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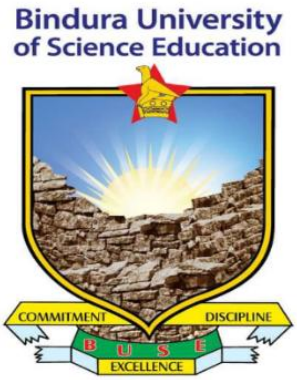
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK



RESEARCH TOPIC: DEVELOPING A GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH FOR THE PREVENTION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE; A CASE STUDY OF MUSASA PROJECT, NEMAMWA, MASVINGO

BY:

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A RESEARCH SUBMITTED TO BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK.

JUNE 2026

DECLARATION

I, **Nelia Mamwadi (B220832B)** do hereby declare that this work is for my own origin and it has not been submitted to any faculty at this university or at any other colleges or universities for award of a degree, diploma or certificates.

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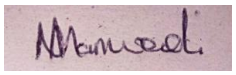
Student's Signature 

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RELEASE FORM

I certify that **Nelia Mamwadi** student number B220832B was under my supervision. I further certify that she attended all the scheduled meetings with me and that she has fulfilled all the requirements that I have set before her as the supervisor. It is my professional judgment that the research project is of sufficiently high standard as to be submitted with my name attached to it as the supervisor. I hereby release the student without reservation to submit her research project for marking.

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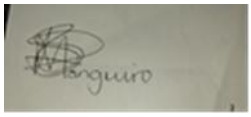
Signature  Date: 18/08/2026

Chairperson of the Department Board of Examiners

The departmental board of examiners is satisfied that this dissertation report meets the examination requirements and therefore I recommend Bindura University of Science Education to accept this research project by Nelia Mamwadi titled: **Developing a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe; A case study of Musasa Project, Nemamwa Masvingo.**

Chairperson

Name……Signature…….Date……

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May God bless you all abundantly?

DEDICATION

I wholeheartedly dedicate this study to my beloved family for their unwavering support, love and sacrifices which have been my strength throughout this academic journey. To my father and mother thank you for your sacrifices, guidance and constant belief in me. To my brother James and young sister Ethel, thank you for your love and motivation .This achievement is as much yours as it is mine. Your unwavering support have made this accomplishment possible. I am forever grateful and dedicate this work to you with all my love and appreciation.

ABSTRACT

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) remains a significant social and human rights problem in Zimbabwe despite the existence of legal frameworks and intervention programmes aimed at addressing gender-based violence. This study sought to develop a gender transformative approach to prevent intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe using Musasa Project in Nemamwa, Masvingo as a case study. The study was guided by four objectives which include to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, to identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention, to examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions and to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate violence tailored to the Zimbabwe context. The study employed a qualitative research approach and a case study research design. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with seven IPV survivors and three Musasa Project staff. Purposive sampling was used to select participants, while thematic analysis was employed. The findings revealed that the persistence of IPV is influenced by patriarchal norms, unequal gender relations, economic dependency, cultural beliefs and the normalization of violence within intimate relationships. The study also found that existing interventions such as counselling, legal support services contribute to IPV prevention but are constrained by limited resources, inadequate community participation and persistent gender inequalities .Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of engaging men and boys ,promoting women's economic empowerment ,strengthening community awareness and challenging harmful gender norms. The study concludes that preventing IPV requires addressing root causes of gender inequality through a gender transformative approach that promotes equitable gender relations and enhancing community-based prevention programmes, increasing women's economic empowerment opportunities and promoting the active involvement of men and boys in IPV prevention initiatives. The proposed model, Integrated Gender Transformative Empowerment Model for the Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence in Zimbabwe (IGTEM -IPV) provides a framework for reducing IPV and promoting safer communities in Zimbabwe.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARC	Adult Rape Clinic
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
NGO	Non –Governmental Organization
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Funds
VFU	Victim Friendly Unit
WHO	World Health Organizations
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This research focuses on developing a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. A case study of Musasa Project, Nemamwa Masvingo. A gender transformative approach offers a promising strategy for preventing IPV by addressing underlying gender norms and power dynamics. This chapter provides an overview of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology, limitations and delimitations of the study.

1.1Background of the study

Worldwide, intimate partner violence is recognized as the most common form of violence against women .IPV is not a purely personal issue but a structural problem deeply rooted in gender-equitable social norms. According to WHO (2013), an estimation of 36.6 % of women in Africa experience lifetime intimate partner violence, a prevalence rate significantly higher than the 23.2 % recorded in high-income regions. This disparity highlights how socio-economic factors and systemic inequality drive violence. The risk of IPV can start early, with nearly a quarter of adolescent girls in relationships experience abuse by age 19.IPV can have very dangerous consequences, with more than a third of all female homicides worldwide perpetrated by an intimate partner. IPV is also linked to severe health issues including depression, anxiety, sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies. The psychological effects include post – traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).The accurate extent of IPV is often hidden due to underreporting, fear of retribution, social stigma and cultural pressure to keep family issues private lead to the 'iceberg' of unreported violence. Globally, several actions were taken to address intimate partner violence. The United Nations established a key legal instrument to end violence against women, which is Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).At global level, there is also Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality which aims to reduce the proportion of women and girls subjected to intimate partner violence. There are also gender –transformative strategies which challenge harmful gender norms and power dynamics that enable violence, this include the involvement of men and boys .There is SASA in Uganda and 'Unite for a Better Life" in Ethiopia engage men and boys as advocates to challenge

harmful masculinities and promote healthy relationships. However, despite all the efforts IPV is still prevalent therefore there is need to come with more approaches to address the issue.

UNICEF and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have identified IPV as a significant crisis in Southern Africa, with some of the world's highest prevalence rates. In Southern Africa, harmful social norms, gender inequality and poverty perpetuate intimate partner violence. In 2023, a report by UNICEF and SADC revealed that roughly one in a three girls and women in Southern Africa had encountered some form of intimate partner violence in the past year. This violence is frequently based on traditional patriarchal norms that validate male dominance and aggression. In Southern Africa, young women are especially susceptible to IPV, particularly those who marry at a young age. A 2023 report showed that nearly a third of young brides in Southern Africa experienced IPV in the last year.COVID-19 pandemic worsened IPV in Southern Africa. A study of South Africa adolescent mothers indicated a four-fold increase in IPV during the pandemic compared to levels before it hit the Southern Africa region. Despite efforts put by SADC to address intimate partner violence, it is still a crisis in Southern Africa. SADC developed the SADC protocol on Gender and Development and the SADC strategy and Framework of Action for addressing GBV (2018-2030).These provide regional guidance for member states to enforce legislation, reform criminal procedures and implement integrated approaches to eliminating gender-based violence.

In Zimbabwe, IPV is a pressing human rights issue. Studies indicates that nearly one in three women has experienced physical violence and one in four has faced sexual violence since the age of 15.Factors such as patriarchy ,harmful social norms and the practice 'roora'(bride price) play a role in perpetuating gender inequality and violence. Many survivors do not report incidents due to negative attitudes towards reporting, including fears of stigma and shame, which leads to underreporting. According to Green et al (2024), Even where women are aware or their rights, cultural factors and fear of societal exclusion prevent them from taking action against abusive partners. While there are laws in Zimbabwe aimed at preventing domestic violence, their enforcement is often weak due to limited access to legal resources, inadequate training for law enforcement personnel and societal norms that impact the justice system. Zimbabwe has made steps in promoting gender equality and addressing intimate partner violence, but challenges still persist. According to ZIMSTAT (2020), Zimbabwe's intimate partner violence prevalence rate is

among the highest in Southern Africa. Therefore, there is need to work on the reduction of IPV cases in the country.

In Masvingo, intimate partner violence is a pressing issue due to factors such as cultural and gender-related factors as well as socio economic factors. Gender Transformative Approach has been identified as a key approach for preventing intimate partner violence, as it seeks to transform gender norms and promote equitable relationships (Hankivsky and Hunting 2021).Mostly young women are affected, hence the gender transformative approach will mainly focus on undermining cultural and gender related norms that disadvantages women and leave them vulnerable to intimate partner violence.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a prevalent social problem in Zimbabwe, with women excessively affected due to various factors such as patriarchal norms, gender inequalities, and cultural beliefs that normalize violence within relationships. Despite existing legal and policy frameworks such as the Domestic Violence Act [Chapter 5:16] and interventions by civil society organizations, cases of intimate partner violence remain high pointing to limitations in current prevention strategies. Many interventions have focused on response rather than prevention, often neglecting the underlying gender power dynamics that perpetuate violence. There is therefore a pressing need to develop a gender transformative approach that challenges harmful gender norms, promotes equitable power relations, and empowers both men and women about intimate partner violence or Gender based violence at large. Without such approaches, Zimbabwe risks continued cycles of violence that undermine family stability, women's wellbeing, and broader social development.

1.3Aim of the study

The main aim of this study is to develop a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

To explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

To identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention.

To examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions.

To determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate violence tailored to the Zimbabwe context.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the underlying gender norms and social structures that contribute to the persistence of IPV in Zimbabwe?

2. How effective are current IPV prevention programs in addressing gender power imbalances and transforming harmful gender norms?

3. What support systems or resources do survivors believe would have helped to prevent, reduce or respond more effectively to their experiences of IPV?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings will provide social workers and community-based organizations with a practical framework to engage both men and women in promoting gender equality and non-violent conflict resolution. More so, it also have policy relevance because the findings may inform policymakers in strengthening or redesigning intimate partner violence prevention policies and programs that focus on addressing root causes rather than symptoms of violence. The study is also important as it helps policymakers, survivors of intimate partner violence, community leaders and organizations, academics and researchers by providing insights into the complex interplay of gender dynamics and intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the study will also have an academic contribution because it will contribute to the body of knowledge on gender transformative approaches in social work and intimate partner violence prevention, particularly within the Zimbabwean context. The research will have a contribution in community empowerment by addressing harmful gender norms, the study has the potential to reduce intimate partner violence prevalence, improve family wellbeing, and promote healthier gender relations in Zimbabwean communities.

1.7 Possible Limitations

- The research may be limited by potential biases in participant selection, as those willing to discuss intimate partner violence may not represent the broader population.

- The sensitive nature of intimate partner violence may also be a limitation. This may lead to underreporting of experiences due to fear of stigma.
- Focusing on a limited geographic area can also be a limitation to the study. Some of the findings might not apply to other settings.

1.8 Delimitations

The study will mainly focus on the heterosexuals. This study will only target currently and former married individuals specifically women who are survivors of intimate partner violence. The study will exclude LGBTQ individuals and commercial sex workers since their inclusion requires specialized and sensitive recruitment protocols which will broaden the study scope.

1.9 Definition of key terms

Gender

According to Johri (2023), gender is an analytical category that is socially constructed to differentiate between men and women. This includes norms, roles and relationships with each other, varying across societies and changing over time.

Gender transformative approach

Messerschmitt and Bridges (2024) defines gender transformative approach as a method for addressing gender inequality by challenging its root causes such as power imbalances, social norms and discriminatory practices.

Intimate partner

According to Norris et al (2021), an intimate partner is a person with whom one has a close personal relationship, characterized by emotional connection, regular contact and in some cases sexual behavior.

Intimate partner violence

Sardinha et al (2022) defines intimate partner violence is physical, sexual or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse.

1.10 Organisation of the study

Chapter one: Introduction

The first chapter provides an introduction to the research including the background, problem statement, objectives, and research questions, justification of the study and definition of key terms.

Chapter two: Literature review

This chapter reviews the relevant literature examining research on intimate partner violence, the factors which lead to the increase of intimate partner violence and what has been done to address the issue of IPV.

Chapter three: Methodology

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, describing the research design, data collection methods and analytical techniques employed in the study. It also presents the ethical considerations.

Chapter four: Data Collection

This chapter presents the collected data or the research findings in relation to the research questions and objectives.

Chapter five: Conclusion, recommendations

This chapter discuss the research findings, draw conclusions and offer suggestions of preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

1.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter laid out the foundation of the study to be carried out providing an insight on the main focus of the research. This chapter provided a clarification of the research which aims to develop a gender transformative approach that prevents intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The definition of key terms will guide the readers for them to have a better understanding about the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter undertakes a comprehensive review of existing scholarly literature and theoretical perspective pertaining to the study on developing a gender transformative approach to prevent intimate partner violence (IPV) in Zimbabwe. The chapter provides a theoretical grounding for understanding IPV as a gendered phenomenon rooted in social norms and structural inequalities. It also critically examines feminist theory and gender role theory as the main lenses guiding the study. Furthermore, the chapter reviews global, regional and local literature on intimate partner violence and gender norms. The chapter also identifies key conceptual definitions and highlights existing research gaps that justify the present study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frame work is designed to provide an analytical lens through which a research problem is examined. Theoretical framework play a critical role in guiding social science research because they provide a structured explanation of how different variables and concepts interact. According to Mensah et al (2020), a theoretical framework positions a study within existing bodies of knowledge and allows researchers to interpret findings within broader social contexts. In the study of IPV, theoretical perspectives are particularly important because intimate partner violence is quite a complex social issue influenced by multiple structural, cultural and interpersonal factors. Therefore, this section will outline theoretical foundation supporting the study. The research will draw on the Gender role theory and Feminist theory as both are considered relevant to the current study. These theories help to explain how socially constructed gender norms, power imbalances and patriarchal structures contribute to intimate partner violence. Gender role theory and Feminist theory are also relevant in understanding how gender-transformative interventions seek to challenge harmful norms and promote equitable gender relations and that will minimize IPV cases in Zimbabwe. Importantly, the integration of these two theories allows for both structural and behavioral analysis of intimate partner violence, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

2.1.1 Feminist Theory

Feminist theory views intimate partner violence as a manifestation of structural gender inequality deeply rooted in patriarchal beliefs. Feminist theory emerged during the feminist movements of

the 1960s and 1970s, which sought to challenge gender inequalities in social, political and economic spheres. According to Applin et al (2023), violence against women is rooted in patriarchal structures that grant men authority over women in both private and public spheres. According to these scholars intimate partner violence should not be viewed simply as individual conflict but rather as a manifestation of systemic gender inequality. Radical feminist theorists emphasize that patriarchal societies legitimize male dominance and female subordination. Thereby, that create conditions that allow violence against women to occur. In many cultures men are socialized to believe that they have authority over their wives or partners, while women are expected to be submissive and obedient. This unequal power dynamic often results in situations where men use violence to assert control or punish perceived disobedience. Sanauddin (2025), further argue that institutions such as the family, religion, media and the legal system may reinforce patriarchal values that perpetuate violence against women .For instance, in many Zimbabwean communities, religious and cultural teachings often emphasize female submissiveness and marital endurance, which can discourage women from reporting abuse or seeking external intervention.

Moreover, feminist theory highlights the economic dimension of violence against women .Many women remain in abusive relationships because they lack financial independence or access to economic resources. Economic dependency can therefore limit women's ability to escape abusive environments .This perspective is mostly relevant in developing countries where gender disparities in employment and income remain significant. Furthermore, contemporary feminist scholars also came up with the intersectional perspectives that examine how gender inequality interacts with other forms of social inequality such as class, race and age. Sokoloff and Dupont (2005) argues that women experience violence differently depending on their social positions .For example, rural women, poor women and young women may face additional barriers when seeking support services for intimate partner violence such as in remote areas of Zimbabwe like Binga and Muzarabani where access to legal and support services is limited due distance, poverty and reliance on traditional systems.

2.1.2 The relevance of the feminist theory to the study

The feminist theory greatly contribute as it examines the dynamics of power and control in relationships which are central to understanding intimate partner violence. In Zimbabwe, cultural norms often support male authority and female submissiveness, making women vulnerable to

violence. Additionally, the theory highlights how societal norms order acceptable behaviors for different genders, often excusing or taking violence against women as a societal norm. Walby (2019), support the view by emphasizing that gender norms and power relations are socially constructed and sustained within communities. This directly aligns with objective 1, which seeks to explore the societal factors and gender norms contributing to the persistence of intimate partner violence, as feminist theory helps to uncover how these norms are socially constructed and maintained.

More so, the feminist theory is significant on the impacts of intimate partner violence on survivors. The theory emphasizes socialization of women into passive roles, affecting their ability to seek help or leave abusive situations .This theoretical framework will inform the gender transformative approach by addressing the societal constructs that supports or promote intimate partner violence. This relates to objective 3, which focuses on examining the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions, as many interventions fail to address these deep-rooted gender norms. According to Dobash and Dobash (2020), women's socialization into submissive roles often limits their agency and reduces the effectiveness of interventions that do not challenge these norms.

