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DISASTERS, PANDEMICS, VULNERABILITY FACTORS AND THEIR IMPACTS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN AFRICA

Tapiwa Musasa[1]

Abstract

The article argues that African women and children are vulnerable to any type of disaster or pandemic at the micro or macro level, due to their high levels of susceptibility and unequal access to resources as compared to their male counterparts. The study explores the views of stakeholders in disaster management through document reviews, interviews, focus group discussions and observations. Results of the study reveal that women in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi and South Africa suffered more at the hands of Cyclone Idai in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, as compared to their male counterparts. Domestic violence cases against women increased, sexual abuse against women and girls in temporary shelters also increased, and privacy and ante-natal services were limited or not available at all in emergency facilities during Cyclone Idai and COVID-19. The article recommends that disaster management in communities should take a continuous multi-stakeholder approach where all parties take turns to be at the forefront in terms of basic needs provisions. More resources should be set aside with enough monitoring and evaluation at national and international levels to cater for the vulnerable communities and sectors of the population like women and children during disasters and pandemics.

Keywords: disaster management, heterogeneity, natural disasters, anthropogenic disasters, gender inequality.

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (2016), disaster management is the organisation and management of resources and

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responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of emergencies, in particular, preparedness, response and recovery to lessen the impact of disasters. To safeguard gains made in development, there is need to increase disaster preparedness, planning and management so that lives and infrastructure are safeguarded. Even the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can hardly be achieved without effective disaster management plans, especially for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and other developing regions. A disaster is a departure from the normal situation, although normality can be subjective (Wiest *et al.,* 2002). In addition, ISDR (2004) defines a disaster as the disruption of the community's functionality resulting in human, economic and environmental losses to an extent that the community cannot cope without external support. Joseph-Brown (2013) views risk as the function of a hazard and vulnerability, that is, Risk = Hazard × (Vulnerability - Capacity).

This article argues that while disasters vary in intensity and propensity, affecting everyone and everything indiscriminately, women, children and girls bear the brunt in the disaster management cycle (Sorahbizadeh, 2016). This is due to cultural, religious, social, and economic factors that inevitably find women at a disadvantage in Africa. Women seldom have property rights, access to credit, decision-making powers or equal opportunities in employment and education (Hosain *et al.,* 2015), leaving them at the mercy of men in anything that affects their well-being.

This study takes its argument from the fact that disaster frequency and severity are increasing in the 21st century (Coley 2020; Lai and La Greca, 2020), and that disasters do not affect everyone equally, with women and children presented as the worst victims due to their vulnerabilities caused by the poverty trap, particularly in SSA (Anyanwu and Anyanwu, 2017), and lack of decision-making powers (Sohrabizadeh *et al.,* 2016; Dhliwayo, 2019). The occurrence of disasters is inevitable in most cases and they appear to be companions of humankind (Batia *et al.,* 2018). The important aspect of disaster management is to assess the levels of vulnerability of different population sectors and communities in a bid to come up with mitigation measures that will reduce the impacts of the disasters or, at least, enable recovery and resilience.

All sectors of the population, adults, children and women face pre-existing challenges that increase their vulnerability to disaster, depending on their differentiated social and economic orientation, a situation that Turnbull *et al.* (2013) describe as experiencing the impacts of disasters differently, depending on who you are and what you have in society. According to Khoram-Monash *et al.* (2017), vulnerable people like children, the elderly and the sick, are most likely to be forgotten or left out during emergency evacuations, thus specialised arrangements should always be put in place for

them in the disaster management process. It is against this background that the study intends to examine how women and children were affected in Southern Africa by Cyclone Idai and COVID-19 since the whole disaster management debate continues to rest on the issue of gender disparities in SSA, in that gender equality and women empowerment are the panaceas.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Disaster vulnerability is increasing on a global scale, especially for vulnerable groups like children, women, the elderly, the disabled and the poor. In the opinion of Alfredo (2017), it appears the world is increasingly becoming more unstable and unpredictable as disasters appear to be around the corner from terrorism, war and climate change. Disaster management is, therefore, a critical discipline to manage the impacts of those disasters, to give the people a high level of awareness, sensitisation and preparedness so that the impacts are minimised.

