parents/Guardians and Female Sex Workers. The information that the respondents are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise their positions and social status or those of other respondents. Any information to be provided will be kept in confidence and used solely for the purposes of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed.

Attached please find the permission request letter from the Bindura University of Science Education, responses from the Permanent Secretary for the Mashonaland central provincial and devolution affairs and the District development Coordinator for Mazowe. I have also attached my interview guide for the Resident Magistrate, as one of my key informants in the research for your perusal.

I thank you so greatly for your assistance in the completion of my research project.

Yours sincerely



MR DAVID NYAMURERA

PhD Research Candidate, Department of Peace and Governance, Bindura University of Science Education.

e-mail: dnyamurera@gmail.com or dnyamurera@nac.org.zw

Annexure 6: Response from JSC

Your Reference:
Our Reference:
Telephone: [0]242 772995/6
Fax:



CHIEF MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE
JUDICIAL SERVICE COMMISSION
P.O. BOX CY535
CAUSEWAY
ZIMBABWE

26 July 2023

Bindura University of Science Education
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities
Department of Peace and Governance
P. Bag 1020
Bindura



Att: Mr David Nyamurera

RE: RESPONSE TO A STUDY RESEARCH: SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS ON FEMALE PERPETRATORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN MAZOWE DISTRICT: MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE.

The above matter refers.

May we refer to your letter dated 20 July 2023 in which you requested to interview the Resident Magistrate at Mazowe Magistrates' Court.

Please be advised that the Chief Magistrate is unable to accede to your request to interview Magistrates

We wish you all the best in your studies.

N. NDUNA

FOR: CHIEF MAGISTRATE

Judicial Service Commission
"A Zimbabwe in which world class justice prevails"

Annexure 7: Seeking permission process-ZRP

ZIMBABWE REPUBLIC POLICE

Official Communications should not be addressed to individuals



Mazowe District Headquarters
P.O. Box 90,
MAZOWE

Telephone: (066219)2205/2212

25 July 2023

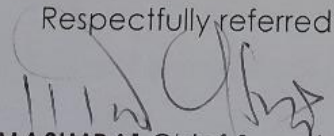
The Officer Commanding Police
MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE



SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MAZOWE DISTRICT FOR NYAMURERA DAVID NR 77-000662-W-42 A PHD STUDENT AT BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

1. Please find attached application for permission to carry out academic research in Mazowe District by the above applicant.
2. Applicant intend to research on societal perceptions related to women as perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The targeted key participants include the ZRP Victim Friendly Unit and he is seeking permission to interview members of the Unit to obtain information.
3. Background checks were conducted by Police Intelligence Bindura District and nothing detrimental was found in respect of the applicant.
4. The office of the Secretary for Provincial Affairs and Devolution has already given permission for the applicant to carry out his research in the preferred district.
5. See attached relevant documents for ease of reference.

6. Respectfully referred


[E. MASIMBA] Chief Superintendent
Officer Commanding Police
MAZOWE DISTRICT



etc
Super Mazowe
Applicant to direct to CGP.