In the Zimbabwean context, feminist theory provides a useful lens to analyze the cultural and structural factors that contribute to intimate partner violence .The traditional patriarchal norms often position men as household heads and decision makers while women are expected to perform care giving roles and demonstrate obedience to their husbands. Hence by adhering to these societal norms it may result in unequal power relations within intimate relationships. Research conducted by organizations such as Musasa Project and the Zimbabwe Women's Lawyers Association indicates that many survivors of intimate partner violence face social pressure from family members and community leaders to remain in abusive marriages, with some families encouraging reconciliation even in severe abuse cases in order to preserve family unity and social reputation. Cultural beliefs emphasizing marital endurance and family unity may therefore discourage women from reporting abuse no matter the extensiveness of the abuse. This aligns with Objective 2, which seeks to identify community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention. This is supported by Sweetman (2019), who argues that patriarchal systems and community expectations play a major role in sustaining gender inequality and violence.

Additionally, Feminist theory is very significant as it also highlights the importance of empowering women through education, economic opportunities and legal protection. Therefore, gender transformative approaches inspired by feminist principles aim to dismantle patriarchal structures that perpetuate inequality and violence within societies. By promoting gender equality and challenging harmful social norms, feminist-informed interventions can contribute to long term prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. This directly links with objective 4, which aims to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. This is emphasized by the United Nation Women (2022), which emphasize that empowering women and transforming gender norms are critical strategies in achieving sustainable reductions in intimate partner violence. Thus, feminist theory not only explains the causes of intimate partner violence but also provides a normative framework for designing transformative interventions aimed at long term prevention.

2.1.3. Gender Role Theory

The gender role theory focuses on how societies assign different roles, behaviors and expectations to men and women. The theory originates from sociological and psychological studies examining how individuals learn socially acceptable behaviors associated with being male or female. Adhikari and Sigdel (2024) argue that gender roles are socially constructed expectations that influence how individuals behave within families, workplaces and communities. These roles are learned through socialization processes such as family upbringing, education, religion and media. From early childhood boys and girls are taught different behavioral expectations. Key assumptions of gender role theory include that masculinity is often associated with dominance, control and aggression and femininity is associated with submission, caregiving and tolerance. It is believed that deviations from prescribed roles may attract social sanctions. In relation to intimate partner violence, gender role theory explains how men may use violence to assert masculinity or respond to perceived threats to their authority whilst women may just remain in abusive relationships due to social expectations of obedience and marital endurance. The media, religion and educational institutions also play important roles in reinforcing these gender norms. In many societies media portrayals of masculinity often emphasize aggression and control while representations of femininity emphasize passivity and dependence .These representations contribute to the normalization of unequal gender relations in many communities and in Zimbabwe, such norms are reinforced through cultural teachings and media portrayals that associate masculinity with

authority and control while femininity is linked to obedience and submission. Gender transformative programs challenge these rigid roles by encouraging other, non-violent masculinities and empowering women to assert their rights.

Both feminist theory and gender role theory complement each other in explaining intimate partner violence. Feminist theory highlights structural power imbalances while gender role theory explains behavioral and normative factors that normalize violence within intimate relationships. Together, they provide a holistic understanding of IPV as a socially constructed phenomenon sustained by unequal power relations and rigid gender norms. Gender transformative approaches draw from these theories by challenging patriarchal beliefs that legitimize male dominance, transforming harmful gender norms that condone violence, engaging men and boys as allies in violence prevention as well as empowering women socially, economically and legally.

2.1.4 The significance of the Gender Role Theory

The gender role theory is relevant to the study because it greatly contribute to the socialization process. Starting from a young age, individuals socialize into specific gender roles which decree their behaviors and relationships. In the Zimbabwean culture, traditional masculine roles encourage dominance and control while feminine roles emphasize submission and nurturing. In Zimbabwe the gender role expectations are reinforced through cultural practices, religious teachings and traditional leadership structures .For example, the concept of male headship within households often grants men decision-making authority while women are expected to respect and obey their husbands. These norms may contribute to the normalization of control and oppression within relationships. This directly relates to objective 1, which seeks to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence, as gender role theory explains how these norms are learned and maintained within a society.

Additionally, gender role theory helps to shade more light on the behavioral expectations in the society. It explains why some men may opt to intimate partner violence as a means of asserting control in line with societal expectations of masculinity. Understanding these expectations allows for targeted interventions that challenge harmful notions of masculinity. In addition, gender role theory gives an insight on changing dynamics .As societal norms evolve, perceptions of gender roles do likewise. Gender role theory will provide insight into how shifts in traditional roles can be harnessed to promote equality and fight intimate partner violence. This is linked to objective 2,

which focuses on identifying community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention, since the theory helps explain how communities construct and maintain expectations around masculinity and femininity. It also aligns with objective 3, which examines the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions, as effective interventions must address these behavioral expectations. Kimmel (2020) argues that gender is performed through everyday interactions and that harmful expressions of masculinity can be reshaped through social change .Furthermore, gender role theory is also relevant on reliance and empowerment. The theory emphasizes the need for interventions that empower women to break away from traditional roles, thus fostering resilience against intimate partner violence. By addressing the root causes of harmful gender norms, gender role theory can provide an important foundation for designing prevention strategies aimed at reducing intimate partner violence. This aligns with objective 4, which seeks to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, as the theory supports the transformation of rigid gender roles into more equitable ones. It also reinforces Objective 3, as empowerment –based interventions are key in improving the effectiveness of existing strategies. Hence, the Gender Role Theory is very significant to the study.

2.2.0 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE KEY PHENOMENA IN THE STUDY

2.2.1 Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Intimate partner violence is a pattern of behavior in an intimate relationship that involves the use of physical, sexual or psychological abuse to control another partner. The World Health Organization defines intimate partner violence as a behavior by an intimate partner or former partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors (WHO, 2021).Intimate partner violence occurs in both heterosexuals and same-sex relationships however, the research consistently shows that women are excessively affected.

2.2.2 Gender Transformative Approach

Gender transformative approach can be defined as an intervention that seeks to change the societal norms and power imbalances that underpin gender-based violence. The concept of gender transformative programming emerged from global efforts to address the root causes of gender inequality rather than simply responding to its consequences. According to Njuki et al (2023),

gender transformative approaches aim to critically examine and transform harmful gender norms, power relations, and institutional structures that perpetuate gender inequality. Unlike gender-sensitive approaches which merely acknowledge gender differences, gender transformative approaches actively challenge the social norms and power dynamics that support gender inequality. These interventions seek to empower women and girls while simultaneously engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality.

2 .3.0 Intervention Strategies to Address Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a pervasive global challenge rooted in gender inequality, patriarchal systems and unequal power relations. Affecting approximately one in three women worldwide, intimate partner violence cuts across socio-economic, cultural and geographical boundaries .Despite increasing recognition of intimate partner violence as a human rights violation and public health issue ,its persistence highlights the limitations of existing intervention strategies. This persistence reflects deeply embedded societal norms and power imbalances, directly linking to objective 1 which seeks to explore societal factors and gender norms that contribute to intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. Jewkes et al (2020) argues that intimate partner violence is sustained by structural and normative factors that require multidimensional and context- specific responses .This section critically examines key intervention strategies used to address intimate partner violence, analyzing their application and effectiveness across global, Sub-Saharan African and Zimbabwean contexts.

2.3.1 Legal and Policy Frameworks as an Intervention Strategy

Legal and policy frameworks constitute one of the most widely adopted strategies to address intimate partner violence, focusing on criminalization, protection and prevention.

At the global level, legal interventions are shaped by international frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals .These frameworks obligate states to enact laws that protect women from violence and promote gender equality. Additional global instruments such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) further strengthen international commitments by emphasizing prevention, protection and state accountability. However ,recent studies indicate that while over 80 % of countries have enacted laws addressing domestic violence ,enforcement remains

inconsistent ,particularly in low income settings where institutional capacity is weak(UN Women,2022).This indicates a gap between policy formulation and implementation at global level ,highlighting a gap in assessing how global frameworks translate into effective local action which is central to objective 3 . According to Garcia –Moreno et al. (2021), global legal frameworks have been instrumental in shifting intimate partner violence from a private issue to a public and legal concern. However, Htun and Weldon (2018) argue that the mere existence of laws does not guarantee effectiveness as implementation often remains weak, particularly in low –income countries where institutional capacity is limited .As seen in some countries where laws exist but enforcement mechanisms remain under-resourced. Furthermore, these global frameworks often adopt universal approaches that may overlook cultural and contextual differences, presenting a gap that aligns with objective 4, which seeks a context-specific gender transformative approach.

In Sub –Saharan Africa, regional policy frameworks such as the Maputo Protocol and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development have guided national responses to intimate partner violence. These frameworks emphasize the protection of women‘s rights and the elimination of gender –based violence, particularly through instruments such as the protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol,2003) which explicitly calls for the elimination of violence against women and influencing legal reforms across African counties. Additionally, the SADC protocol on Gender and Development (2008) sets specific targets for member states to reduce gender based violence .These are complemented by the African Union Gender strategy (2018-2028) and Agenda 2063, which emphasize gender equality and social transformation across the continent. For example, South Africa has implemented the Domestic Violence Act (1998) in line with these regional commitment. While, they have encouraged legislative reforms across the region. In Southern Africa, intimate partner violence is often complicated by the intersection of economic hardship and traditional patriarchal norms .Studies conducted across the Southern Africa region reveal that intimate partner violence is closely linked to social and cultural expectations regarding gender roles .In many communities, men are expected to exercise authority over their wives, while women are expected to demonstrate obedience and loyalty. These societal expectations directly relate to Objective 1, as they highlight the gender norms sustaining intimate partner violence. These expectations may legitimize controlling behaviors and physical discipline within relationships.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender Protocol emphasizes the importance of addressing gender-based –violence as part of regional development strategies. Many countries in the Southern African region have enacted domestic violence as part of regional development strategies. According to Xu (2024), many countries in the region have enacted domestic violence legislation and established gender equality policies. However, the implementation of these policies remains unreliable as demonstrated in counties like South Africa where strong legal frameworks exist but high rates of IPV persist due to societal norms and weak enforcement at community level. This situation reveals a regional research gap in understanding why legal reform does not consistently translate into normative and behavioral change at community level ,and it points to the for studies that link legal frameworks with social norms interventions .This is directly relevant to objective 2 which focuses on identifying community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention. Some scholars argue that legal reforms alone are insufficient without changes in social norms and community attitudes .Informal community justice systems and traditional leadership structures sometimes dominate legal processes, making it difficult for survivors to access justice. Regional initiatives such as the SASA Community mobilization model and the Stepping Stones Program have demonstrated promising results in reducing intimate partner violence by engaging communities in discussions about gender, norms power and relationships. In rural African settings community –based models like SASA model in Africa have shown that involving men as allies is crucial for sustainable intimate partner violence prevention. Duvvury et al. (2019) highlight that enforcement remains inconsistent due to weak judicial systems, corruption and limited access to legal services, especially in rural areas.

In Zimbabwe, the Domestic Violence Act represents a key legal intervention aimed at addressing IPV. The Domestic Violence Act (Chapter 5:16) provides a legal shield for domestic violence survivors however intimate partner violence remains high, in the country. This Domestic Violence Act of 2007 marked a significant step towards addressing Gender –based violence in Zimbabwe. The Act criminalizes various forms of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse. It also provides mechanisms for obtaining protection orders against perpetrators and criminalizes domestic violence. This Act is supported by the constitution of Zimbabwe (2013), which guarantees equality, dignity and freedom for violence, as well as the National Gender –Based Violence Strategy (2023-2030), which aim to strengthen prevention and response

mechanisms. Despite the existence of this legal framework, intimate partner violence remains widespread in Zimbabwe. Mukamana (2022), argues that more than 35 % of women of a reproductive age (15-39 years) have ever experienced at least one form of intimate partner violence. Several factors contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. While this law aligns with international and regional commitments, its effectiveness is constrained by socio-cultural norms that discourage reporting as well as limited awareness among communities, directly linking to objective 2 which focuses on community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention. Despite additional policy efforts such as the Zimbabwe National Gender –Based violence Strategy (2023-2030) which aims to strengthen prevention and response mechanisms. Shamu et al. (2019) note that many survivors do not utilize legal remedies due to fear of stigma and economic dependency, highlighting the gap between policy and practice. This indicates a critical research gap at national level, where existing legal and policy frameworks are not sufficiently addressing underlying gender norms and power relations, thereby reinforcing the need for objective 4 which seeks to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the Zimbabwean context.

2.3.2 Survivor Support Services as an intervention Strategy

Survivor support services are designed to provide immediate assistance and protection to victims of intimate partner violence.

At global, support services such as shelters, counselling, healthcare and legal aid are recognized as essential components of intimate partner violence response systems the global response of IPV has evolved significantly over the past few decades .Earlier approaches focused primarily on providing shelters and crisis services for survivors. While these services remain important, contemporary strategies increasingly emphasize prevention through addressing the root causes of violence. International frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG5) recognize the elimination of violence against women as essential to achieving gender equality and sustainable development across the world. SDG 5 specifically calls for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in both public and private spheres .This goal acknowledges that gender- based – violence is both a human rights issue and a barrier to social and economic development at global level. The Global research also highlights the importance of engaging men

and boys in violence prevention efforts. Programs that encourage men to challenge harmful masculinity norms have been shown to reduce violence and promote healthier relationships. These services play critical role in mitigating the immediate impacts of violence and supporting survivors' recovery .However, Garcia – Moreno et al. (2021) note that access to such services remains uneven, particularly in low-resource settings, although countries like Kenya have introduced one stop centers that provide integrated medical, legal and psychosocial support ,improving access for survivors. A major global research gap is that survivor support services are predominantly reactive. They prioritize post-incident care but insufficiently integrate prevention and gender –transformative components that address root causes, this is directly relevant to objective 4 which seeks to come up with a comprehensive gender-transformative approach .In addition, evidence is limited on how to decentralize and sustain integrated services in low-resource and rural contexts, a problem linked to objective 3 which examines the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions.

In Sub Saharan Africa, support services are often limited by resource constraints and inadequate infrastructure. While some countries have established shelters and counseling services, their availability is largely confined to urban areas .This creates significant barriers for rural population ns. Additionally, social stigma and lack of awareness further limit utilization of these resources, with rural populations particularly affected due to long distances to service centers and lack of transport. This demonstrates a regional research gap in accessibility and equity of services, particularly for rural communities linking to objective 2 which focuses on identifying the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention. There is also a gap in evidence on models for integrating survivor services with community-based prevention and economic support programs to reduce recurrence of intimate partner violence.

In Zimbabwe, civil society organizations play a central role in providing survivor support services. These include shelters, counselling and legal assistance, institutions such as the Victim Friendly Unit and One Stop Centers have been introduced to improve access to integrated services. While these interventions are crucial, and their reach is limited due to funding constraints and reliance on donor support. Many survivors particularly in rural areas, lack access to these services .Furthermore, social stigma and cultural norms often discourage women from seeking assistance. Hence, a major loop hole is that these services are not adequately decentralized and do not fully

incorporate gender transformative approaches, particularly in other rural settings. There is a loop hole on limited evaluation of the reach and effectiveness of the One Stop Centers and Victim Friendly Units in rural districts, scarce data on service utilization disaggregated by location and socio-economic status and little evidence on the sustainability of NGO –led services without continued donor funding .These gaps are directly linked to Objective 3 which aims to examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence interventions.

Critically, while survivor support services are essential for immediate response, they do not address the underlying causes of intimate partner violence. Their effectiveness is therefore limited unless complemented by preventive and transformative interventions.

2.3.4 Education and Awareness Campaigns as an intervention strategy

Education and awareness campaigns aim to change societal attitudes and increase understanding of intimate partner violence. Globally, these campaigns have been widely used to challenge the normalization of violence and promote gender equality. Global campaigns such as He For She and Unite to End Violence against Women specifically attempt to transform gender norms they have been effective in raising awareness and increasing reporting of intimate partner violence. However, Flood (2019) argues that awareness alone is insufficient to change behavior, particularly in contexts where violence is deeply normalized. Hence, it is clear that awareness does not consistently translate into behavioral change and there is need to focus on understanding how awareness campaigns can be combined with normative and structural interventions to produce sustained behavior change that links to Objective 4 of the study which seeks to come up with a gender transformative approach.