IMPACTS OF DISASTERS AND PANDEMICS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN GLOBALLY

Women always suffer more during disasters because of their nurturing and caregiving roles, and as producers, providers and consumers of food and other goods and services for their families, communities and themselves (UNDP, 2021). According to Ranji *et al.* (2021), women across the United States lost or had to quit their jobs because the day-care or school of their children was closed, so they had to leave to take care of the children. This created mental health challenges and stress for the women. The multiple roles played by women mean that they themselves are the last priority and they risk losing their good health or lives as they care for others. This situation is why Ahmad (2018) suggests that there should be shared responsibilities in the day-to-day duties of the family and communities to give each other space for personal health and protection. During both Cyclone Idai and COVID-19, not only were women engaged in providing for the physical needs of the family - food, clothing, shelter, fuel, water and health care - they also did so in difficult conditions and were encumbered by emergency operations such as the construction of make-shift shelters, constructing rafts and scaffolds to keep above water levels, sheltering animals, protecting their children and animals from insects and snakes, taking special care of infants and the aged, particularly when ill. Women coped by invoking assistance from the village elite, borrowing from neighbours, scouring the environment for scraps of food and fuelwood, subsisting on emergency items stored underground or in the homes of the elite, or going to live with relatives in less affected areas till the worst was over.

In concurrence are Bradshaw and Fordham (2013), who say that women and girls report that violence is likely to increase after a disaster, and trauma

and an increase in their workload. Most statics highlight losses men suffer, leaving out losses for women who normally do not have much to their names, except small livestock and cooking utensils. According to Hossain *et al.* (2015), disasters and pandemics destroy the smooth-running of healthcare systems, increasing the risk of lacking safe water, sanitation and exposure to disease prevalence. Children's rights are greatly violated as they miss school, food and nutrition, hygiene and health in general. Disasters cause psychological suffering in children as they witness parents and other family members die or lose possessions and livelihoods, pushing them into child labour activities (Kousky, 2016).

Experiences of Women and Children from Past Events in Africa

In African countries, it is the girl child who drops out of school due to droughts or famine, then either get married or take care of the young and the sick by providing labour. It then becomes a vicious cycle of poverty for women and girls (Chichester *et al.*, 2017). Lack of education has negative repercussions later on in life (UNDP Report, 2021). Such repercussions always lead women and girls to turn to employment in the informal sector which was seriously affected the COVID-19 pandemic in most African countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique, to mention a few. This pushed women, girls and children deeper into poverty and increased gender-based violence and malnutrition (Mackenzie, 2020; Nerves, 2020). According to LeMason (2016), gender inequalities often worsen after a disaster, with not just physical violence, but sexual and emotional violence as well, brought to bear on women, girls and children. Trafficking and child marriages also increase due to increased vulnerability and emotional stress on men during disasters. In Uganda, after losing their jobs, men would not go to the fields claiming it was a woman's. In Ethiopia, men divorce their wives due to the loss of cattle herds because of droughts (Chineka, 2016). They do that for their security of person, but in the process, increase their vulnerability to women (Lim *et al.*, 2019).

Water scarcity in the Sahel region forces women and girls to travel long distances to look for water, thus exposing them to danger. In a bid to avoid long queues, girls opt to fetch water at night, even risking snake, hyena, or even sexual attacks (WHO, 2013). Similarly, children suffer during disasters, especially when they are not included in disaster management policies and their voices are never heard (Peek *et al.*, 2017). Institutions that deal with children should advocate for the children through local policy formulation, awareness campaigns, education and training. Studies done by Goodman *et al.* (2016) indicate that the health of women is affected mostly during disasters because of their low status in the community. Pregnant women, for example, suffer due to their location, crowded cities, limited natural resources, inequality, disruption of electricity, telephone services and running water. All these are critical in emergencies for delivering

women because this leads to treatment in the open, lack of communication, referrals and difficulties for doctors to operate on patients who need such services. Maternal mortalities, therefore, increase during disasters.

Chineka (2019) indicates that some organisations have realised that women suffer more during and after disasters, leading to the introduction of programmes to increase community resilience through women empowerment. The chosen districts in the study are Mumbwa District in Zambia and Chivi District in Zimbabwe, all indicating that some interventions to empower women will help reduce their vulnerability in disasters. In Mumbwa, Heifer International donated heifers in a programme code-named 'Pass the Gift', in that a beneficiary will pass on a calf to a co-member in the programme since cattle are understood as an essential resource in drought-stricken areas. Although gender inequality is still very high in Africa, some countries have made significant strides in reducing the gender gap, for example, Rwanda and Namibia with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 80,5% and 80.9%, respectively (Chepkemoi, 2018; Andrus, 2021; Gender Gap Report, 2021; World Economic Forum, 2021). Other African states can, therefore, learn from their counterparts on how best to improve gender equality, which can significantly assist in reducing women's and children's vulnerabilities in times of disasters.