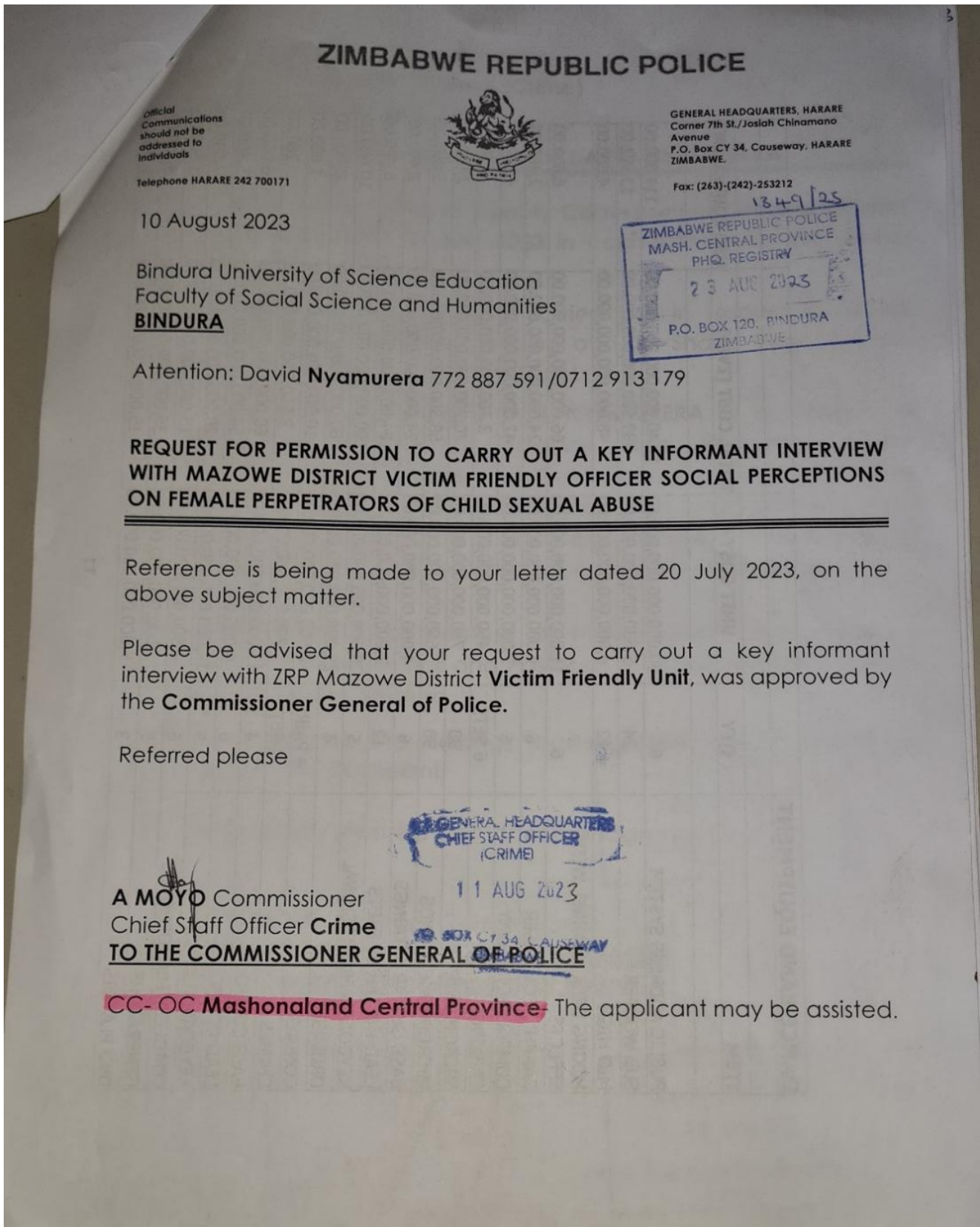
Annexure 8: Background checks-ZRP

Memorandum		486/23
To	: PPIO <u>Mashonaland Central Province</u>	
From	: PDIO <u>Bindura District</u>	
Dated	: 21 July 2023	
Subject	: BACKGROUND CHECKS IN RESPECT OF DAVID NYAMURERA NR 77-000662-W-42	

1. On 21 July 2023 ZRP Bindura Central operatives conducted background checks in respect of the above subject who is a male adult aged 57 years, residing at 1239 Shashi view, Bindura, contactable on 0772 887 591 . The subject intends to conduct a research in Mazowe District on social perception on woman as perpetrators of child sexual abuse and he intends to interview ZRP Mazowe District Victim Friendly Unit office.
2. Subject is a student in the department of Peace and Governance at Bindura University of Science and Education, a member of National Aids Council at Mashonaland West Province and he is also a pastor at Boarnges Apostolic Faith Church, Chiwaridzo, Bindura.
3. Checks were carried out with Joseph **CHIVARE** Nr 25-040825-M-25 a male adult aged 50 years, of 7575 Chiwaridzo, Bindura contactable on cell number 0773 979 698 who is a vangelist at Boarnges Apostolic Faith Church who said that the subject is apolitical, socialises well with others and has no criminal records known so far. Reverend Phillimon **MULAMBO** a male adult who is a neighbour to the subject and resides at house number 1237 Shashi view, Bindura stated that he has known subject for more than 10 years and he described subject as very social person who came from Manicaland.
4. Subject is apolitical and has no criminal records known.

COMMENT
Nothing detrimental noted on subject.

Annexure 9: Approval of request-ZRP



Annexure 10: Approval of request-ZRP

ZIMBABWE REPUBLIC POLICE

Official
Communications should
not be addressed to
Individuals



ZIMBABWE REPUBLIC POLICE,
MASH CENTRAL PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS
P.O. Box 120, BINDURA
ZIMBABWE.