In Sub –Saharan Africa, awareness campaigns are often implemented through community outreach and media platforms. While they have contributed to increased knowledge about intimate partner violence, their impact on behavior change remains limited. Structural factors such as poverty and gender inequality continue to undermine their effectiveness. This reflects a research gap where awareness strategies are not integrated with structural and economic interventions, limiting their transformative potential.

In Zimbabwe, awareness campaigns have been conducted by both government and non-governmental organizations. These initiatives have improved public understanding of intimate partner violence and available support services. However, their impact is constrained by cultural

norms that continue to justify violence. Additionally, limited access to information in rural areas further reduces their effectiveness. Education and awareness campaigns are important but insufficient as standalone interventions. Their effectiveness depends on their integration with broader structural and transformative strategies. A national research gap exists where campaigns are not sufficiently localized or inclusive of key community actors such as men ,traditional leaders and religious institutions limiting their impact because religious and traditional leaders really have a great influence to the community members. This greatly aligns with Objective 2 which aims to identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and intimate partner violence prevention. There is also limited evidence on the comparative effectiveness of different messaging strategies and platforms like social media versus community theatre in rural Zimbabwean contexts.

While legal frameworks, support services and awareness campaigns have all contributed to addressing intimate partner violence, their effectiveness is often limited by weak implementation, cultural resistance and structural inequalities. Importantly, no single strategy is sufficient on its own .Instead, a comprehensive and integrated approach is required. This aligns with objective 4 of the study which seeks to develop a gender transformative approach that addresses root causes of intimate partner violence within the socio-cultural context of Zimbabwe.

2.4.0 Efficacy of the current intervention strategies on preventing intimate partner violence.

Several interventions exist but their effectiveness varies, critical evaluations show that there are challenges in implementation. Many laws and regulations remain under –implemented due to lack of resources public awareness. At global level various intervention strategies have been implemented to address intimate partner violence .These interventions range from legal frameworks and protection services to community-based prevention programs and gender transformative initiatives. While these strategies have contributed to increased awareness and support for survivors, research indicates that their effectiveness often depends on how well they address the underlying causes of violence. Legal framework remain one of the primary strategies used by governments to address intimate partner violence. Criminal sanctions against perpetrators aim to prevent violence and provide legal protection for survivors. According to Handy (2024),

the existence of strong legal frameworks can increase reporting rates and improve access to justice for survivors. However, legal responses alone cannot eliminate intimate partner violence if cultural norms continue to tolerate violence.

Research conducted in Southern Africa indicates that some community members believe that a husband has the right to discipline his wife under certain circumstances. Such beliefs normalize violence and reduce the effectiveness of legal interventions. Therefore, interventions that focus solely on legal responses without addressing social attitudes may have limited impact. Furthermore, there is sometimes need for holistic approaches which explains why some existing interventions become less effective .Some interventions that integrate legal, social and educational components tend to produce better outcomes than isolated efforts. Holistic interventions that combine legal protection, psychosocial support and community education have found to produce more sustainable outcomes .For instance, integrated service models that include counselling, legal assistance, shelter services and economic empowerment programs provide comprehensive support for survivors. Studies conducted by Abramsky et al (2014) on the SASA community mobilization program demonstrated that gender transformative interventions that involve community members to reflect on power dynamics within relationships and challenge harmful norms. Studies have shown significant reductions in intimate partner violence through community based engagement and dialogue. In the same way, economic empowerment programs that support women's financial independence have been shown to reduce vulnerability to intimate partner violence. When women have access to income-generating opportunities, they are better able to leave abusive relationships and make independent decisions.

In Zimbabwe, the Domestic Violence Act (Chapter 5:16) was enacted in 2007 to provide protection for survivors of domestic violence. The Act recognize different forms of abuse including physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence. It also allows survivors to obtain protection orders against perpetrators. Despite these legal provisions enforcement challenges remain significant .Limited financial resources, lack of trained personnel and inadequate awareness among community members often hinder the effective implementation of the law. More so, existing interventions seem to be less effective due to cultural barriers. Societal attitudes often hinder the effectiveness of interventions as prevailing norms may discourage reporting and seeking assistance. This shows that culture plays a significant role in shaping attitudes towards intimate

partner violence. In many societies, including Zimbabwe, traditional norms emphasize male authority within households. These norms sometimes lead community members to view domestic disputes as private family matters rather than serious human rights violations. As a result, survivors may face social pressure to remain in abusive relationships in order to preserve family unity.

More so existing interventions seem to be less effective due to cultural barriers. Societal attitudes often hinder the effectiveness of interventions as prevailing norms may discourage reporting and seeking assistance. Hence, sometimes there is need for holistic approaches that is why some existing intervention become less effective. Some interventions that integrate legal, social and educational components tend to produce better outcomes than isolated efforts.

2. 4.1 Intervention Strategies that can be made to address IPV.

There is need to tailor some intervention strategies that can contribute in preventing intimate partner violence. There is need for community engagement, involving community leaders and members in crafting culturally relevant solutions that can foster acceptance and participation. Community engagement is widely recognized as one of the most effective approaches to preventing violence. Community leaders, traditional authorities and religious institutions often play influential roles in shaping social norms and behaviors .By involving these actors in violence prevention initiatives, programs can gain greater legitimacy and acceptance within communities. Community dialogue initiatives encourage individuals to discuss gender norms, power relations and healthy relationship practices. These discussions can help challenge harmful beliefs that justify violence against women .When community members collectively reject violence, social pressure against abusive behavior increases.

More so, there should be tailored educational interventions focused on changing attitudes towards gender roles and intimate partner violence prevention. Education plays a critical role in transforming gender norms .School-based programs that teach young people about gender equality, conflict resolution and respectful relationships can help prevent violence before it occurs. According to Perez-Martinez et al (2023), early education programs that challenge stereotypes about masculinity and femininity are particularly effective in promoting non-violent behaviors. Public awareness campaigns also contribute to changing societal attitudes towards intimate partner violence .Media campaigns, radio discussions and community theatre performances can raise awareness about the harmful consequences of violence and promote gender equality. Furthermore,

multi-sectorial collaboration should be encouraged .Encouraging collaboration among government, non –governmental organizations and civil society is very important to create a unified approach to intimate partner violence. Multi-sectorial approaches bring together different stakeholders including government ministries, law enforcement agencies, health institutions, non-governmental organizations and community groups' .Each of these actors plays a unique role in preventing and responding to intimate partner violence. For example, health care providers can identify survivors of IPV and refer them to appropriate support services .Legal institutions can ensure that perpetrators are held accountable, while community organizations can provide counselling and economic development programs.

Lastly, monitoring and evaluation should be taken seriously .There is need to establish frameworks for ongoing assessment of intervention strategies as necessary. Monitoring and evaluation systems allow policy makers and program implementers measure the impact of interventions and identify areas that require improvement. Evidence based approaches ensure that resources are allocated to strategies that demonstrate measurable success in reducing violence. Regular evaluation also allows programs to adapt to changing social contexts and emerging challenges. Continuous learning and adaptation are essential for ensuring the sustainability of gender transformative approach.

2. 5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has outlined the theoretical framework relevant to understanding intimate partner violence ,greatly focusing on Feminist Theory and Gender Role Theory .A theoretical framework was established to guide the investigation along with an evaluation of global ,regional and Zimbabwean intervention strategies demonstrating how intimate partner violence is not only an individual issue but is deeply rooted in patriarchal systems ,unequal power relations and socially constructed gender roles that normalize male dominance and female subordination .The effectiveness of these interventions was critically assessed ,revealing the need for improvement and innovation .Finally, this chapter identified existing research gaps that future studies should address including the need for more context-specific research in Zimbabwe, greater focus on the lived experiences of survivors and deeper analysis of how socio-economic factors and cultural norms sustain intimate partner violence. These gaps pave the way for a gender transformative approach to preventing IPV in Zimbabwe, emphasizing the importance of multi-sectoral

collaboration involving government ,civil society and communities to create sustainable and effective interventions.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on presenting the research methodology that was employed in carrying out the study entitled Developing a Gender Transformative Approach to prevent intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe: A case study of Nemamwa, Masvingo. Research methodology is an important part of the study because it explains the procedures, methods and strategies that were followed in collecting and analyzing data. This chapter outlines the research philosophy, research approach, research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection methods, data collection tools, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, limitations and delimitations.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the system of beliefs, assumptions and views that guide how knowledge is generated and understood during a study. It explains what the researcher believes about reality, truth and the best ways of obtaining knowledge. According to Saunders et al (2019), research philosophy refers to a set of assumptions concerning the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge .In the same view Creswell (2018), defines research philosophy as a worldview that shapes the researcher‘s understanding of a problem and influences the methods chosen to investigate it. Research philosophy is important because it influences the entire research process .It affects the type of questions asked ,the methods used to gather data ,the relationship between the researcher and participants and the interpretation of findings .Without a clear philosophical foundation, a study may lack direction and consistency.

This study was guided by the interpretivist research philosophy .Interpretivism is based on the belief that social reality is constructed through human interactions, experiences and meanings. This means that people understand the same issue differently depending on their personal experiences, culture, beliefs and environment. Unlike positivism, which focuses on measurable facts and objective reality, interpretivism seeks to understand human behavior from the participants' point of view. Interpretivism recognizes that social problems such as intimate partner violence cannot be fully understood through numbers alone because they involve emotions, relationships, power and social norms that is why it was considered the most suitable philosophy for the study.

Furthermore, interpretivism was aligned with the feminist theory and gender role theory informing this study. Gender transformative approaches challenge dominant patriarchal structures and seek to understand how gender norms and power relations are produced, reproduced and potentially disrupted in specific social and cultural contexts .This required an interpretive lens capable of examining not only what happened to survivors but how and why it happened within the specific social ecology of Nemamwa, Masvingo. Interpretivism therefore provided the most appropriate philosophical foundation for generating contextually relevant, participant –centered and socially meaningful knowledge about intimate partner violence prevention in Zimbabwe.

3.2 Research Approach

Research approach refers to the broad strategy or plan used by the researcher to collect, analyse and interpret data in order to answer research questions. It provides direction on whether the study will use numerical data, textual data or combination of both. According to Leavy (2022), a research approach is the logical framework linking research questions with methods of data collection and analysis.

The study adopted a qualitative research approach .Qualitative research is an approach that seeks to understand meanings ,experiences, behaviors and social realities through non-numerical data such as words ,narratives and discussions .Creswell and Poth (2018), explain that qualitative research is used to explore and understand how individuals or groups interpret social problems .Qualitative research approach was suitable because the study aims to explore the causes of intimate partner violence, survivor experiences and possible gender transformative interventions rather than measuring statistics. The qualitative research approach allowed the researcher to gather suggestions for preventing intimate partner violence through gender transformative approaches by conducting in depth interviews, the researcher also sought to understand social and cultural factors that contribute to intimate partner violence in Nemamwa. The qualitative research approach was most appropriate because it generated rich, detailed and context-specific information.

3.3 Research Design

According to Abutabenjeh and Jaradat (2018), research design refers to the overall plan or blueprint used to conduct a study .It shows how data will be collected, from whom and how it will be analyzed. According to Kumar (2019), research design is a procedural plan that enables the researcher to answer research questions validly and efficiently. The researcher employed a case

study design .A case study is an in-depth investigation of a specific case such as community ,organization, household or event .In this study, Nemamwa in Masvingo was the case under investigation. Yin defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real –life context .This design enabled the researcher to explore intimate partner violence within the actual social setting where participants lived and interacted.

The case study design was appropriate because it enabled a deep understanding of intimate partner violence in one community rather than superficial information from many areas .Nemamwa was selected because it provided a relevant context where gender norms, family relations and community systems could be examined closely at Musasa Project where a lot of intimate partner violence survivors reside. The design also allowed the use of different data collection methods such as in depth interviews and focus group discussions. This strengthened the quality of data obtained.

3.4 Study Setting

The study was conducted at Musasa Project in Nemamwa, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe. The selection of this setting was deliberate and informed by both the research objectives and the contextual relevance of the site to the phenomenon under investigation. Musasa project, Nemamwa is a rural area located in Masvingo Province in the South Eastern part of Zimbabwe .Musasa project is located approximately 20- 25 kilometers from Masvingo town ,approximately 6,5 kilometers west of Great Zimbabwe ruins. There are Karanga people, a sub group of Shona ethnic group. The Shona people are known for their strong adherence to patriarchal cultural values and practices, clearly defined gender roles that position men as household heads and decision makers while women are expected to be submissive, obedient and confined to domestic responsibilities. The socio economic conditions, combined with deeply entrenched patriarchal norms, create an environment in which intimate partner violence is not only prevalent but is frequently normalized and tolerated by community members including by some women themselves. Many survivors in Nemamwa faced significant barriers to seeking help including fear of stigma, economic dependence on abusive partners and sometimes lack of trust of formal institutions like police. It was within this complex social ecology that the study area was situated ,making Nemamwa a highly relevant and contextually appropriate setting for research on developing gender transformative approach to intimate partner violence prevention.

The choice of Musasa Project in Nemamwa as the study setting was justified by several reasons. Firstly, the organization' s established presence in the community meant that potential participants were already familiar with and trusted the institutional environment which was essential for encouraging open and honest participation in a study on such a sensitive topic. More so ,Musasa Project's mandate and operational focus were directly aligned with the research objectives ,making it an ideal organization for a study aimed at developing gender transformative approaches to intimate partner violence prevention. Furthermore, the rural ,resource-constrained and patriarchal structured context of Nemamwa presented an authentic and critical site for exploring how gender transformative frameworks could be contextualized and made practically relevant to communities where intimate partner violence is most deeply embedded and where preventive interventions are most urgently needed.

3.5 Target Population

A target population refers to an entire group of individuals, cases or elements that share defined characteristics and about whom the researcher seeks to generate knowledge .It broader universe of potential study participants from which a sample is drawn. Burns and Grove (2021) defines a target population as the entire set of individuals who meet the sampling criteria and from whom the researcher wishes to draw conclusion. The target population is determined by the research objectives and the specific characteristics relevant to the study's inquiry.

In the context of this study, the target population comprised women who had experienced intimate partner violence in Nemamwa, Masvingo .This population was defined by specific inclusion criteria women aged 16 years to 50 years who had experienced physical, emotional, sexual and economic abuse perpetrated by an intimate partner, women who had strong ties to the Nemamwa community and also women who were willing and able to share their experiences in a research context. Additionally staff members of Musasa Project operating in the Nemamwa and broader Masvingo area were included as a secondary target population, given their professional expertise in supporting intimate partner violence survivors and their programmatic knowledge of gender – based violence interventions in the region.

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Sampling in qualitative research involves electing a subset of participants from the target population in a manner that is purposeful, theoretically informed and capable of generating rich,

relevant data. Qualitative research aim informational richness and relevance to the research questions.

The researcher employed purposive sampling as the primary sampling technique .It is also referred to as purposeful or criterion-based sampling .Purposive sampling involves the deliberate selection of participants based on specific characteristics ,experiences or knowledge that are directly relevant to the research .Patton (2015) describes purposive sampling as selecting information –rich cases for study in depth ,where information –rich cases are those from which the researcher can learn a great deal about the central issues of the inquiry. The researcher chose purposive sampling because the study sought to explore the experiences of intimate partner violence survivors and professional insights of Musasa Project staff .It was essential to select participants who had direct, relevant and substantial knowledge and experience pertaining to the research questions .Random or convenience sampling would not have guaranteed the selection of participants with the depth experience and relevance necessary to generate meaningful data.

3.7 Sample Size

The sample size of this study comprised a total of ten participants ,divided into two groups .The first group consisted of seven intimate partner violence survivors from Musasa Project ,Nemamwa who were interviewed individually using in –depth interview techniques. These IPV survivors also participated in a Focus Group Discussion. The second group consisted of three staff members of Musasa Project operating in Nemamwa and Masvingo, who participated in a focus group discussion. The composition of the sample was deliberately designed to capture both experiential perspective of survivors and the professional perspective of practitioners, thereby generating complementary and mutually enriching sources of data.

The selection of seven survivors as the primary participant group was grounded in the principles of qualitative inquiry, which do not prescribe fixed or large sample size but instead emphasize the quality and depth of data generated .In qualitative research, smaller samples are considered appropriate and sufficient when participants are selected purposively and when the data collection methods are designed to generate rich, detailed, and contextually nuanced information. Guest et al (2006) argues that thematic saturation ,the point at which no new themes or categories emerge from the data can often be achieved with as few as six to twelve interviews in homogeneous samples. Given that seven survivors in the study shared broadly similar experiences of intimate

partner violence in Nemamwa and were selected specifically for their relevance to the research questions. The researcher was confident that a sample of seven was sufficient to achieve data saturation the survivor unit. The inclusion of three Musasa Project staff members in a focus group discussion further enriched the dataset by providing institutional and programmatic perspectives that complemented the individual survivor narratives.