METHODOLOGY
The study employed primary qualitative data collection methods and desktop research to gather data on the impacts of disasters in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi. Interviews, focus group discussions and observations were used to gather data during the period of Cyclone Idai in 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 -2021. The results were analysed using thematic analysis.

FINDINGS
Cyclone Idai affected women more than men in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique because of vulnerability and inequality. In these countries, an estimated 53% of the 750 000 people affected by Cyclone Idai were women against 47% for men (Save the Children, 2019; UNDP, 2019; UNICEF, 2019), an indication that women are amongst the most vulnerable people in any natural or anthropogenic disaster. During Cyclone Idai, 45 000 births were expected, and 70 000 births were at risk of life-threatening complications due to the disruption of communication and transport channels (Reliefweb, 2019; ZimFact, 2019; Save the Children, 2019). This is an indication that any disaster affects people according to their resilience and resistance to such shocks, thus women are amongst the most vulnerable unless efforts are made to effectively reduce gender inequality in African societies.

For Zimbabwe, in particular, the situation during Cyclone Idai was worsened by the fact that inequalities already existed in terms of employment, access to finances and other critical basic rights, thus lack of shelter, emergency facilities, medication and accessibility to medical centres made the situation even more unbearable for women and children (ZimFact, 2019). These challenges were in addition to already existing sexual violence, lack of privacy and lack of sanitary ware for women and girls. Those who could afford, easily got access to food through online shopping, or asked for home deliveries (participatory observation), while the poor people could not afford such luxuries. Maids and gardeners were laid off their jobs without pay, leading to food shortages for children and other vulnerable members of their families (*ibid.*). In Chimanimani and Chipinge, Zimbabwe, a total of 250 000 people was affected by Cyclone Idai and 130 000 of those were women. It was reported that 5 200 women were at risk of sexual violence. Lack of privacy and safe spaces at emergency shelters exposed women to sexual abuse. Many Cyclone Idai victims were sheltered in schools, churches and public buildings, exposing women to sexual attacks. Some of the women expressed feeling insecure at the shelters and exhibited fear of pervasive violence post-Cyclone Idai (Dhliwayo, 2019).

Nearly 75 000 pregnant women were caught up in the Cyclone Idai trail of destruction and 1 in 10 women (10%) were at risk of serious complications that required special delivery care. The reported disruption of water and sanitation facilities by Cyclone Idai exposed pregnant women to opportunistic infections and outbreaks at established health and referral health centres (*ibid.*).

In Malawi, 468 650 people were affected by the same cyclone, 117 160 being women of child-bearing age and 23 432 of them were pregnant at the time (Relief Web, 2019). More than half a million women and girls were desperately in need of sexual and reproductive health services.

Women and children were the worst affected by COVID-19 in South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Mozambique reported a rise in gender-based violence during COVID-19 due to confinement and tensions in the home. Most of the victims were women. About 1.3 million children lost their parents, education, shelter, clothing and needed humanitarian assistance in Mozambique during Cyclones Idai and Kenneth (Save the Children, 2019; UNICEF, 2019). Pijoos (2019) reports that in Mozambique, powerful political party leaders forced women into sex for food during Cyclone Idai food handouts because they did not have the money demanded by the food distributors.

Reports by UNICEF (2019) show that South African women suffered more in the workplace as they could not work from home because most of them work in the food industry (restaurants, hotels, tourism and hospitality, etc.) and street vending, which require them to be at the work, leading to loss of income for their families. Most of these industries were closed during the COVID-19 pandemic (Ranji *et al.*, 2019). Where they were open, women were at the forefront, placing them directly in risky areas where they could easily contact the zoonotic disease. In Zimbabwe, the informal sector operated mostly by women has become the backbone of the economy, but it was closed also due to COVID-19, hence they women could not feed their families (observation and focus group discussions). More than 90% of women in rural areas are affected by drought and poverty, so are unable to feed their children (Walsh, 2016). School closures affected their feeding schemes, thus pushing some children into hunger, starvation and malnutrition.

Old people's homes and childcare centres are concepts that are still developing on the African continent. This means that most of the invalids are still being taken care of in the home. This caring and nurturing role is the domain of women; thus, a woman will not desert her family or community during disasters. It is also the mother's role to take care of children and most mothers will find it difficult to swim to safety with a child on her back or to abandon a sick child, an elderly member of the family, or a disabled person irrespective of age. Women are most likely to die trying to source help for the affected in developing countries, unlike in developed nations where the nurturing responsibilities have significantly been transferred to social workers in homes. One participant in the study, a 59-year-old woman had this to say:

> Many women who had sick people in their homes died while they waited for help. For example, a friend of mine died during Cyclone Idai. She sent all her teenage children to run and look for help while she took care of her elderly mother-in-law. The children survived. The husband survived because he had to run after the children. It is so painful.