Telegrams 'Propol' MASH CENTRAL: Tel (066210) - 6694

Fax: (263)-(066210)-6202/6200

26 August 2023

Officer Commanding Police
MAZOWE DISTRICT

Attention: District (**Victim Friendly Unit**)

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A KEY INFORMANT
INTERVIEW WITH MAZOWE DISTRICT VICTIM FRIENDLY
OFFICER SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS ON FEMALE PERPETRATORS OF
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Reference is made to the above subject.

Please be advised that a request to carry out a key informant interview with your office by Mr David **Nyamurera** was approved by the Commissioner General of Police.

May he be assisted as requested.

Respectfully referred.

[**T. NDOU**] Assistant Commissioner
for Officer Commanding Police
MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE



KII and FGDs Guides

Annexure 11: Interview Guide for District Social Development Officer (DSD)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA to the;
 - i. Victim
 - ii. Significant others and members of the immediate family
 - iii. Community
 - iv. Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. How can the community improve their involvement in the identification of potential FSPs of CSA and their victims so as to enhance disclosure and prevention?
9. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
10. Explain your role in female perpetrated CSA prevention as DSD (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 12: Interview Guide for Civil Society Organizations (Ceshhar)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action has the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. What is your role in female perpetrated CSA, as an organization?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 13: Interview Guide for District Health Promotion Officer-DHPO (MoHCC)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action has the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
9. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
10. Explain your role in CSA prevention (clearly defining the level of prevention, from primary to tertiary). *What approach can the practitioners adopt to prevent CSA? (Probe for public health, multi-sectoral holistic approach).*

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 14: Interview Guide for Civil Society Organizations (Msasa Project)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardize your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA to the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action has the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. What is your role in female-perpetrated CSA as an organisation?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 15: Interview Guide for Civil Society Organizations (ZHI)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organization. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?

8. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. What is your role in female perpetrated CSA, as an organisation?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 16: Interview Guide for District Nursing officer-DNO (MoHCC)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. What is your role in female perpetrated CSA, as an organisation?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 17: Interview Guide for District AIDS Coordinator (NAC)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action has the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
 1. Enumerate and explain the indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) that relate to sexual health, and prevention of female perpetrated CSA in the local community.
 2. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
 3. How can the community improve their involvement in the identification of potential FSPs of CSA and their victims so as to enhance disclosure and prevention?
 4. Explain your role in female-perpetrated CSA prevention (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 18: Interview Guide for District Victim Friendly Officer-ZRP

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)
6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?

7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. What is the role of ZRP-VFU in the promotion of CSA reporting in this community? Explain your response.
9. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?
10. Explain your role in CSA prevention as ZRP (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 19: Interview Guide for Chief 2

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)
6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?

7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. Enumerate and explain the Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) that relate to sexual health and prevention of female-perpetrated CSA in the local community.
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. How can the community improve their involvement in the identification of potential FSPs of CSA and their victims, so as to enhance disclosure and prevention?
11. Explain your role in female perpetrated CSA prevention as Chiefs (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 20: Interview Guide for Traditional leader (Chief's council chairman)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?
8. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions on reducing this process?
9. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
10. What is your role in female perpetrated CSA, as Chiefs?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 21: Interview Guide for Gender Focal Person-GFP (Mazowe RDC Official)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardize your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organization. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)
6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?

7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?

8. What is the role of Mazowe RDC in the promotion of CSA reporting in this community? Explain your response.

9. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?

10. Explain your role in CSA prevention as an Official in Mazowe RDC (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 22: Interview Guide for Executive Officer- EO Social Services (Mazowe RDC Official)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance (Human Security). The information you are asked to provide is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

1. What are the perceptions of the people of Mazowe regarding female-perpetrated CSA?
2. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
3. What are the effects of CSA on the;
Victim
Significant others and members of the immediate family
Community
Society
4. Enumerate and explain the CSA community-based response initiatives.
5. What community-based CSA prevention activities exist in Mazowe? (What action have the people in this community taken against CSA by FSPs?)

6. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? May you also mention the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?

7. What techniques have you found useful for the purposes of community capacity building in the prevention of CSA by FSPs?

8. What is the role of Mazowe RDC in the promotion of CSA reporting in this community? Explain your response.

9. If there are external facilitators of CSA by FSPs, what are your suggestions for reducing this process?

10. Explain your role in CSA prevention as an Official in Mazowe RDC (clearly defining the level of prevention-primordial to tertiary)

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 23: Interview Guide for the FGDs

- Adolescent youth
- Parents/Guardians
- Female Sex Workers (FSWs)

Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE)

Department of Peace and Governance

Title of Research: Title of Research: Social perceptions on female perpetrators of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in Mazowe District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe.