3.8 Data Collection Methods

Data collection method refers to the specific tool, procedure and technique that a researcher uses to gather information from participants in order to address the research questions .According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), data collection in qualitative research involves locating people or sites for study, gaining access and building rapport, purposefully sampling participants, collecting data using multiple forms and making a record of the information. In qualitative research, data collection methods are designed to generate rich, contextual and meaning –laden information that reflects the subjective experiences, perspectives and interpretations of participants. Hence, the researcher utilized the relevant data collection methods which allowed her to acquire in –depth information.

3.8.1 In –depth Interviews

In depth individual interviews were conducted with seven intimate partner violence survivors from Musasa Project Nemamwa, Masvingo. In –depth interviewing is a qualitative data collection technique in which the researcher engages in an extended, open ended conversation with a participant's experiences, perceptions, feelings in depth. The interview is typically guided by a flexible set of open –ended questions or themes which allow the participant to narrate their experiences in their own pace ,while the researcher listens actively ,asks follow up questions and probes for further details.

In-depth interviews were the primary data collection method for this study because they were the most appropriate technique for exploring the experiences of intimate partner violence survivors. The one on one format of the interview used by the researcher, created a private, confidential and supportive space in which survivors managed to share their stories without the social pressure that might arise in a group setting. The researcher conducted the interviews in Shona, the predominant local language in Nemamwa to ensure that participants could express themselves fully and

authentically. Each interview lasted 25 - 30 minutes and was conducted at a location of the participant's choice to maximize comfort.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussion with Survivors

The researcher also conducted a focus group discussion with seven intimate partner violence survivors. A focus group discussion is a qualitative data collection method in which a small group of participants are brought together to discuss a specific topic, guided by a trained facilitator. The group dynamic of FGD enabled participants to interact with each other, share and compare their experiences, challenge assumptions and collectively construct meaning in ways that individual interviews might not facilitated. The survivor Focus Group Discussion lasted approximately 45 minutes and was conducted in a private, secure venue agreed upon by all participants.

The researcher conducted a focus group discussion after the in depth interviews in order to acquire an additional layer of data that captured the social and collective dimensions of survivors' experiences. The FGD enabled participants to identify commonalities and differences in their experiences to articulate shared understanding of gender norms and intimate partner violence dynamics in their community and to collectively reflect on what they believed would constitute effective, community –relevant IPV prevention strategies .The interaction between participants in the focus group discussion also had the potential to stimulate reflection and memory bringing to light experiences and perspectives that might not have surfaced in an individual interview context.

3.8.2. Focus Group Discussion

The researcher conducted a focus group discussion with three Musasa Project staff members .Musasa Project is a Zimbabwean non-governmental organization dedicated to the prevention of gender based violence and the support of survivors. The staff members who participated in the FGD included individuals with professional experience in counselling, community outreach and programs coordination all of whom had direct engagement with intimate partner violence survivors in Nemamwa and Masvingo areas. The staff FGD lasted approximately one hour and was conducted at the Musasa Project office in Nemamwa Masvingo. The discussions covered themes including the nature and prevalence of intimate partner violence ,the organization 's current intervention strategies ,barriers to survivor engagement ,the potential for gender transformative approaches to be integrated into existing programming, recommendations for community-level prevention efforts.

3.9 Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools refer to the specific instruments, devices and mechanisms that a researcher uses to gather, capture and record data from participants during the research process. In this study, the researcher utilized semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussions guides. Data collection tools are a critical component of any research study as the quality, accuracy and completeness of the data gathered is largely determined by the appropriateness and rigor of the tools employed. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), data collection tools are the instruments and materials used by the researcher to systematically gather record and store information from participants and their selection must be guided by the nature of the research questions, the research design and the characteristics of the participant population. Data collection tools refers to the means by which the researcher operationalizes the data collection process, translating research questions and the and theoretical concepts into concrete ,usable instruments that can generate relevant and reliable information from research participants,(Bryman,2016).This means that data collection tools serve as the bridge between the abstract theoretical framework of a study and the concrete ,real world process of gathering information from participants.

3.9.1 Focus Group Discussion Guide (FGD guide)

A focus group discussion guide is a data collection tool consisting of a set of open ended questions and thematic prompts that the researcher uses to guide and facilitate discussion among a group of participants. Morgan (2019), defines a focus group discussion as a structured yet flexible instrument that provides the facilitator with a roadmap for the group discussion, ensuring that all relevant themes are covered while allowing the natural flow of conversation among participants. According to Nyumba et al (2018), FGD guide is a carefully designed tool that translates the research questions into accessible and engaging prompts that stimulate meaningful dialogue, interaction and collective reflection among group participants.

In this study, the researcher used FGD guides were used during both the FGD conducted with IPV survivors and the FGD conducted with Musasa Project staff members in Masvingo. The guides were developed by the researcher prior to fieldwork and consisted of open –ended questions and thematic prompts tailored to the specific knowledge, experiences and perspectives of each participant group. For the survivor FGD, the guide explored themes including participants' shared experiences of IPV, the community norms and gender dynamics they identified as contributing to

abuse and their collective views on prevention strategies relevant to the Nemamwa context. For the Musasa Project staff FGD, the guide covered themes including the organization's current intervention strategies, barriers to survivor engagement, programmatic gaps and recommendations for integrating gender transformative approaches into existing service delivery frameworks. The open –ended nature of the questions in both guides ensured that participants were able to express their views freely and authentically, generating rich and meaningful data that was directly relevant to the research objectives.

3.9.2 Interview Guide

An interview guide is a data collection tool consisting of a set of pre-determined questions that the researcher uses to guide and structure an interview with a participant. According to Patton (2015), an interview guide is a list of questions or topics that the researcher intends to cover during the interview, providing a framework for the conversation while allowing sufficient flexibility for the participant to elaborate and express their views freely. Rowley (2012) describes an interview guide as a carefully constructed instrument that translates the research objectives into specific questions designed to elicit rich, relevant and detailed responses from participants.

In this study, the interview guide was developed by the researcher prior to commencing fieldwork and was informed by the research objectives, the existing literature on intimate partner violence and the gender transformative framework underpinning the study. The interview guide was used during the in-depth interviews conducted with the seven IPV survivors from Nemamwa, Masvingo. The guide consisted of open-ended questions that explored the social and cultural factors contributing to intimate partner violence in their communities, experiences in seeking and receiving support and their perspectives on how gender transformative prevention strategies would look like in their community. Open-ended questions were deliberately chosen because they gave participants the freedom to narrate their experiences in their own words, at their own pace and to the level of detail they were comfortable with, which was particularly important given the sensitive nature of the research topic.

3.10 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure refers to the systematic and sequential process that a researcher follows in order to gather data from participants in a structured, ethical and organized manner. According to Bryman (2016) data collection procedure is the orderly and deliberate process through which

the researcher moves from the planning stage of data collection to its actual implementation in the field, ensuring that all methodological and ethical protocols are observed.

The researcher firstly obtained an ethical clearance from Bindura University of Science Education, which granted formal approval for the study to proceed. The researcher then formerly approached Musasa Project, Nemamwa in Masvingo and asked for permission to conduct the study within the organization. Permission was granted by Musasa Project management, who also facilitated access to survivor participants and staff members.

The researcher identified the participants through purposive sampling. Musasa Project staff members, who had established relationships of trust with IPV survivors, assisted the researcher in identifying women who met the study‘s inclusion criteria .Through this process ,seven survivors were selected for in depth interviews and the survivor focus group discussion and the staff members were selected for the staff Focus group discussion.

Before commencing ay data collection activity, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to all participants in a native language they all understood. Informed consent was obtained from all participants. A trauma –informed approach was maintained throughout all interactions with survivor participants

The researcher then carried out data collection in three stages. The researcher conducted individual in-depth interviews with seven survivors each lasting between 20 to 30 minutes in private location chosen by participants. In the second stage, a focus group discussion was conducted with the survivors lasting approximately 45 minutes, in a private and secure venue agreed upon by all participants. In the third stage, the researcher conducted a focus group discussion with three Musasa Project staff members lasting approximately one hour. All sessions were conducted in Shona for survivor participant and in English for staff members.

Data from survivors was recorded through detailed written notes in a notebook as some of the survivors expressed discomfort with audio recording. Notes were expanded into full narrative records immediately after each session. The researcher recorded data from Musasa Project staff, using the researcher’s mobile phone. This was done with the full consent of all participants and was subsequently transcribed for thematic analysis.

3.11 Data Presentation and Analysis

Data presentation refers to the systematic and organized way in which collected data is displayed, arranged and communicated in a manner that is clear, coherent and accessible to the reader. Creswell and Creswell (2018) defines data presentation as the process of organizing and displaying data in a structured and meaningful way that allows the reader to follow the researcher 's interpretive process and understand the findings of the study. Data analysis on the other hand refers to the systematic process of examining, coding, categorizing and interpreting data in order to identify patterns, themes and meanings that address research questions. According to Braun and Clarke (2019), data analysis is a process of active engagement with data in which the researcher moves progressively between the dataset and emerging interpretations, exercising analytical judgment throughout I n order to produce a meaningful and credible account of the phenomenon under study.

3.11.1 Familiarisation with the Data

The first phase involved the researcher familiarizing herself with the entire dataset. After data collection, the researcher read and re-read all interview notes, and focus group discussion notes thoroughly. This process allowed the researcher to engage herself in the data, gain a deep understanding of its content and begin identifying initial patterns and ideas that were relevant to the research questions .During this phase, the researcher also wrote down initial thoughts, impressions and observations about the data in her research notebook, which served as the foundation for the subsequent analytical phases.

3.11.2 Generating Initial Codes

In the second phase, the researcher generated initial codes from the data .Coding involved identifying meaningful and relevant segments of data and labelling them with descriptive codes that captured the essence of what was being said. The researcher went through all interview notes and focus group discussions records systematically, highlighting significant statements, recurring ideas and significant patterns and assigning each a descriptive code. The codes were generated inductively, meaning they emerged directly from the data rather than being imposed from a predetermined framework, ensuring that the analysis remained grounded in the actual experiences and perspectives of participants.

3.11.3 Searching For Themes

In the third phase, the researcher sorted and grouped the initial codes into broader potential themes. This involved examining the relationships and connections between different codes and identifying clusters of codes that shared a common meaning or addressed a similar aspect of the research questions. The researcher used a thematic map to visually organize the codes into potential themes and subthemes, allowing her to see the overall structure of the emerging analysis and to identify areas of convergence and divergence across the dataset.

3.11.4 Reviewing Themes

In the fourth phase, the researcher reviewed and refined the potential themes identified in the previous phase. This involved checking each theme against the coded data extracts and the full dataset to ensure that the themes were coherent, internally consistent and meaningfully distinct from one another. Some themes were merged or split during this phase as the researcher refined her understanding of the data and ensured that the thematic structure accurately reflected the content and complexity of participants' responses. The researcher also checked that the theme was sufficiently supported by data extracts from across the dataset.

3.11.5 Defining and Naming Themes

In the fifth phase, the researcher defined and named each theme clearly and precisely. Each theme was given a brief and descriptive name that captured its essence and a detailed definition was developed for each theme explaining what it covered, what it did not cover and how it related to the research questions. This phase was important in ensuring that the themes were clearly distinguished from one another and that their boundaries and meanings were transparent and accessible to the reader.

3.11.6 Writing up the Analysis

In the sixth and final phase, the researcher wrote up the thematic analysis as a detailed and integrated narrative. This involved weaving together the identified themes, illustrative data extracts from participant response and interpretive commentary that explained the significance and meaning of the themes in relation to the research questions and the broader theoretical framework of the study. The write –up was structured thematically rather than participant by participant, ensuring that the analysis presented a coherent and analytically rich account of the findings rather than a descriptive summary of individual responses.

3.11. 7 Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness refers to the extent to which research findings reflect participants' experiences and perspectives (Noble and Smith, 2020).Trustworthiness is a critical component in qualitative research as it ensures the credibility and overall quality of the study .Qualitative research focuses on establishing trustworthiness in order to demonstrate that the findings are accurate, consistent and reflective of participants' lived experiences. Morrow (2020) states that the importance of trustworthiness lies in its ability to foster confidence among researchers, participants and stakeholders in the research study. The researcher upheld credibility, conformability, transferability and dependability to ensure that the findings are grounded in the experiences of participants and are presented in a manner that is both systematic and ethically sound.

3.11.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the findings accurately represent the realities and experiences of participants .It is equivalent to internal validity in quantitative research (Creswell and Poth ,2018)In this study ,credibility was enhanced through methodological triangulation and prolonged engagement The researcher employed triangulation by using multiple data collection methods namely focus group discussions with IPV survivors, focus group discussion with staff from Musasa project and also in depth interviews with intimate partner violence survivors. According to Denzin(2017),triangulation strengthens credibility by allowing the researcher to compare and cross validate data from different sources and perspectives, This approach enabled the researcher to obtain both collective and individual experiences, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of intimate partner violence dynamics and prevention strategies. More so, spending time with participants allowed the researcher to build trust and rapport, which is crucial when dealing with sensitive issues such as intimate partner violence. Meriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that prolonged engagement enhances the depth and authenticity of data collection in qualitative studies.

3.11.2 Conformability

Conformability refers to the degree to which the findings are shaped by the participants rather than researcher biases, assumptions or personal interests (Lincoln and Guba 1985).Rasheed et al (2023) states that conformability pertains to the impartiality and objectivity of the findings ,guaranteeing that they remain unaffected by any biases or preferences of the researcher. Reflexivity was central

to ensuring conformability throughout the study. The researcher continuously and critically reflected on personal assumptions, values, cultural background and potential biases that could influence the collection and interpretation of data from intimate partner violence survivors and Musasa Project staff. This was particularly crucial because research on IPV and gender in Zimbabwe is deeply embedded in cultural and social norms that could unconsciously influence the researcher's perspectives and interpretation of participants' experiences shared during focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

3.11.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied or transferred to other contexts .Unlike quantitative research, qualitative studies do not aim for generalization but rather provide sufficient contextual detail to enable readers to determine applicability(Nowell et al ., 2017)In this study ,transferability was achieved through the provision of thick description. Detailed accounts of the research setting in Nemamwa, Masvingo, the socio-cultural context of IPV in Zimbabwe and the characteristics of participants including intimate partner violence survivors and Musasa Project staff were provided. Braun and Clarke (2021) argue that thick description allows readers to make informed judgments about the relevance of findings to other settings. By thoroughly describing the context and participants, the study enables other researchers and practitioners to assess whether the findings can inform intimate partner violence prevention strategies in similar rural or community-based settings.

3.11.4 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency and stability of research findings over time and across conditions and it is comparable to reliability in quantitative research (Merian and Tisdell, 2016).In to ensure dependability, the researcher maintained a detailed and transparent account of the research process. This included documentation of the research design, sampling procedures, data collection methods and data analysis processes. The use of a consistent interview guide for in – depth interviews ensured uniformity in the data collection process while still allowing flexibility for participants to express their experiences. The researcher also maintained an audit trail consisting of field notes and audio recordings. Maintaining an audit trail enhances dependability by allowing other researchers to trace the research process and evaluate the consistency of the findings. (Nowell et al.2017)

3.12. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research refer to the moral principles and guidelines that a researcher must observe and uphold throughout the entire research process in order to protect the rights, dignity, safety and wellbeing of research participants. Research involving human participants particularly vulnerable populations such as IPV survivors, requires the researcher to be extremely careful and sensitive in the way she conducts the study so that participants are not harmed. According to Bryman (2016) ethical considerations is a concern for the well-being of research participants, ensuring that they are not harmed, deceived or exploited in the course of the research process. In this research, the researcher was guided by informed consent non-maleficence, respect for participants and confidentiality.

3.12.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent is an ethical principle that requires the researcher to ensure that all participants have been filly and clearly informed about the nature, purpose, procedures risks and benefits of the study before they agree to participate .According to Bryman (2016),informed consent means providing participants with all the information they need to make a free and informed decision about whether to participate in the research, including information about the purpose of the study ,what participation involves, any risks or benefits associated with participation and their right to withdraw at any time.