Women experienced increased domestic violence during COVID-19, lack of antenatal services during Cyclone Idai among other effects, while children's rights to food, shelter and education were violated. Table 1 summarises the reports from focus group discussions conducted by the study.

Table 1: Effects of Disasters on Women and Children, Contributing Factors
(Author, 2021)

Pandemic/Disaster	Effects of Women	Effects on Children
Cyclone Idai -2019	-Sexual violence -Lack of antenatal services -More deaths -Food, water and sanitation shortages -Post-disaster traumas -Loss of livelihoods	-Psychological trauma -insecurity and deaths of parents -Loss of education time -Deaths -Health issues -Trafficking -Orphanhood - Sexually abused in food relief queues.
COVID-19-2020-2021	-Inability to feed families -Spousal separation -Increase in domestic violence -Over-burden of care-work	-Loss of school time -Malnutrition -Psychological damage -Witnessing domestic violence -Child labour
Contributing Vulnerability Factors	-Unemployment -Lack of education -Lack of properties -Exclusion from knowledge due to norms and traditions -No decision-making rights	-Lower physiological development -Lower intellectual capacity -Dependant nature

Table 1 shows the effects of Cyclone Idai, a climate-induced disaster and the COVID-19 pandemic, a biological zoonotic pandemic on women and children. The contributing factors to vulnerabilities are also shown. Participants in focus group discussions indicated that women and children are the worst affected because they are rarely separated and they had this to say:

> Due to the caregiving role of women, the children are always with them and whatever dangers affect the mother also affect the children. During Cyclone Idai, for example, in Chimanimani, some mothers were home when the disaster struck and there was no way they could leave their children alone. It was traumatic to witness one or all of your children die before you because you could not carry all of them to safety. However, some men survived because they were not home or they were alone, which means they could easily run to safety.

This means women are easily affected by disasters and pandemics because of the caregiving role in the family. This validated the responses obtained from focus group discussions, thus confirming the results. Asked to comment on how children in the district suffered due to COVID-19, one respondent from the discussants summarised it as:

> Our children suffered due to shortage of food. Most parents lost their jobs and they could not adequately provide for their children, violating the rights of the children in terms of basic needs provision. In terms of education, all schools were closed and everyone was at home. In rural areas, for example, some parents could not afford the smart gadgets needed to join online lessons, thus there was differential access to education. Some parents were fighting and the children were also affected as they witnessed such violence that is not good for the child.

These responses show that women and children in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi were affected negatively by COVID-19 and Cyclone Idai.

DISCUSSION

Women and children are the major victims of natural and anthropogenic disasters compared to their male counterparts. The reviewed literature indicates that the subordinate position of women in society disadvantages since they cannot make quick decisions due to a lack of resources (Anyanwu and Anyanwu, 2017; Hosain *et al.*, 2015). This pathetic situation must be appreciated by society because it is and has been unfair to women since time immemorial. From a rights-based approach, every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Men and women have been created equally as free and independent beings, but socialisation has changed women to be tools and weaker subordinate members of society. Results indicate that women were home most of the times when disasters struck. Some of them could not run away as fast as they needed to do, because they had children on their backs or had elderly sick people to take care of.

The results also indicate that factors contributing to the vulnerability of women include lack of education and overburdening due to care work at home, among others. This means that women and girls do not have time to do other things to develop themselves in academically, economically, socially, or politically and, therefore, remain underprivileged. This view was also aired by Le Mason (2016), who comments that the responsibility of day-to-day survival activities like laundry, food and water lies too much on women. Everybody should do their part so that the impact of disasters, during and after, is equally felt by everyone, not just the female members of the family. If care work and household chores are shared, women will not be that much vulnerable to disasters. The results from the focus group discussions indicate that women suffered more domestic violence as compared to men during COVID-19, a situation that could have be avoided with improved equality and women empowerment in homes and societies.

The challenges women and children face during disasters and pandemics have underlying causes that can be changed through socialisation and educating men to live with empowered women.