The researcher is a PhD student in Peace and Governance. The information you are asked to provide during this FGD is required for research purposes only and will not be used to jeopardise your position or compromise the integrity or status of your organisation. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of this study. Anonymity is strictly guaranteed. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Introduction Questions

a) What, in your view, is the role of women in society?

Probe: How do you think women should behave?

b) What, in your view, is the role of women in a sexual relationship?

Probe: What would you think of someone who behaves differently?

c) In relation to sexual relations, what do you think is the worst thing a woman could do?

Probe: Explain using examples

Research Questions

1. What is your understanding of CSA by Female Sexual Perpetrators (FSPs)
2. Do you perceive females as potential perpetrators of CSA in this community? (What are your own current perceptions on female-perpetrated CSA in this community?)
3. Explain how the people of Mazowe perceive the practice of CSA by females.
4. What are the underlying factors that promote people to perceive CSA perpetration and gender in the way they do?
5. Explain how females in the Mazowe community promote CSA.
6. Explain the economic, social, political, cultural and religious factors that are associated with female-perpetrated CSA in this community.
7. Explain the nexus between perceptions and social factors like personal level dimensions, social communication, culture and traditional practices in view of female-perpetrated CSA in this community.
8. Do you think the adolescent youth of Mazowe are protected from female-perpetrated CSA? Explain your response.
9. What are the effects of CSA on the;
 - a. Victim
 - b. Significant others and members of the immediate family
 - c. Community
 - d. Society
10. Explain what the people of this community are doing to prevent the acts of CSA by FSPs (community initiatives based on indigenous knowledge systems-IKS).
11. How can the community improve their involvement in the identification of potential Female Perpetrators of CSA and their victims so as to enhance disclosure and prevention?

12. Explain the roles/ or possible roles of;
 - a. Parents/guardians
 - b. Community leaders (including chiefs, village headmen and chairpersons, religious and political leaders)
 - c. Adolescent youth
 - d. Professionals- (e.g. teachers, health and Community/social development workers)
 - e. Government

in the prevention of female-perpetrated CSA.

13. What are the common forms of CSA by FSPs in this community? Explain the factors or underpinnings of these forms of CSA by FSPs?
14. In your opinion, explain the link between sexual arousal, taking alcohol (including substances and drugs), cognition, perception and the various forms of CSA.
15. What are the attention, affection or material incentives that are offered/provided by the FSPs as an attraction to the potential victim?
16. Are there any facilitators of these processes and activities? If so, explain their nature/ explain who they are?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Annexure 24 ZACC Integrity Committee pledging



ZIMBABWE ANTI - CORRUPTION COMMISSION: INTEGRITY PLEDGE

(A Commitment to Ethical Practices and Good Governance as Public Official)

I believe that corruption is one of the biggest impediments to economic growth and prosperity in Zimbabwe, and has been eroding the moral fibre of this society.

As a Patriotic Zimbabwean citizen and a Public Officer employed in the Health Sector genuinely believes in the growth, prosperity and inclusive development of my country, and in promoting good governance buttressed by transparency, accountability, integrity and the rule of law, I acknowledge my responsibility to lead by example in the fight against corruption and to ethically render my services with integrity.

In view of the foregoing, I hereby pledge the following:

- i. I shall discharge my duties with the highest degree of competence, excellence, transparency, independence and professionalism in ensuring development of strategies and policies to combat HIV and AIDS;
- ii. I shall discharge my duties with the highest degree of honesty in the mobilisation and management of resources in support of national response to HIV and AIDS;
- iii. I shall abide whole heartedly with provisions of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards expected in executing my duties.
- iv. I shall advocate the true essence of service delivery by ensuring that all my actions and decisions are guided accordingly, with the goal of serving solely the interest of the public and not my own personal interests;
- v. I shall continue to improve professionally, intellectually and morally and shall always strive to be an agent of change for the better;
- vi. I shall work side by side with all agents of government, public and private entities, and civil societies in enhancing transparency and enforcing accountability in service delivery;
- vii. I shall integrate in my work the concept of social and environmental responsibility as an indispensable factor to efficient and effective service delivery;
- viii. I shall create a healthy working relationship with every person by inculcating in their minds that we are enablers and not deterrents in the development of our country;
- ix. I shall be vigilant but not distrustful and I shall uphold and practice courtesy, modesty, and humility at all times; and
- x. Ultimately, I shall abide by the Constitution of Zimbabwe and comply with all laws of Zimbabwe.

IN VIEW THEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my signature at.....this
.....20.....

Name _____ Signature _____

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN before me at.....this
.....20.....

ADMINISTERED BY