In the study, informed consent was obtained from all participants before the commencement of any data collection activity. The researcher explained the purpose of the study, the nature of the data collection activities, the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any time without consequence to all participants clearly in a language they understood. The researcher provided consent forms for participants to read and write. Separate consent was obtained from Musasa Project staff members for the audio recording of their focus group discussion. The researcher stored all signed consent forms securely.

3.12.2 Confidentiality

In research involving IPV survivors, confidentiality is of critical importance because the disclosure of a participant's identity or the details of her experiences could expose her to further violence, social stigma or family pressure. Babbie (2020) concurs that researchers must protect participants' private information and ensure that their identities are not revealed.

In this study, the researcher upheld confidentiality through a number of actual and deliberate measures. All participants were assigned pseudonyms, meaning that their real names were not recorded or used anywhere in the study. No identifying information such a real names, specific addresses or other personal details was included in the interview notes, focus group notes or research project. All data collected during the study was stored securely by the researcher. Participants were also assured that the information they shared would be used solely for the purposes of the study and would not be shared with anyone outside the research process.

3.12.3 Respect for Participants

Respect for participants is an ethical principle that requires the researcher to treat all participants with dignity and honoring each participant's autonomy. According to Bryman (2016) respect for participants means treating research participants as ends in themselves rather than merely as means to the researcher's ends and ensuring that their dignity, autonomy and rights are upheld at every stage of the research process.

In the study, the researcher demonstrated respect for participants in several ways. The researcher acknowledged and valued the courage it took for IPV survivors to come forward and share their deeply personal and painful experiences and treated each participant with the utmost sensitivity and care. The researcher also ensured that data collection sessions were conducted at time and location that was convenient and safe for participants, rather than imposing arrangements that only suited the researcher. Throughout the entire research process, the researcher was mindful of the power imbalance that exists between the researcher and the participants and took deliberate steps to minimize this imbalance by positioning herself as a respectful, empathetic and non-authoritative presence in all research interactions.

3.12.4 Non –Maleficence

Noni-maleficence is an ethical principle that requires the researcher to do no harm to participants throughout the research process. This means that the researcher must take all necessary steps to ensure that participation in the study does not cause any physical, psychological or social harm to participants. This is particularly important in research involving IPV survivors, as asking participants to recall and narrate their experiences of abuse carries a real risk of causing emotional distress and psychological pain.

In this study, the researcher took several steps to uphold to non-maleficence. Before commencing data collection, the researcher consulted Musasa Project staff to put in place a safety and referral plan that could be activated if any participant showed signs of distress during the interviews of focus group discussions. The researcher adopted a caring, empathetic and non-judgmental approach throughout all interactions with survivor participants, creating a safe and supportive environment in which participants felt comfortable and respected. Participants were reminded at the beginning of each session to skip any question they were not comfortable answering or to withdraw from the study without facing any negative consequences. Where participants showed signs of emotional distress during data collection, the researcher paused the session immediately and offered emotional support.

3.13 Limitations of the Study

Limitations refer to the weakness or shortcomings of a study that were beyond the control of the researcher and that may have affected the findings or the way the study was conducted. One of the limitation s of the study is the reliance on written notes for survivor interactions. Some of the survivors showed discomfort with being audio - recorded so the researcher ended up relying on notes writing to record data from the in depth interviews and survivor focus group. While the researcher took detailed notes during and immediately after each session, it was not possible to capture every word and detail of what participants said in the same way that an audio recording would have allowed. This means that some important details or expressions may have been missed or recorded less accurately than would have been the case with audio recording which have had a minor impact on the completeness of the data.

Furthermore, the sensitive nature of intimate partner violence meant that some participants may have been reluctant to share the full details due to fear of shame or social stigma. Despite, the researcher‘s efforts to create a safe supportive and confidential research environment, it is possible that some participants held back certain information or presented some of the information in a way that they felt would be more socially acceptable. This means that the data collected may not fully reflect the true extent and complexity of participants’ knowledge about intimate partner violence.

3.14 Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations refer to the conscious and deliberate choices made by the researcher that defined and set the boundaries of the study. The study was deliberately conducted at Musasa Project in

Nemamwa, Masvingo. This was intentional and well considered decision made by the researcher for several important reasons. Firstly, Musasa Project is an organization that works specifically with GBV survivors meaning that the researcher was able to access women who had direct and relevant experiences of intimate partner violence. In addition, Musasa Project employs trained and experienced professionals who deal with IPV on a daily basis whose professional knowledge and insights were invaluable. The presence of both IPV survivors and IPV professionals at Musasa Project Nemamwa made it the most appropriate and productive site of the study as it allowed the researcher to collect relevant data from two complementary participant groups within the same organizational setting. Conducting the research at Musasa Project also ensured that participants felt safe and supported throughout the research process, given that the organization already provided a trusted and familiar environment for survivors.

More so, the other delimitation is that the study deliberately focused on women survivors of IPV as the primary participant group. The researcher chose not include male perpetrators of IPV, male survivors or other community members as participants. This decision was informed by the feminist gender role theory which anchored this study. These theories require the centering of women's voices and experiences. Including other groups would have shifted the focus of the study away from its primary objective of preventing IPV in Zimbabwe

3.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a detailed account of the research methodology employed in this study on developing a gender transformative approach to prevent intimate partner violence in Nemamwa Masvingo, Zimbabwe. The research outlined the interpretivist research philosophy, qualitative research approach, a case study research design that were employed in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select participant in the research study. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions using an in –depth interview guide and focus group discussion guide as data collection tools .Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Trustworthiness of the study was discussed in this chapter. The chapter also discussed the ethical considerations upheld throughout the study as well the limitations and delimitations that defined boundaries of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and discusses the findings gathered from the study on developing a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Zimbabwe .The chapter is guided by the study objectives which sought to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, identify community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention, examine the efficacy of existing IPV prevention strategies and determine a comprehensive transformative approach suitable for the Zimbabwean context. The findings presented in this chapter were obtained through in depth interviews with IPV survivors, FGD with IPV survivors and FGD with key informants.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the participants who took part in the study .The study involved a total number of ten participants consisting of seven survivors of intimate partner violence and three key informants. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, educational background and occupational status were considered important in understanding participants' experiences, perceptions and views regarding intimate partner violence and gender transformative approaches. All the participants were women within economically active age group and most were separated or married. Their educational backgrounds varied from primary to secondary level education. These characteristics provided important insights into the social and economic factors that influence vulnerability to intimate partner violence within the community.

The key informants were selected based on professional experience and involvement in programmes related to gender issues and IPV prevention. Their demographic and professional backgrounds enabled them to provide expert knowledge and informed perspectives relevant to the objectives of the study.

Table 1.1 shows the demographic characteristics of female intimate partner violence survivors.

PSEUDONYMS	AGE	MARITAL STATUS	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	OCCUPATIONAL STATUS
P1	20	Separated	Secondary	Unemployed
P2	22	Separated	Secondary	Informally employed
P3	18	Married	Secondary	Unemployed
P4	16	Single	Primary	Unemployed
P5	17	Married	Secondary	Unemployed
P6	25	Separated	Secondary	Unemployed
P7	50	Married	Tertiary	Informally employed

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of female IPV survivors

The table above presents the demographic characteristics of seven survivors of intimate partner violence who participated in the study .The participants were women from Musasa project Nemamwa shelter ,Masvingo who experienced different forms of intimate partner violence and were receiving support services from Musasa project .Their ages, educational backgrounds ,marital statuses and occupational statuses varies reflecting the diverse social and economic circumstances that influence experiences to IPV. Their experiences provided valuable insights into the nature, causes and impact of intimate partner violence.

Table 1.2 shows the demographic characteristics of key informants

PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	PROFESSION	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
KI 1	36	Female	Tertiary	Social worker	3 years
KI 2	37	Female	Tertiary	Psychologist	10 months
KI 3	40	Female	Tertiary	Social worker	1year 6 months

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of key informants

The table above presents the demographic and professional characteristics of key informants who participated in the study. The participants were selected based on their expertise and experience in addressing IPV and gender-related issues. They included professionals such as social workers and psychologists working within Musasa Project. Their varied professional backgrounds and years of experience provided rich and informed perspectives on the causes, prevention strategies and possible gender transformative approaches to intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

4.2 Societal and cultural norms contributing to intimate partner violence

The first objective of this study was to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The findings reveal that deeply rooted patriarchal beliefs, traditional gender expectations and economic dependency of women greatly contribute to the persistence of IPV in Zimbabwe.

4.2.1 Traditional beliefs supporting male dominance

Research participants revealed that patriarchal beliefs and traditional societal norms contribute significantly to intimate partner violence in many communities in Zimbabwe. Many participants indicated that men are often viewed as heads of households with authority over women, which normalizes unequal power relations and violence. The evidence below highlights survivors' experiences and perceptions regarding cultural norms that reinforce male dominance and women's subordination.

Participant 2 said:

> "*Maonero emunharaunda medu anongotsigira kutonga kwevarume muwanano, vanhukadzi tinongotarisirwa kuterera zvinodiwa nevarume vedu zvisinei kuti tiri kumbunyikidzwa here kana kwete."* (Traditional views support male dominance in relationships or marriages and women are expected to obey their husbands even when they are abused.)

Participant 5 explained:

> "*Takakura tichingodzidziswa kuti mukadzi unofanirwa kushingirira kuti wanano iende mberi uye haufanirwi kutongesa murume wako kunyange watadzirwa*."(In our culture, women are taught to endure marriage problems and not challenge men even when they are wrong.)

During the Focus group discussion, it was clearly indicated that cultural expectations pressured women to remain silent about abuse .Participants stated that women who challenged abusive relationships are often labelled disrespectful or rebellious.

Participant 1 stated that:

> "Munharaunda *matinogara vanhu vanongoti mukadzi kwaye anoshingirira chero kukauya chii muwanano*." (People in the community say a good wife must persevere no matter what happens.)

Participant 2 added:

> "*Munhukadzi anopiwa mhosva yekuputsa wananno kana akasiya nekuda kwekuti aishungurudzwa.*"(Women are blamed for breaking families when they leave abusive marriages.)

Key informants from Musasa Project concurred that patriarchal beliefs remained one of the major drivers of IPV in Zimbabwe. Staff members explained that many communities still socialize boys to dominate while girls are socialized to submit.

KI 1 said:

> "*Patriarchal systems contribute to reinforce unequal power relations where men feel entitled to control women thus patriarchal beliefs continue to sustain intimate partner violence.*"

KI 3 added:

> "*Most survivors we assist were taught to tolerate abuse because marriage is considered sacred*."

The findings reveal that patriarchal norms continue to fuel IPV in Zimbabwe. The experiences shared by survivors and key informants show that violence is often justified as a disciplinary mechanism whenever women challenge male authority. This reflects how deeply embedded patriarchal values normalize unequal gender relations in Zimbabwean communities. The study findings concur with Heise et al (2019), who argue that patriarchal social structures reinforce male dominance and women's subordination. The findings are also consistent with Jewkes et al (2020)

who assert that unequal gender norms legitimize violence against women by positioning men as authority figures in relationships, observed that gender inequalities create environments where violence against women become normalized. The findings reveal that societal institutions such as families, religious institutions and traditional systems reinforce expectations that women should tolerate abuse in order to persevere marriages and family reputation. The findings concur with Walby (2019), who argues that patriarchal societies normalize male dominance and female subordination, thereby increasing women's vulnerability to violence.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with Gender Role Theory which explains that men and women are socialized into rigid gender roles from childhood .Men are taught to exercise control and assert masculinity while women are expected to be submissive and tolerant .Dobash and Dobash (2020), further maintain that women's socialization into submissive roles contributes to tolerance of abuse and limits resistance against violent relationships. The findings further support feminist theory which explains that IPV is not merely an individual problem but a manifestation of structural gender inequalities maintained through patriarchy. In many Zimbabwean communities, traditional beliefs continue to place men in positions of authority while women are expected to remain submissive. Similarly, Chireshe (2019) noted that cultural norms in Zimbabwe often discourage women from speaking against abuse .This contributes to silence, fear and continued victimization of women. Hence, there is need for community based gender transformative programmes that challenge patriarchal beliefs and promote equal power relations between men and women.

4.2.2 Economic dependency and financial control

The study revealed that economic dependency significantly contributes to intimate partner violence. Many survivors and key informants explained that financial dependence on abusive partner limited their ability to leave violent relationships.

Participant 1 stated:

> *"Ndandisingashandi ndaichengetwa nemurume wangu so pese pandaitaura zvekumusungisa aiti haazondichengeti kana kuchengeta mwana nekudaro ndaingoshingirira ndichishungurudzwa nekuti ndaiona kuti handaizozvikwanisa ndega."* (I stayed with my abusive husband because I had no source of income

.He controlled all the finances and would threaten to stop supporting the child and I if I reported him.)

Participant 5 said:

> '*Pese pandaitaura zvekuenda kubasa ainditi ndinomudherera kana ndikanotsvaka basa ndinenge ndozvionera zvese pasina rubatsiro rwake."* (Whenever I tried to become financially independent, he accused me of being disrespectful. He threatened to withdraw his support if I get employed.)

In a FGD, Participant 6 noted:

> "*Ndaingoshingirira ndichishungurudzwa nekuti ndaitya kuti ndinozochengetwa nani kana ndikasiyana nemurume uyu."*(I endured abuse because I feared how I would survive outside the marriage .I did not have employment or anywhere to go.)

KI 1 highlighted that:

> '*Economic abuse is very common. Perpetrators use financial control to trap women in abusive relationship."*

The findings reveal that economic dependence significantly weakens women's bargaining power and decision making capacity within intimate relationships. From the findings it is clearly explained that lack of financial independence trapped many survivors in abusive marriages because they feared poverty or inability to provide for themselves. Economic abuse emerged as a major form of control where perpetrators manipulated access to money and resources in order to maintain dominance over survivors.

The findings indicate that financial dependency creates a cycle of vulnerability whereby women remain exposed to repeated violence due to limited economic alternatives. Participants highlighted that abusive partners deliberately prevented them from working, controlled household income or threatened to withdraw financial support whenever they attempted to assert independence. This demonstrates how economic abuse functions as a mechanism of power and control within violent relationships.

The findings agree with the feminist perspectives which argue that structural inequalities such as unequal access to employment opportunities ,education and economic resources increase women's vulnerability to violence .The findings also concur with UN Women (2022) which emphasizes that women's economic dependence is a significant driver of IPV globally. Similarly Njuki et al (2023), argue that economic empowerment is central to achieving gender equality because financial independence enhances women's agency and decision making power. The findings also support the views of Sweatman (2019) who notes that economic inequalities reinforce women's dependence on abusive partners and limit their ability to escape violent relationships .Participants repeatedly emphasize that fear of economic hardship forced them to remain silent and tolerate abuse. This reflects how poverty and gender inequality intersect to sustain IPV.

Moreover, the findings reveal economic abuse has broader social and psychological consequence. Survivors reported experiencing stress, hopelessness and emotional exhaustion due to financial insecurity .Some participants explained that they lost confidence and felt trapped because they had no resources to rebuild independent lives. This indicates that economic abuse also affects psychological health. However, the findings also indicate that economic empowerment programmes can significantly transform survivors' lives. Participants who had received vocational training or income generating opportunities reported improved confidence, independence and ability to make personal decisions .Therefore, economic empowerment is not only a prevention strategy but also a pathway towards restoring dignity and resilience among survivors of IPV. Thus, women empowerment programmes aimed at improving survivor's economic independence should be strengthened in order to reduce dependency on abusive partners.

4.3 Community Perceptions and Attitudes towards Gender Equality and Violence Prevention.

This section presents findings on community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention. Participants pointed out several societal attitudes, victim blaming tendencies and normalization of violence within communities. However participants also mentioned about positive changes in awareness regarding women's rights and gender equality.

4.3.1 Normalization of Violence within Relationships

The research revealed that intimate partner violence is often normalized within communities. Several survivors and key informants pointed out that violence is viewed as a private family matter, perpetrators are protected because IPV is considered as normal between spouses.

Participant 6 noted:

> *"Munharaunda medu vanhu vaingoti kukonana kwagara kuriko pakati pemurume nemukadzi uye hapana chikonzero chekuudza vanhu vekunze."* (People in the community would say disputes between spouses are normal and should not involve outsiders.)

Participant 7 stated:

> *"Pandakamhan'arira murume wangu pamusaka pekundishungurudza dzimwe hama dzakatanga kuti ndadenha murume uye handimuremekedzi."(*When I reported the abuse, some relatives blamed me for provoking and disrespecting my husband.)