The impacts of COVID-19 have been felt by women more than men because women are expected to cook and put something on the table. This has put pressure on the women who may find it difficult to source food during a drought, a cyclone, an earthquake, or a pandemic like COVID-19. When everybody else was at home during lockdowns, some women were forced to use whatever means, even immoral ones, to source the food. For example, during Cyclone Idai food relief programmes, it was alleged that some married women and girls engaged in sexual relationships with officers distributing the food so as to jump the queues and/or get extra packs of mealie meal, cooking oil, sugar and so on.

The same was reported in Chimanimani Zimbabwe during Cyclone Idai. Elderly women who could not source extra food, pushed their young daughters into such illicit affairs for the sake of food, a situation that most respondents confirmed. Such scenarios need to be investigated by the authorities and deterrents put in place so that young girls and women do not continue to be taken advantage of by such officials during disasters and pandemics for the sake of basic needs that should be given freely by the government. Proper monitoring and evaluation are needed during food distribution programmes. Only those men and lucky women with enough savings were able to sustain good living conditions and provide decent meals to their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a pathetic situation that can be avoided with proper monitoring and evaluation of food distribution programmes.

Feminisation of poverty remains very high in Africa because of the geographical location of women who live mainly in rural agricultural areas. The areas are underdeveloped and lack infrastructure for any modern development initiatives, a colonial relic that could have been corrected since independence. These are the areas where more than 70% of the population live in absolute poverty, hunger and starvation, worsened by the effect of El Nino-induced droughts and climate change. In Zimbabwe, for example, 67% of the population in rural areas (Zimbabwe Statistical Office, 2012), is without enough food due to droughts and women and children constitute more 60% of this population (Walsh, 2016). Such disasters continue to

affect women emotionally and socially since they are expected to do a lot for the family due to socialisation structures. When faced with a challenge, people tend to use resources at their disposal to get out of the situation. However, women are not self-sufficient, rendering them vulnerable and exposed to the effects and shocks of disasters, more than their male counterparts.

Women face the biggest brunt of challenges affecting their nations because they are the majority in the population and carry the heavy burden of childcare and other nurturing roles like caring for the elderly and the sick. While it is difficult for a pregnant woman or a nursing mother to run to safety during a disaster, it is even worse when a woman faces the dilemma of escaping, leaving behind the sick and the elderly but, most importantly, their young children who cannot cope with the speed and resistance to diseases required during evacuations. Some women choose to die with their children rather than desert them, hence the high statistics of female victims in disasters. Women in urban areas still face the same challenges because they still depend on men for survival, increasing the risks of contracting sexually transmitted diseases for single mothers and widows who must rely on casual sex to secure food for their children and families. Even child protection laws like the Maintenance Act are still difficult to uphold, and men can still play hide and seek with the women denying the responsibility to provide for their children, thus leaving no option for the uneducated, unemployed poor women but to use any means available to take care of their children and, in most cases, have resorted to prostitution as a way out of starvation.

Gender equality and women empowerment are important tools that can be used by nations to reduce the impacts of pandemics and disasters on women and children. Although many nations are making efforts to put legislation in place for women's empowerment, the pieces of legislation are not effective. It is pathetic to note that some national constitutions state that women should have equal political representation and in parliaments, but male leaders are still holding the highest positions, giving a chance to only a few women who are not even equipped educationally to make effective contributions to economic and political decisions in parliament. However, African countries like Rwanda and Namibia have made very significant strides toward gender parity as alluded to by Andrus (2021) and Chepkemoi (2021). This is an indication that gender equality is possible if legislation is effectively implemented.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Cyclone Idai, Cyclone Kenneth, COVID-19 and other disasters and pandemics in the 21st century have negatively impacted women and children more than adult men because of the nature of work women are expected to do by society. Some Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies and plans do not include women and children as active participants. The challenges faced by different countries are similar, particularly for women both in urban and rural communities. Women need to be empowered by their governments, but most importantly, the women themselves must have the internal will to take the initiative to claim their equal share in education, employment and political status. Their empowerment will give their children a better chance to access all development opportunities and be better placed to fight against disasters. Governments must create enabling environments for gender equality so that no sector of the population is at a disadvantaged in terms of resilience to disasters. Socialisation processes must start accepting and appreciating the benefits of globalisation, modernisation and urbanisation and remove the chains women have in the home as this will also free them from being the worst victims of disasters. Africa still has a long way to go in terms of gender equality, women empowerment and reducing the number of women and children dying and suffering from the effects of natural and anthropological disasters. However, Rwanda and Namibia have made significant strides in terms of gender parity. Other African countries can learn from them to fully equip women to offer resistance and resilience during disasters and pandemics like Cyclone Idai and COVID-19, respectively.

- The Government, through responsible ministries, should integrate child-centred and women-centred policies into Disaster Risk Reduction Plans.
- The Government and the private sector should unite in promoting sustainable women empowerment programmes through incentives that can be accessed only when one is in school. This will keep girls in school as long as possible as a long-term strategy to equip women and girls first against disasters and pandemics.
- Food packages must be distributed to cushion families in food provision for their families so that women do not face the burden of basic needs provision alone. Close monitoring for objectivity and transparency will reduce women and girls' sexual abuse by unprofessional officials.
- To cater for victims of domestic violence, online counselling services must be provided and intensified during disasters and pandemics.

- Women must be included in the whole Disaster Management Cycle from planning to monitoring and evaluation of DRR plans.
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) must be prioritised for sustainable development programmes so that no one depends on another for protection and survival. Meaningful empowerment programmes will eliminate exclusion and protect women and girls from being taken advantage of during political campaigns.
- More awareness campaigns are needed for Disaster Risk Reduction so that men, women and children, including the disabled, are less vulnerable, with the capacity to reduce the impacts of pandemics and disasters on everyone.

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EXPERIENCES OF BREAST CANCER TREATMENT AMONG WOMEN IN HARARE

MAUREEN TSHUMA[1]

Abstract

The study explores breast cancer treatment among women in Zimbabwe and how women engage with breast cancer treatment. The study looks into cancer survivorship in Zimbabwe concerning the use of alternative cancer medicines as palliative methods. The article makes the argument that breast cancer treatment information dissemination remains low with most women viewing breast cancer as a death sentence. The article examines literature from around the globe on breast cancer treatment and the coping strategies employed by breast cancer patients in African settings. The study used a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive research design. The study found that lack of information influenced treatment seeking among women in Zimbabwe with most women regarding breast cancer as a death sentence due to lack of information on the available treatments for breast cancer and survival chances. The findings indicate that breast cancer is regarded as a spiritual disease in Africa caused by witchcraft.

Keywords: survivorship, disease, efficacy, culture, policy, community management

INTRODUCTION

Breast cancer is a life-threatening disease often accompanied by debilitating treatment-related side effects. It is regarded by many as a silent killer. Breast cancer does not discriminate on the basis of social class, culture, race, ethnic origin or colour. Women diagnosed and treated for breast cancer experience changes in every aspect of their lives. Their lives often become restricted socially, physically and psychologically. The body is subjected to aggressive medical procedures and the subsequent treatment-related side effects that

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often evoke emotional depression as the mind struggles to comprehend and manage the fatal ailment (Holland & Stiehm, 2003; Avis *et al.,* 2005; Baucom *et al.,* 2006; Draper, 2006; Lauver, Connolly-Nelson and Vang, 2007). Several factors that can affect the treatment of breast cancer have not been dealt with in great detail because attention has been on the bio-medical aspect of the treatment and drugs (Carroll *et al.,* 2014; Mwinyi *et al.,* 2014). In both developed and developing nations, breast cancer is reported to be the most common cancer in women. While breast cancer is often thought to be a disease in first-world nations, it should be noted that the majority of breast cancer deaths (69%) occur in third-world countries (WHO, 2008). This, in part, is due to the late detection of breast cancer and the lack of information and knowledge about the disease in third world countries. There is no universal experience of breast cancer treatment. The quest of the study was to gain an understanding of breast cancer treatment. In addition, it also looked at the factors affecting the treatment of breast cancer and identified coping mechanisms. This academic study seeks to add to the body of knowledge and understanding of experiences of breast cancer treatment among women.

Research has shown that more women are being diagnosed and treated for breast cancer worldwide (Seer Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results, 2009; American Cancer Society, 2009b). The causes of breast cancer are unknown but there are high risk factors that may predispose women to develop breast cancer. In both developed and developing countries, breast cancer is recorded as causing cancer mortality among women and is the most common of the cancers afflicting women (Jemal *et al.*, 2011; Zainal and Saleha, 2011). In Zimbabwe, reports show that there were 3 519 new cancer cases recorded in 2009. Of these new cases, 1 427 (40.6%) were among males and 2 092 (59.4%) among females (Zimbabwe National Cancer Registry, 2009). Breast cancer among black Harare females had a prevalence rate of 13.7% and was reported as the second most common after cervical cancer.