KI 2 highlighted:

> *"Many survivors fear reporting because communities often minimize the seriousness of abuse among spouses."*

The findings demonstrate that harmful community attitudes contribute significantly to the persistence and underreporting of intimate partner violence. Many participants explained that violence within relationships is often treated as a normal private matter that should be resolved within families rather than through formal reporting systems .Survivors reported being blamed for provoking abuse while perpetrators were often excused or protected by relatives and community members. The normalization of violence creates an environment where survivors fear judgment, stigma and rejection if they speak out. Participants highlighted that women who report abuse are frequently labelled as disrespectful, disobedient or failures in marriage. This discourages many survivors from seeking support or justice and allows perpetrators to continue abusive behavior without accountability.

The findings align with Flood (2019) who argues that social acceptance of violence undermines prevention efforts because abusive behavior becomes normalized within communities. Similarly, Shamu et al. (2019) argue that many women in Zimbabwe do not report abuse due to fear of stigma, victim-blaming and family pressure. The findings also support Gender Role Theory which explains that communities socialize women into passive roles while men are associated with authority and dominance .These socially constructed expectations contribute to victim blaming because women are expected to maintain peace within households regardless of abuse.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that normalization of violence contributes to intergenerational transmission of abusive behaviors .In a focus group discussion ,some participants indicated that children who grow up witnessing violence may later perceive abuse as normal within relationships .This demonstrates how harmful societal attitudes perpetuates cycles of violence across generations. The findings also reveal mistrust towards formal justice systems among some survivors. Participants explained that because communities often minimize violence, survivors lose confidence in receiving meaningful support from authorities .This further reinforces silence and isolation among victims

Therefore, there is need for intensified public awareness campaigns that challenge victim-blaming attitudes and emphasize that IPV is a serious social and human rights issue .Men and boys should be actively engaged in violence prevention programmes so that harmful forms of masculinity can be transformed into positive and respectful behaviors. Communities should also establish survivor-centered support systems that encourage survivors to report abuse and access emotional, legal and psychosocial support without fear of judgment.

4.3.2. Growing Awareness on Gender Equality

Despite the persistence of harmful attitudes, participants also highlighted increasing awareness regarding gender equality and women's rights. From what was mentioned in Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews it indicates that community education programmes are gradually transforming attitudes towards intimate violence prevention.

Participant 4 noted:

> "*Kudzidziswa kunoitwa mumanharaunda nemaorganization akaita seMusasa Project ne ARC ari kuita vakadzi vati pembenukei vazive kuti kumbonyikidzwa*

hakuna kunaka."(Workshops and awareness programmes being conducted by non –governmental organizations helps women to understand that abuse is not normal.)

Participant 5 added:

"*Ikezvino vanhukadzi vakutombotaurawo kana vambunyikidzwa uye vakuziva kutsvaga rubatsiro."*(Women are now beginning to speak openly about violence and seek help.)

In a FGD, participant 8 said:

"*Vechidiki vanoziva kodzero dzavo zvasiyana nemazera echikuru hanyanyoziva nezvekodzero."*(Young people are becoming more aware of gender equality compared to older generations.)

KI 1 noted:

'Community education programmes are slowly changing attitudes towards women 's rights and violence prevention."

The findings point out that awareness campaigns and gender equality programmes are contributing to positive changes in attitudes and perceptions .Survivors are increasingly recognizing abuse as a violation of rights rather than a normal aspect of marriage. These findings agree with Perez-Martinez et al. (2023) who emphasize that educational interventions play an important role in transforming harmful gender norms. Similarly, UN Women (2022) highlights that community awareness programmes are essential in changing societal attitudes towards IPV. . However, despite some harmful attitudes in communities, the findings also suggest that awareness programmes and advocacy campaigns are gradually shifting public perceptions. Some survivors reported increased community discussions around women's rights and violence prevention. This indicates that although harmful attitudes remain widespread, there is growing recognition that there should be gender equality between spouses and IPV is a serious social problem requiring collective action.

Therefore, awareness campaigns on gender equality and violence prevention should be expanded into rural communities where access to information and support services remains limited. Schools,

colleges and universities should continue promoting gender equality education in order to shape positive attitudes among young people. Media platforms such as radio, television and social media should also continue spreading anti- violence messages and educating communities about the harmful effects of intimate partner violence.

4.4 Efficacy of Current Intervention Strategies towards Preventing Intimate Partner Violence.

The third objective of the study was to examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention intervention. From the discussions held it was indicated that counselling and psychosocial support services are significantly contributing in supporting survivors and reducing intimate partner violence. However participants highlighted some challenges that continue to affect the accessibility of these services.

4.4.1 Counselling and Psychosocial Support Services

All the participants highlighted the importance of counselling and psychosocial support services provided by organizations such as Musasa Project. The survivors stated that psychosocial and counselling services promote emotional healing and recovery among survivors of IPV.

Participant 1 said:

> *"Counselling yandakapiwa pano paMusasa yakandibetsera chaizvo kuti ndive confident zvekare and kunzwisisa kuti kumbunyikidzwa kwandaiitwa yaisava mhosva yangu."*(Counselling helped me regain confidence and realize that the abuse was not my fault.)

Participant 4 added:

> "*Masupport groups akandibetserawo kuti ndikasike kuhealeer from zvandandasangana nazvo nekuda kwekuti ndaisangana nevamwewo vane matambudziko seangu."*(The support groups helped me heal emotionally because I met women with similar experiences.)

Participant 6 highlighted that:

> "*Pandakawana counselling ndakawana simba rekutanga upenyu hwangu zvekare ndiri ndega."*(After receiving counselling I became stronger and more confident to rebuild my life.)

KI1 said:

> "*Psychosocial support is essential as it help survivors to deal with trauma, depression and fear."*

The findings demonstrate that counselling and psychosocial support services play a significant role in promoting emotional healing, resilience and empowerment among survivors of intimate partner violence. Participants explained that counselling helped them process trauma, rebuild confidence and recognize that abuse was not their fault. Survivors also indicated that support groups created safe spaces where they could share experiences ,reduce feelings of isolation and receive emotional encouragement from others facing similar challenges.

The findings reveal that IPV has profound psychological consequences including depression, fear, anxiety, emotional trauma and low self-esteem. Many survivors explained that prolonged exposure to violence affected their mental well-being and ability to trust others .Counselling services therefore emerged as critical interventions that support emotional recovery and restore hope among survivors.

The findings are consistent with Agarwal et al. (2023) who emphasize that psychosocial support services improve mental well-being and reduce emotional distress among survivors of violence. Bonkass et al. (2024) argue that counselling and emotional support strengthen resilience and help survivors cope with trauma and stigma.

The findings further indicate that psychosocial support contributes to empowerment because survivors gain confidence to make independent decisions and seek justice. Another participants explained that after receiving counselling she became more aware of her rights and developed courage to leave an abusive marriage. This demonstrates that counselling services do not only address emotional suffering but also strengthen survivor's agency and self –worth.

However, despite the positive impact of counselling services, participants highlighted major challenges affecting accessibility. Counselling and psychosocial services were reported to be

limited, especially in rural communities where survivors often lack transport to go for counselling services. Key informants also indicated shortages of trained counsellors and inadequate funding for psychosocial programmes. This therefore highlight the significant gap between the need for psychosocial support and the availability of services. This suggests that although counselling interventions are effective, their impact remains limited due to inadequate resources and weak decentralization of services. Additionally, fear of stigma and community judgment was highlighted. This discourages women from accessing counselling services openly. This demonstrates that strengthening psychosocial support must be accompanied by community awareness programmes that reduce stigma and encourage help seeking.

Overally, the findings suggest that counselling and psychosocial support services are essential components of a gender transformative response to intimate partner because they promote emotional healing empowerment and recovery among survivors.

4.4.2 Legal and Protection Services

Participants acknowledged that legal frameworks and protection services provide important support for survivors. Survivors greatly discussed their experiences with protection orders, legal reporting processes and assistance received from support organizations.

Participant 1 noted:

> *"Nyaya yekuendesana kumacourts kuprotection order yakabetsera chaizvo kuti murume wangu asandirova."* (The protection order helped to stop my husband from assaulting me.)

Participant 2 added:

> *"Pandakauya nenyaya yangu kuMusasa nakabatsirwa kumhan'ara nyaya yangu ndikawana rubatsiro kunyange zvazvo zvakamboti netsei."*(Musasa Project helped me to report the case of physical abuse and I accessed legal assistance even though I faced some challenges.)

During a FGD Participant 5 noted:

> *"Kuziva kwandakaita kodzero dzangu kwakandipa samba rekutsvaka rubatsiro panyaya yangu and nyaya yacho iri kufamba zvakanaka kumacourts."*(Knowing

my rights gave me courage to seek justice and fortunately the case procedure is going smoothly.)

KI 2 supported that legal and protection services contribute a lot in preventing intimate partner violence.

She stated:

> *"The Domestic Violence Act has helped many survivors access protection, this really helps to reduce intimate partner violence, although implementation challenges remain."*

The findings show that legal interventions provide protection and promote justice for survivors. However, barriers such as fear of stigma and limited awareness continue to hinder reporting. Survivors highlighted that legal services such as protection orders and referral assistance from organizations like Musasa Project played an important role in ensuring their safety and helping them seek justice. The findings indicate that awareness of legal rights empowers survivors to challenge abuse and report perpetrators .Participants who understood their legal rights expressed greater confidence in approaching formal justice systems. This demonstrates that legal literacy is important in strengthening women's agency and reducing tolerance of violence.

These findings agree with Handy (2024) who argues that legal empowerment improves access to justice for survivors of gender-based violence. Legal frameworks are important in shifting intimate partner violence from a private matter to a public concern (Garcia-Moreno et al, 2021).Similarly UNDP (2022) emphasizes that effective legal systems play a critical role in protecting survivors, promoting accountability and preventing further abuse. The findings also align with the Feminist Theory which argues that laws and institutions are important tools in addressing structural gender inequalities that sustain violence against women .Legal frameworks therefore become necessary in challenging patriarchal power relations and protecting women's human rights.

However, despite the existence of legal protection mechanisms, participants highlighted several implementation challenges. Some survivors explained that police officers and community leaders sometimes discourage women from pursuing cases, encouraging reconciliation instead of justice. This demonstrates that patriarchal attitudes may also exist within justice systems, thereby weakening the efficacy of legal interventions. The findings concur with Chireshe and Chireshe

(2020) who found that some survivors in Zimbabwe experience secondary victimization when reporting cases due to intensive responses from law enforcement officials. Participants also noted delays in court processes, lack of transport money and fear of retaliation from perpetrators as major barriers to accessing justice.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that some survivors remain unaware of available legal protection services, especially in rural communities where access to information is limited. This suggests that legal reforms alone are insufficient without continuous awareness campaigns and community education programmes. Despite these challenges, the findings indicate that legal and protection services remain important in preventing further abuse and promoting survivor safety. Participants who received legal assistance reported feeling more protected and confident in rebuilding their lives.

Therefore, there is need to strengthen the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act through training police officers ,traditional leaders and court officials on survivor-centered approaches. Legal awareness campaigns should also be expanded into rural communities so that survivors become more aware of their rights and available protection services. Additionally, legal services should be decentralized and made affordable in order to improve accessibility for survivors from low-income backgrounds.

4.5 Gender Transformative Approaches that can Prevent Intimate Partner Violence.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the Zimbabwean context. When asked about the views on gender transformative approaches that can effectively prevent IPV, the participants emphasized the importance of addressing structural gender inequalities as well as promoting positive masculinity and empowering women economically.

4.5.1 Male Involvement in Community Engagement

Survivors and key Informants emphasized the importance of involving men and community leaders in intimate partner violence prevention. The findings really showed the importance of transforming harmful masculine norms and encouraging men to actively participate in challenging IPV in Zimbabwe.

Participant 4 noted:

> *"Vanhurume vanofanirwa kunge varipowo nguva dzese panodzidziswa nezvekodzero kana mhirizhonga nekuti zvinorema kuti zvichinje kana vanhukadzi Vega varivo vanongodzidziswa."*(Men should also be taught about gender equality because change cannot happen when only women are targeted.)

Participant 6 said:

> *"Masabhuku nemadzishe ngavakurudzire nyaya yekodzero munharaunda uye varambidze mhirizhonga Munharaunda."*(Traditional leaders should speak openly against violence in communities.)

Participant 8 said:

> *"Pese panoitwa maprogiramu nemaorganization ngavasimbirire kusimbisa vakomana kuti varemekedzewo vanhukadzi."*(Community programmes should always teach young boys to respect women.)

KI 3 highlighted that:

> *"Engaging men and boys is important in challenging harmful masculinity and promoting non-violent relationships."*

The findings indicate that sustainable prevention of intimate partner violence requires active engagement of men, boys and community leaders. Participants emphasized that men should not be excluded from gender equality programmes because they are central in transforming harmful gender norms and behaviors. Perez-Martinez et al (2023) emphasize that positive masculinity programmes contribute towards violence prevention. The findings reveal that involving men and boys in violence prevention programmes helps challenge harmful constructions of masculinity that promote dominance aggression and control over women. Participants explained that young boys should be taught respect, equality and non-violent conflict resolution from an early age. This demonstrates the importance of socialization in shaping positive gender relations. These findings align with Abramsky et al. (2014) whose SASA! Programme demonstrated that community mobilization significantly reduces violence. This clearly emphasize the idea of educating men and boys in order to prevent intimate partner violence. Similarly, Barker et al. (2021) argue that engaging men and boys in gender transformative programmes helps challenge rigid gender norms

and promotes healthy and respectful relationships. This is because men are more likely to reject violence when they are actively involved in discussions around gender equality and human rights. Thus there should be a lot of men involved programmes that promote healthy masculinity and respectful relationships in Zimbabwe.

4.5.2 Economic Empowerment of Women

Participants strongly emphasized economic empowerment as an important strategy in preventing IPV. All participants emphasized the importance of income generating projects and economic opportunities in reducing women's vulnerability to intimate partner violence.

Participant 3 said:

> *"Tinodawo maprojects anopa mari kuitira kuti tisazoramba takagarira kuchengetwa nevarume vanovashungurudza."*(Women need income- generating projects so that they do not remain trapped in abusive relationships.)

Participant 5 noted:

> *"Vanhukadzi kana vaine mari yavo pachavo vanova confident kuita sarudzo nehupenyu hwavo."* (Financial independence gives women confidence to make decisions about their lives.)

Participant 7 added:

> *"Kana Munhukadzi achikwanisa kuzviriritira ega akashungurudzwa anokwanisa kusiya munhu anomushungurudza zvisina kutya kuti anozochengetwa nani."*(If women are empowered economically they can leave abusive marriages without fear.)

KI 1 added:

> *"Economic empowerment programmes reduce women's dependency on abusive partners."*

The findings reveal that economic empowerment enhances women's agency and resilience against abuse and that will not keep them trapped in abusive relationships. Participants strongly emphasized that financial independence enables women to make decisions about their lives and

reduces dependency on abusive partners. These findings indicate that women who lack access to employment opportunities, income-generating projects and financial resources are more vulnerable to violence because they fear economic hardship if they leave abusive relationships .Survivors repeatedly highlighted that economic dependence forced many women to tolerate violence for the sake of survival. These findings agree with Njuki et al. (2023) who argue that gender transformative approaches should include economic empowerment strategies to address structural inequalities. UN Women (2022) also highlights that, women's economic independence is critical in reducing vulnerability to intimate partner violence .Similarly ,Kabeer (2019) argues that economic empowerment strengthens women's bargaining power within relationships and increases their ability to make independent decisions regarding their safety and well-being .Economic resources therefore become important tools for reducing women's vulnerability to abuse.