Every year, more women are diagnosed with breast cancer worldwide. Some of the women successfully undergo treatment, whilst others die from the disease. Cancer treatment procedures in Zimbabwe include surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy and hormone therapy. Women diagnosed with breast cancer are faced with aggressive treatment regimens that often cause numerous health-related problems, physical impairments and psychological disturbances (Schmid-Buchi *et al.,* 2008). Breast cancer treatment is a complex experience with medical and psychosocial concerns and demands from the time of prognosis. Many needs associated with it may linger into the post-treatment phase (Hoffman *et al.,* 2009; Recklitis *et al.,* 2010). This phase entails various self-directed tasks like symptom management and surveillance of recurrence (Yeh *et al.,* 2010). The

treatment-related side effects and health problems experienced due to radiotherapy and hormone therapy are less demanding than those caused by chemotherapy. In some cases, medical health-related problems and some of the side effects are temporal and fade away on completion of treatment, whilst other health problems are permanent and persistent long after treatment and this may cause emotional distress among women who undergo breast cancer treatment. The medical treatment procedures are intrusive and aversive, often leading to negative outcomes that include decreased physical function, psychosocial disruptions, decreased psychosocial adjustments and negative changes in life perspectives (Arman and Rehnsfeldt, 2003; Bloom, 2002).

Women diagnosed with breast cancer are often put under great pressure that demands them to cope with the treatment and its adverse side effects (Northouse 2005; Fergus and Gray 2009). The recovery process too can be a difficult experience that often leads to emotional depression and stress. The diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer have the effect of threatening a woman's capability to attain the goals of her life. The continuation of life assumes the status of being the main salient goal. Adjusting to breast cancer diagnosis and treatment is different for all women. Some women show improvements with time, whilst others experience deteriorations in their functional capacities. It is imperative to recognise that breast cancer treatment is a strenuous experience that results in women experiencing changes in their quality of life and can affect entire life plans. It is against this background that this study aims to increase knowledge about the experiences of breast cancer treatment, the factors affecting its treatment and coping mechanisms.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Breast cancer is a growing public health challenge globally and in developing countries like Zimbabwe, the health sectors are not very functional, with most of the patients perishing before accessing treatment. The conceptual framework that guides this study is medical pluralism as Horbst and Schirripa (2017) observed that as a scientific endeavour, medical pluralism describes people's diverse treatment realities around the world, giving a chance to the relegated medical practices that suffered through the modernisation process that has controlled the discourse of the healing methods around the world. Janzen (2014) alludes that medical pluralism is the co-existence of ideas and practitioners from several traditions occupying the therapeutic space in society. The use of this conceptual framework is justified by the fact that Africa is a place with diversity and multiple realities. The healing process is broad and not limited to conventional medical practices. The use of these medical practices as alternative medical practices continues to be trivialised when, in reality, they contribute to the well-being

of patients going through medication rejection or reacting to the side effects of these medications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed indicates that the diagnosis and intense treatment of breast cancer is perceived by many people as life-threatening experience that often elicits emotional distress and eventually leads to death among many women diagnosed with the disease. Being diagnosed with breast cancer can change every aspect of an individual's life, it is a life-changing experience. Breast cancer is a life-threatening disease that alters one's life physically, socially, psychologically and emotionally (Schmid-Buchi *et al.,* 2005; Boehmke & Dickerson, 2006; Schmid-Buchi *et al.,* 2008; Rosedale, 2009; Buchi, 2010). A study by Rosedale (2009) revealed that the psychological, social, physical and emotional effects of breast cancer create ongoing challenges and crises that result in experiences of loneliness among women diagnosed with breast cancer. Loneliness is an inward feeling resulting from the failure of other people to recognise and comprehend the diagnosis, intense treatment of breast cancer and the long-term aftermath of the illness (*ibid*.). In her study, Buchi (2010) further notes that acute disease of breast cancer filled with uncertainty, hopelessness, feelings of vulnerability, anxiety and an unpredictable future frequently leads to depressive feelings. Worth noting is the study by Dvaladze (2012) that highlighted participants' fear of breast diagnosis because of a lack of awareness that made them perceive breast cancer as a death sentence. Participants were not afraid of death but were afraid of cancer, which means that they accepted death as inevitable but not cancer.

Reaction to the diagnosis and confirmation of breast cancer range from stoicism to shock and despair. The disease is viewed as an existential threat (Buchi, 2010; Dvaladze, 2012). As argued by Buchi (2010:23):

> .... the women were deeply shocked as they felt the tumour in their breast themselves or were confronted with the fact they might have breast cancer, the women reacted differently to the cancer diagnosis. Some of them accepted their fate or turned feelings off, others were calm and suppressed intrusive thoughts and some associated the disease immediately with death.