The findings further reveal that economic empowerment contributes to self –confidence, dignity and social independence among survivors. Participants explained that women who are financially stable become more confident in speaking out against abuse and seeking help. Therefore, Government and NGOs should increase funding in women empowerment programmes. Savings groups and microfinance initiatives should be strengthened so that women can become economically independent and they will not be victims of intimate partner violence only because they lack financial independences. There is also need for vocational training programmes, entrepreneurship support and employment creation initiatives targeting women, particularly in rural communities where poverty and unemployment remain high .Furthermore, economic empowerment programmes should be integrated with counselling and legal support services in order to provide holistic support to survivors of IPV.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented, analyzed and discussed the findings of the study on developing a gender transformative approach to prevent IPV in Zimbabwe. The findings revealed that patriarchal norms, harmful cultural beliefs, economic dependency and normalization of violence significantly contribute to the persistence of IPV .Survivors and key informants highlighted that unequal power relations within society continue to reinforce women's vulnerability to IPV. The chapter concludes that preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe requires comprehensive gender

transformative approaches that address structural inequalities, transform harmful gender norms and strengthen survivor-centered support systems. Collaboration between government institutions, communities, traditional leaders and non-governmental organizations is therefore essential in promoting gender equality and reducing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, conclusions, implications of the study ,recommendations and the gender transformative model for preventing intimate partner violence(IPV) in Zimbabwe, A case study of Musasa project Nemamwa ,Masvingo. The study was guided by four objectives which are to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, to identify community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention, to examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions and to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach suitable for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The study was informed by Feminist Theory and Gender Role Theory which provided a framework for understanding how unequal gender relations and socially constructed gender roles contribute to intimate partner violence. The study adopted a qualitative research approach to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives regarding intimate partner violence .This chapter also provides a synthesis of the major findings of the study, discusses the implications of the findings ,proposes recommendations and a gender transformative approach for preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

5.2 Summary of findings

This section presents a summary of the major findings that emerged from the study on developing a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The findings are summarized according to the study objectives and reflect the experiences and perspectives of intimate partner violence survivors as well as key informants from Musasa Project. The findings revealed that intimate partner violence remains a complex social problem influenced by deeply rooted patriarchal norms harmful gender expectations, economic inequalities and economic attitudes that continue to normalize intimate partner violence. At the same time, the findings highlighted the importance of survivor- centered support services, community awareness initiatives, male involvement and economic empowerment in addressing the root causes of intimate partner violence and promoting sustainable gender equality .The findings in relation to each objectives are presented below.

5.2.1 Societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

The findings revealed that deeply entrenched patriarchal beliefs and traditional gender norms remain significant drivers of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. Participants indicated that men are often regarded as household heads with authority over women, while women are expected to remain submissive, obedient and tolerant of abuse. Cultural expectations encourage women to preserve marriages at all costs, even when intimate partner violence is present. The findings further revealed that economic dependency contributes significantly to women's vulnerability to intimate partner violence. Many survivors reported remaining in abusive relationships because they lacked financial independence and feared poverty and inability to support their children. The findings made it clear that patriarchal norms and economic dependency continue to reinforce unequal power relations, making women more vulnerable to abuse and limiting their ability to leave abusive relationships.

5.2.2 Community Perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention

The findings brought out that intimate partner violence is often normalized within communities and viewed as a private family matter. Survivors reported experiencing victim-blaming attitudes from family members and community members when they attempt to report abuse. Women who leave abusive marriages are frequently criticized for disrupting family unity. However, the study also found evidence of gradual positive change. Awareness campaigns and educational programmes conducted by organizations such as Musasa project have increased community understanding of women 's rights and gender equality .Younger generations appear to demonstrate greater acceptance of gender equality than the older generations who have deeply rooted patriarchal beliefs. The study revealed that while harmful community attitudes continue to normalize violence and discourage reporting, awareness programmes are gradually transforming perceptions regarding gender equality and violence prevention.

5.2.3. The efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions

The findings revealed that counselling and psychosocial support services play an important role in promoting emotional healing, recovery and empowerment among survivors. Participants indicated that counselling really assisted them to regain confidence, overcome trauma and rebuild their lives.

The study also found that legal and protection services, including protection orders and legal assistance, contribute significantly to survivor protection and access to justice. Participants who received legal support reported increased feelings of safety and confidence. Despite these positive outcomes, participants highlighted several challenges including limited availability of services in rural areas, inadequate funding, shortages of trained personnel, transport challenges, fear of stigma and delays with legal processes. The findings clearly pointed out that existing interventions are effective in supporting survivors but remain constrained by accessibility, resource limitations and implementation challenges.

5.2.4 Determining a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

The findings identified male involvement, community engagement and women's economic empowerment as critical components of an effective gender transformative approach. Participants emphasized the need to actively engage men and boys in gender equality programmes in order to challenge harmful constructions of masculinity and promote respectful relationships. Traditional leaders, community leaders and religious leaders were also identified as important agents of change, economic empowerment also emerged as a key prevention strategy. Participants pointed out that women who possess financial independence are better positioned to make decisions regarding their safety and are less likely to remain trapped in abusive relationships. Therefore from the findings, sustainable prevention of intimate partner violence requires a multi-sectoral and comprehensive approach that simultaneously transforms harmful gender norms, engages men and boys and strengthens women's economic empowerment.

5.2.5 Limitations to the study

Although this study generated rich and valuable insights into the development of a gender transformative approach for preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, limitations were encountered. The sensitivity of the research topic was a major limitation to the study.

Sensitivity of the Research Topic

Intimate partner violence is a highly sensitive and emotionally challenging topic. Some participants may have experienced difficulties recalling traumatic experiences or may have withheld certain information due to fear, shame or emotional distress .For example, survivors may have avoided discussing severe incidents of abuse because revisiting such experiences could

trigger painful memories. According to Liamputtong (2020), research involving survivors of violence often encounters challenges associated with emotional discomfort and u underreporting of experiences. Although a trauma –informed approach was adopted throughout the study, the possibility of incomplete disclosure cannot be completely ruled out.

Despite these limitations ,the study generated credible and meaningful findings regarding the societal factors contributing to intimate partner violence, community attitudes towards gender equality ,the effectiveness of existing interventions and the development of a gender transformative approach for preventing IPV in Zimbabwe .The use of multiple data collection methods, purposive sampling and thematic analysis enhanced the trustworthiness and richness of the findings ,making them valuable for policy ,practice and future research.

5.3 Conclusions

The study sought to develop a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that intimate partner violence remains a significant social problem that is deeply embedded within societal structures, cultural beliefs and unequal gender relations. The persistence of IPV is strongly influenced by patriarchal norms, traditional gender expectations and economic inequalities that continue to position women in subordinate roles within intimate relationships. These structural and cultural factors contribute to the normalization of violence and limit women‘s ability to challenge abusive situations.

More so, the study further concludes that community attitudes and perceptions play an important role in either perpetuating or preventing intimate partner violence. Although victim-blaming attitudes, social stigma and the treatment of IPV as a family matter continue to discourage survivors from seeking help, there is evidence of gradual positive change in attitudes towards gender equality. Community awareness programmes, educational initiatives and advocacy efforts are contributing to increased recognition of women’s rights and the unacceptability of violence within intimate relationships. This demonstrates that social norms can be transformed who communities are actively engaged in gender equality initiatives.

Furthermore, the findings also lead to the conclusion that existing intervention strategies, particularly counselling, psychosocial support services, legal assistance and protection mechanisms, play a critical role in supporting survivors and reducing the effects of violence. These

interventions contribute to emotional healing, empowerment, protection and access to justice. However, their effectiveness is often constrained by limited resources, inadequate accessibility, social stigma and implementation challenges, particularly within rural communities. Therefore. While current interventions are valuable, they require strengthening and roader accessibility in order to achieve sustainable impact.

More so, the study concludes that the prevention of intimate partner violence cannot be achieved through survivor support services alone. Sustainable prevention requires addressing the root causes of violence by transforming harmful gender norms, challenging patriarchal beliefs and promoting equitable power relations between men and women. Gender transformative approaches are therefore essential because they move beyond responding to violence and focus on preventing its occurrence through social and behavioral change.

The study also concludes that the active involvement of men and boys is fundamental in preventing intimate partner violence .Since harmful constructions of masculinity contribute to violence and control within relationships ,engaging men and boys as partners in gender equality initiatives is critical for transforming attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate violence. Similarly, the involvement of traditional leaders, religious leaders, community leaders and families is necessary in creating supportive environments that reject violence and promote respectful relationships.

In addition, the findings demonstrate that women's economic empowerment is a key component of violence prevention .Economic independence enhances women's ability to make decisions about their lives ,reduces dependence on abusive partners and strengthens their capacity to seek safety and support when they face violence .Economic empowerment therefore serves not only as a strategy for improving livelihoods but also as an important mechanism for reducing vulnerability to intimate partner violence.

Overall, the study concludes that an effective gender transformative approach to preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe should be comprehensive, survivor-centered and multi-sectoral. Such an approach should integrate gender equality education, community mobilization, economic empowerment, psychosocial support, legal protection and the active engagement of men and boys. Collaboration among government institutions, non-governmental organizations, traditional leaders, communities and survivors themselves is essential for addressing the

underlying causes of violence and promoting sustainable gender equality. Ultimately, preventing intimate partner violence requires a long term commitment to transforming the social, cultural and structural conditions that sustain gender-based violence within Zimbabwean society.

5.4 Implications of the study to Social work

The findings of this study have important implications for social work practice. The study revealed that intimate partner violence is influenced by patriarchal norms, harmful gender beliefs and economic dependency. This implies that social workers should adopt gender transformative approaches that not only respond to the effects of violence but also address its root causes through empowerment, advocacy, counselling and community education. Social workers should therefore play a leading role in promoting gender equality and challenging social norms that perpetuate violence against women.

The study further implies that effective prevention of intimate partner violence requires collaboration among social workers, government institutions, non-governmental organizations, traditional leaders and community leaders .The findings highlighted the importance of counselling services, legal protection, male involvement and women's economic empowerment. Therefore, social work interventions should be holistic and survivor -centered, integrating psychosocial support, legal assistance and economic empowerment programmes to improve the wellbeing and safety of survivors. Social workers should ensure that survivors are supported throughout the recovery process and are empowered to make informed decisions regarding their lives and wellbeing.

The findings also support Feminist Theory and Gender Role Theory by demonstrating that unequal power relations and socially constructed gender roles contribute to intimate partner violence. This reinforces the need for social work policies and programmes that promote gender justice, human rights and social inclusion. This means that social workers should advocate for increased funding for IPV prevention programmes, expansion of support services to rural communities and stronger implementation of existing laws and policies such as Domestic Violence Act. Through policy advocacy, social workers can contribute to creating environments that support gender equality and reduce structural barriers faced by survivors. The study therefore contributes to the growing body of knowledge on gender transformative social work practice and provides evidence that can inform future interventions aimed at preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

5.5 Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the findings found during the study. These recommendations may assist to come up with a gender transformative approach to address intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe.

Government

- The government of Zimbabwe may strengthen implementation of laws and policies aimed at preventing intimate partner violence like the Domestic Violence Act through continuous training of police officers, magistrates and community leaders on survivor-centered approaches.
- Greater investment may be directed towards expanding counselling, legal and psychosocial support services, particularly in rural communities where access remains limited.
- The government may also work on strengthening the monitoring mechanisms to ensure that existing legislation effectively protects survivors and holds perpetrators accountable.

Non –Governmental Organizations

- NGOs working on gender-based violence may expand community awareness programmes focusing on gender equality, women's rights and violence prevention.
- NGOs may increase support for vocational training, entrepreneurship programmes and income-generating projects targeting women to reduce women's dependency on abusive partners.

Community, Traditional and Religious Leaders

- Traditional and religious leaders may actively participate in preventing intimate partner violence by challenging harmful cultural practices and beliefs that perpetuate violence against women.
- Community leaders may promote positive messages regarding gender equality and encourage communities to support survivors rather than stigmatize them.

Educational Institutions

- Schools, colleges and universities may integrate gender equality and healthy relationship education into their curricula.

- Educational programmes may promote positive masculinity and respectful interpersonal relationships from an early age.

5.6 Areas for Future Study

Although this study generated important insights into the development of a gender transformative approach for preventing intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, several areas require further investigation. Future studies may explore the effectiveness of gender –transformative programmes in different geographical and cultural contexts across Zimbabwe. Since this study was conducted at a single shelter, broader studies involving multiple provinces may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing intimate partner violence and the effectiveness of prevention strategies.

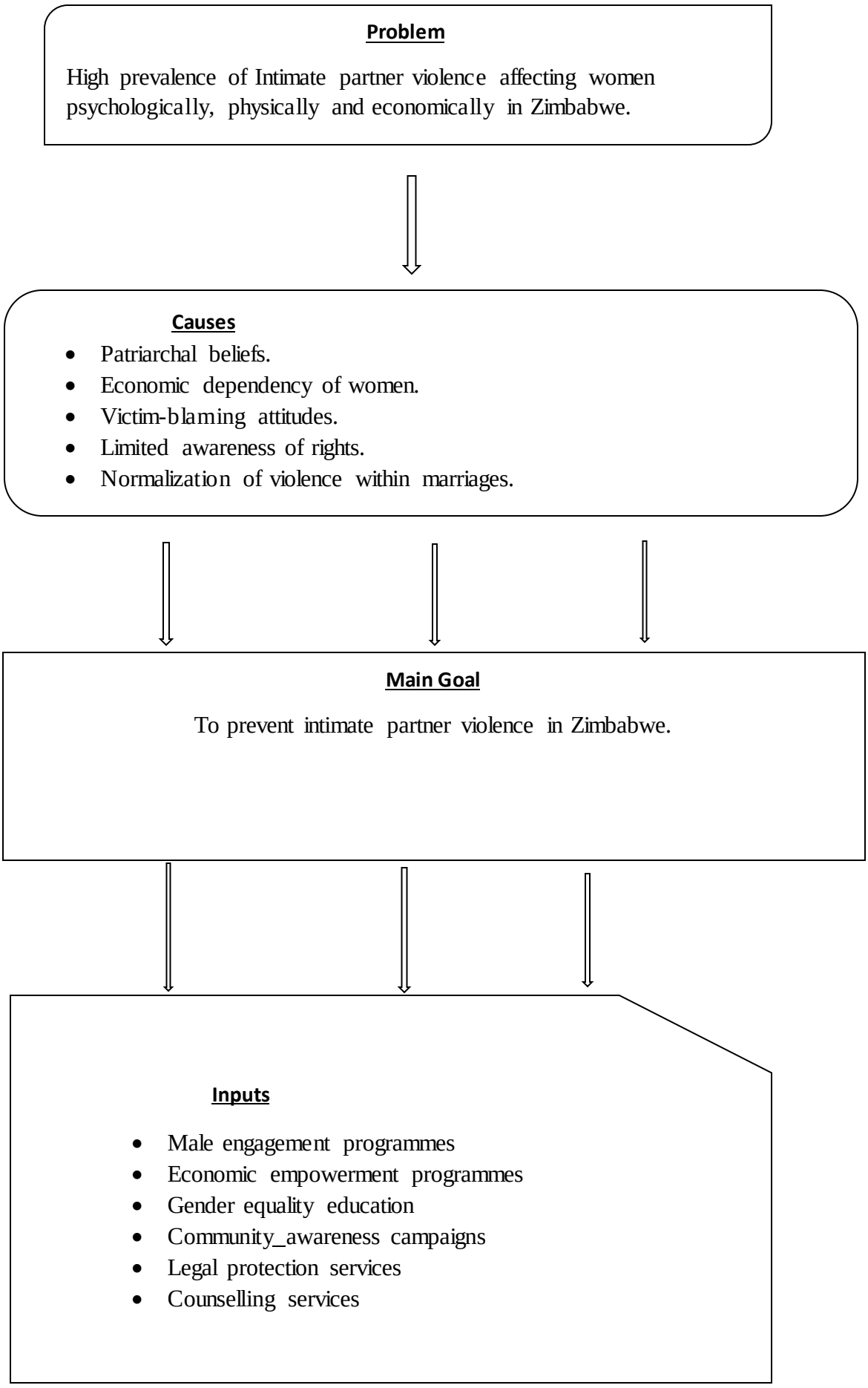
Future research may also focus on the perspectives and experiences of men, including perpetrators of intimate partner violence. Understanding how men perceive gender norms, masculinity and violence may contribute to the development of more effective prevention programmes that target behavioral and attitudinal change. Such studies would complement existing research that primarily focuses on survivors' experiences.

In addition, future researchers may examine the long term impact of economic empowerment programmes on the prevention of intimate partner violence .While this study established that economic independence is an important protective factor, there is a need for longitudinal studies that assess how economic empowerment influences women's vulnerability to violence over time.

Furthermore, future studies may also evaluate the effectiveness of school –based and youth centered gender transformative programmes. Since attitudes towards gender and relationships are often formed during childhood and adolescence, examining interventions targeting young people may provide valuable insights into sustainable violence prevention approaches.

More so, future studies may also investigate the role of traditional and community leaders in promoting gender equality and preventing intimate partner violence. Given their influence within communities, understanding how these actors can effectively contribute to violence prevention may strengthen future intervention strategies.

5.7 Proposed model for IPV prevention in Zimbabwe



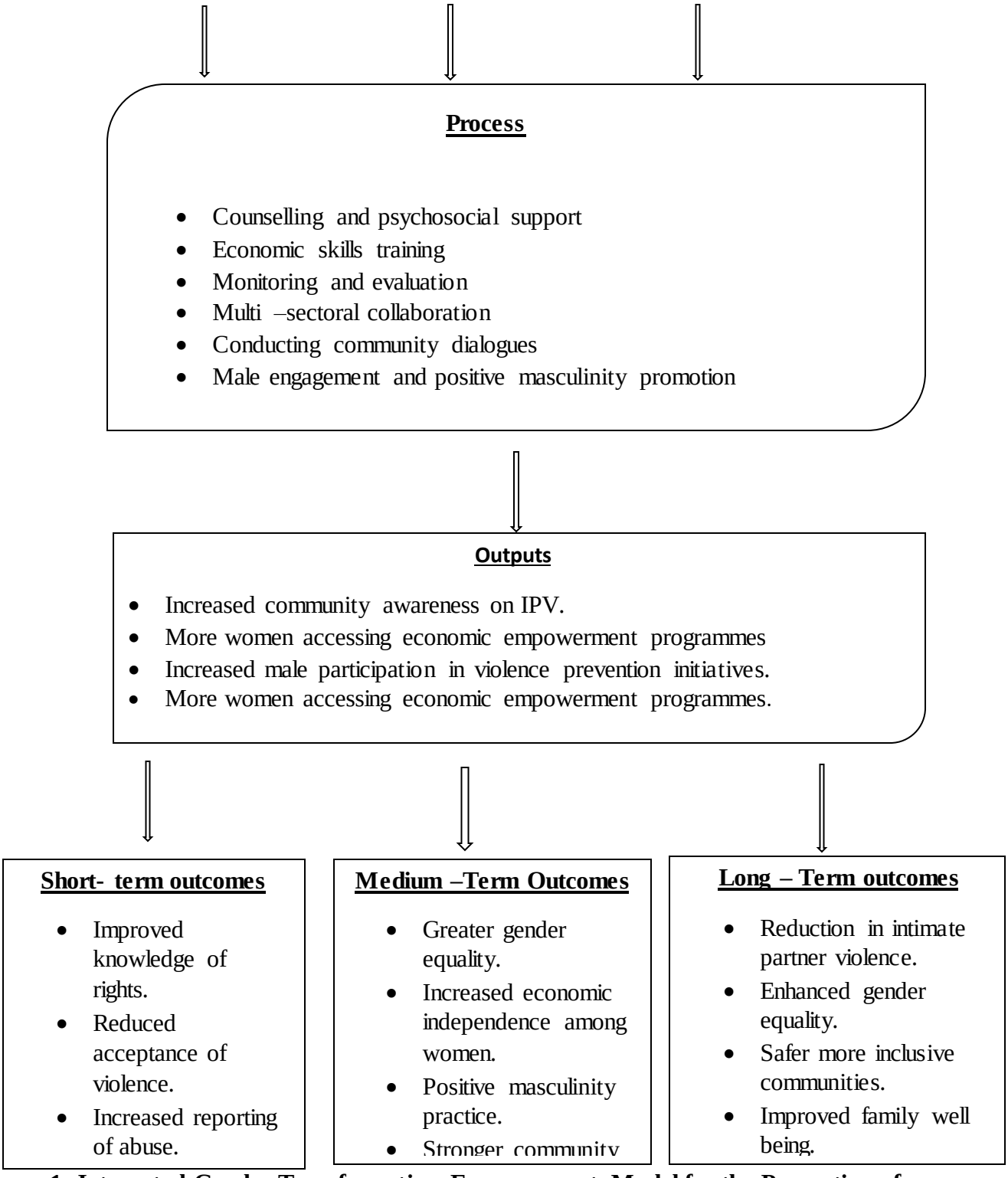


Figure 1: Integrated Gender Transformative Empowerment Model for the Prevention of Intimate Partner Violence in Zimbabwe (IGTEM -IPV)

The proposed model (IGTEM-IPV) is based on the findings of the study .The model recognizes that intimate partner violence is primarily driven by patriarchal beliefs, harmful gender norms ,economic dependency and community attitudes that normalize violence .The model proposes a multi-sectorial response involving government ,non-governmental organizations ,traditional leaders , community leaders, men ,women and IPV survivors. Gender equality education, counselling services, legal protection mechanisms, economic empowerment programmes and male engagement initiatives save as the key inputs required to address the root causes of violence. The expected outputs include increased awareness, improved access to support services, greater participation of men in violence prevention and enhanced economic opportunities for women. These outputs are expected to produce positive outcomes such as improved gender relations, reduced acceptance of violence, increased survivor empowerment and ultimately a significant reduction in intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The model therefore, provides a comprehensive framework for addressing both the structural and behavioral factors that sustain intimate partner violence and supports the development of sustainable gender transformative interventions in Zimbabwe.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a summary of the findings of the study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations, areas for future research and the proposed model for the prevention of IPV in Zimbabwe. The study was guided by the four objectives namely to explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe, to identify community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention, to examine the efficacy of existing intimate partner violence prevention interventions and to determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach suitable for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. The study established that IPV is sustained by deeply rooted patriarchal norms, unequal power relations and socio-economic vulnerabilities. Community members acknowledged the persistence of gender inequalities while existing interventions were found to have achieved limited success due to inadequate community participation, resource constraints and insufficient focus on transforming gender norms. The findings reveal need for comprehensive and coordinated interventions that actively engage men, women, community leaders and institutions in challenging harmful gender beliefs and practices. Based on the findings, the study concluded that sustainable IPV prevention requires a gender transformative approach

that promotes gender equality and multi-sectoral collaboration. Recommendations were provided for social workers, government and non-governmental organizations to strengthen prevention initiatives and improve intervention effectiveness. Areas for future study were identified, including the long term effectiveness of gender transformative interventions, the role of men and boys in violence prevention and the applicability of the proposed model for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe

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Appendix 1: Consent Form

Title of study: Developing a gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. A case study of Musasa Project, Nemamwa Masvingo

Researcher: Mamwadi Nelia

Institution: Bindura University of Science Education

Contact: 0788537400/neliamamwadi02@gmail.com

By signing, I …….have agreed to take part in Nelia Mamwadi's research study aimed at understanding and developing effective strategies to prevent intimate partner violence.

I understand that

1. The research needs to address root causes of intimate partner violence and promote gender equality.

2. My responses will be recorded for data collection purposes.

3. My participation in this research is entirely voluntary and I have the right to refuse participation at any time without consequences.

4. There are no foreseeable risks associated with my participation in this research.

5. Every effort will be made to ensure my confidentiality and anonymity.

Participant's Signature……..Date……../……../……..

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

Appendix 2: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guide with IPV survivors

Research Topic: **Developing a Gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. A case study of Musasa project, Nemamwa, Masvingo**

Introduction:

Welcome everyone. I am grateful for your presence today as we engage in this focus group discussion. Our goal is to hear and understand your experiences related to intimate partner violence (IPV).This is a safe space for you to share your stories, thoughts and feelings. Your insights are invaluable and will help us develop a deeper understanding of the challenges you face and the support you need. Thank you for making a good decision of taking part in this research. The information shared during this discussion will be kept confidential.

Demographical Information

Age Range…….

Gender……..

Level of Education…….

Marital Status……

Interview Questions

SECTION A

To explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of IPV in Zimbabwe.

1. What community traditions do you think contribute to the acceptance of IPV?

2. How do you think gender perceptions change when discussing IPV?

3. Are there any specific beliefs about masculinity and femininity that impact your community's views on IPV?

SECTION B

To identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention.

1. Do you think community attitudes towards gender equality influence the prevalence of IPV?

2. What do you think are the community's most significant misconceptions about IPV?

3. In what ways do survivors think the community supports or stigmatizes survivors of IPV?

SECTION C

To examine the efficacy of existing IPV prevention intervention.

1. What are the existing intimate partner violence interventions being used to help you?

2. Do you think these interventions are helping you to recover well? Why?

3. Can you comment overally on the existing interventions?

SECTION D

To determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the Zimbabwean context.

1. How can education initiatives be designed to effectively engage community members about IPV?

2. What role do you think local leaders can play in shaping a gender transformative approach?

3. Overally what do you think should be done to improve the interventions methods to help you?

Appendix 3: In –Depth Interview Guide with IPV survivors

Research Topic: Developing a Gender transformative approach for the prevention of intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. A case study of Musasa project,Nemamwa Masvingo

Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this in-depth interview .I appreciate you taking the time to share your story with me. This conversation is intended to provide you with an opportunity to express your experiences and perspectives regarding intimate partner .I want to assure you that everything you share will remain confidential and will be used to inform strategies for preventing IPV and supporting survivors. Your insights are crucial in shaping a more effective response to this issue.

Biographical Information

Age……

Level of Education……..

Employment Status……

Type of Marriage (At time of violence)……

Type of IPV encountered…….

SECTION A

To explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of IPV in Zimbabwe.

1. What societal norms do you believe contribute to experiences of IPV in your community?

……

……

2. How do traditional gender roles influence the dynamics of power and control in relationships and marriages?

……

……

3. Can you share any experiences that illustrate how societal expectations have impacted your experiences with IPV?

……

……..

SECTION B

To identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention.

1. How do you perceive gender equality within your community, particularly in regard to relationships?

……

……

2. What are some common attitudes towards victims of IPV in your community?

……

……

3. Have you experienced or witnessed any community initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and what are their impacts?

……

……

SECTION C

To examine the efficacy of existing IPV prevention intervention.

1. What programs or interventions targeting IPV have you heard of or participated in

……

……...

2. In your opinion, how effective are these programs in addressing the needs of IPV survivors?

……

……

SECTION D

To determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the Zimbabwean context.

1. What changes do you believe are essential in society to create a safer environment for survivors of IPV?

……

……

2. How can community involvement shape a new approach to prevent IPV in Zimbabwe?

……

……

3. In your view, what role should men play in preventing IPV and promoting gender equality?

……

……

Appendix 4: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide with ARC, V.F.U and Musasa Project staff

Research Topic: Developing a Gender transformative approach for the prevention intimate partner violence in Zimbabwe. A case study of Musasa project, Nemamwa Masvingo

Introduction:

Thank you all for joining this focus group discussion today. Your expertise and experiences as staff members from the V.F.U, ARC and Musasa project are essential for understanding the systemic approaches to preventing IPV. Together, we will explore both the challenges and successes you encounter in your work. Your insights will contribute to developing more effective strategies and interventions, making a lasting impact in our Zimbabwean communities. I look forward to our conversation and the valuable knowledge we will share.

Demographic Information

Age Range……..

Gender……..

Education Level……..

Relationship Status……..

SECTION A

To explore the societal factors and gender norms that contribute to the persistence of IPV in Zimbabwe.

1. From your experience, what societal factors most significantly affect the prevalence of IPV cases you encounter?

2. How do you perceive the impact of gender norms on both survivors and perpetrators of IPV?

3. Are there particular cultural attitudes that you believe hinder open discussions about IPV?

SECTION B

To identify the community perceptions and attitudes towards gender equality and violence prevention.

1. What community perceptions have you encountered regarding gender equality and IPV prevention?

2. How receptive do you find communities to initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality?

3. What challenges do you face when addressing community attitudes toward IPV prevention?

4. In your view, how can public perception be shifted to better support gender equality initiatives?

SECTION C

To examine the efficacy of existing IPV prevention intervention.

1. What existing interventions have you found to be most effective in addressing IPV, and why?

2. Are there gaps in services provision that hinder effective prevention efforts? If so, what are they?

3. How do you measure the success of programs aimed at preventing IPV in your work?

SECTION D

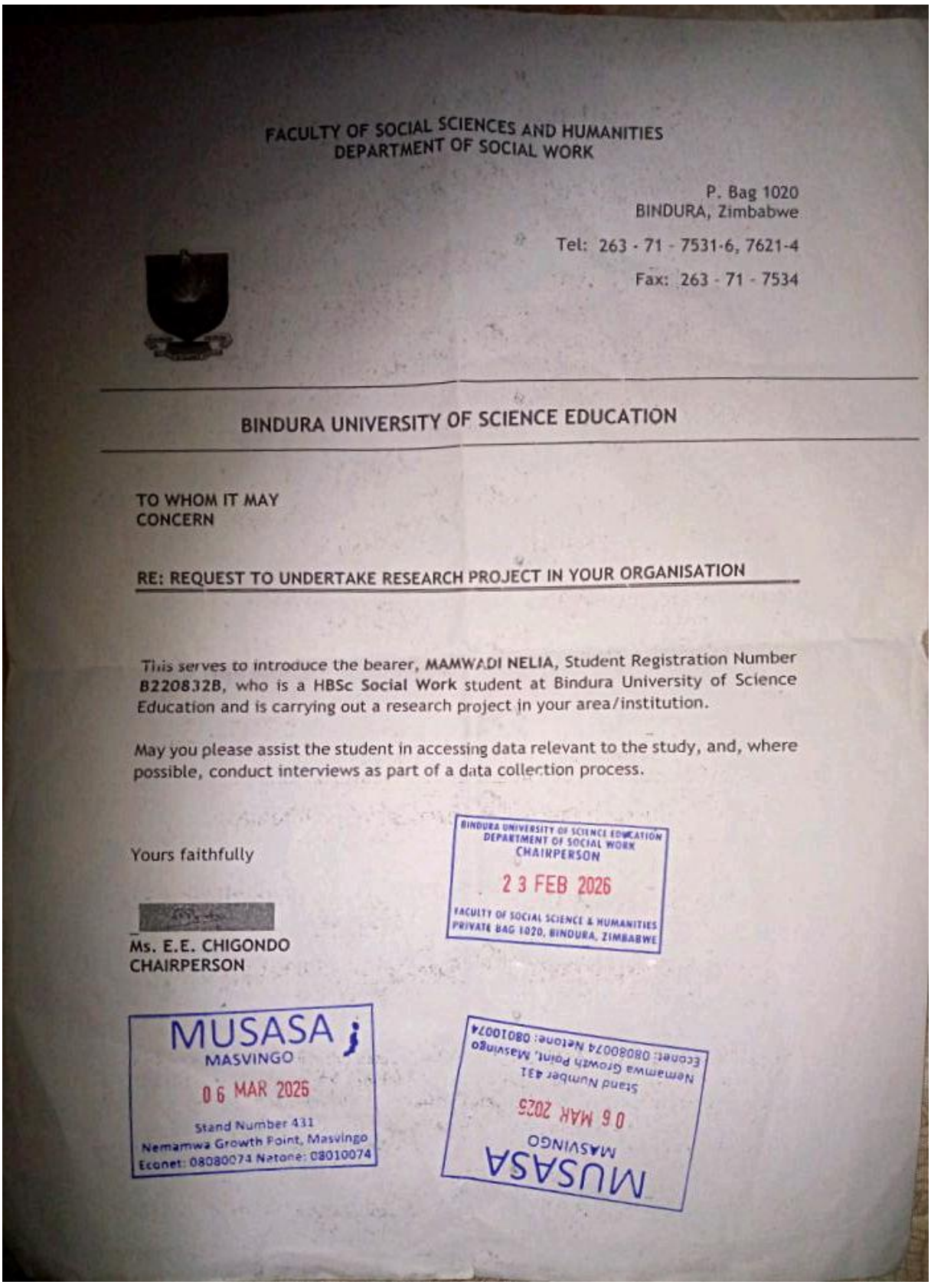
To determine a comprehensive gender transformative approach for the Zimbabwean context.

1. What recommendations would you make for developing a gender-transformative approach specifically suited to Zimbabwean communities?

2. How can collaboration between organizations like ARC, V.F.U and Musasa Project be strengthened to enhance prevention efforts?

3. What role do you believe education plays in transforming societal attitudes towards gender and violence?

Appendix 5: Ethical clearance utilized for data collection



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BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

TO WHOM IT MAY
CONCERN

RE: REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH PROJECT IN YOUR ORGANISATION

This serves to introduce the bearer, **MAMWADI NELIA**, Student Registration Number **B2208328**, who is a **HBSc Social Work** student at Bindura University of Science Education and is carrying out a research project in your area/institution.

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

Yours faithfully

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
CHAIRPERSON
23 FEB 2026
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE & HUMANITIES
PRIVATE BAG 1020, BINDURA, ZIMBABWE

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