Individuals are confronted with complex issues following a diagnosis of cancer (Holland and Stiehn, 2003). Diagnosis of cancer, treatment and recovery processes are challenging experiences for patients and their families (Schmid-Buchi *et al.,* 2008). Interpersonal relationships between cancer patients and their relatives are challenged in dealing with the difficulties and pressures caused by cancer (Northouse, 2005; Fergus and Gray, 2009;). Diagnosis and the treatment of breast cancer are totally two different encounters that are experienced by some women.

As argued by the American Cancer Association (2013:63), "The main types of treatment for breast cancer are surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy, targeted therapy and one-directed therapy." Common treatments of breast cancer available in Zimbabwe are surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy or radiotherapy and hormone therapy (tamoxifen). Several studies (McPhail and Wilson, 2000; Raupach and Hiller, 2002; Hunter *et al.*, 2004; Schultz *et al.*, 2005; Hoybye *et al.*, 2008; Schmid-Buchi *et al.*, 2013) indicate that most breast cancer patients suffer from numerous cancer treatment-related side effects. A study conducted in Zurich, Switzerland by Schmid-Buchi *et al.* (2013) established that the majority of breast cancer patients suffered from pain after treatment and felt impaired in their body image and their social and physical activities. These researchers further note that breast cancer patients are affected by muscle pain, fatigue, pain in hands and feet, hot flashes, hair loss, nails falling off, joint pain, insomnia and restriction of movement in the arm and shoulder of the affected side. They also found that women felt less attractive and less feminine, felt impaired in their daily and leisure activities and complained about gaining weight and changes in their appearance. There were fewer problems reported, with gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea or vomiting, changes in the tastes of food and diarrhoea were the least reported cancer-related symptoms. Hoybye *et al.* (2008) also revealed that breast cancer patients suffered cancer treatment-related effects: urinary problems, lack of concentration, joint or muscle pain, fatigue and less digestion.

The aggressive cancer treatment regimens result in the alteration of body image. Results from different studies indicate that women who experience breast cancer are confronted with changes in the quality of their lives due to the changes in their body image (King *et al.,* 2000; Bloom *et al.,* 2004; Schou *et al.,* 2005; Baucom *et al.,* 2006; Boehmke and Dickerson, 2006; Fobair *et al.,* 2006; Lundgren and Bolund 2007). A study by Boehmke and Dickerson (2006) found that it is not only the body image that is transformed after the diagnosis and treatment, but that there is also transformation in terms of how patients view themselves. Likewise, findings by Lundgren and Bolund (2007) showed that after breast cancer treatment, women live with a body that may appear unfamiliar to them. The study further revealed that the type of treatment a woman undertakes affects her body image. A quantitative study by Avis *et al.* (2005) surveyed 202 young women diagnosed with breast cancer regarding quality of life. Body image was measured as one aspect of quality of life. The findings indicated that the quality of life among

young women diagnosed with breast cancer is impaired after diagnosis. More than three quarters (77.5%) of these women reported unhappiness with their body image. Results by Bloom *et al.* (2004) on body image indicated that 46% of women who experience breast cancer felt embarrassed about their bodies after diagnosis. The main findings by McPhail and Wilson (2000) indicate that 81% of the participants became more self-conscious about their body images after the treatment of breast cancer.

Research demonstrates that cancer-related fatigue is a common cancer treatment-related side effect experienced by women during the treatment of breast cancer and this condition may persist even years after completion of the treatment (Bower *et al.,* 2006); Jacobsen *et al.*, 2007; Kim *et al.*, 2008) Study findings by Kim *et al.* (2008) showed that the quality of life among breast cancer survivors is negatively affected by fatigue. Jacobsen *et al.* (2007) compared breast cancer survivors with women with no history of cancer and they found that fatigue remains a big challenge for breast cancer survivors long after treatment than for women with no cancer history. Furthermore, McPhail and Wilson (2000) conducted a study in the United Kingdom on the experiences of cancer treatment and they reported that 54% of research participants suffered from extreme tiredness during chemotherapy and 33% after radiotherapy. Lack of energy and fatigue are common problems among women who experience breast cancer treatment and even during the post-treatment period (Frost *et al.,* 2000; Girgis *et al.,* 2000; Schultz *et al.*, 2005).

Women with breast cancer often worry about their sexuality, femininity and attractiveness. Several factors such as the removal of the breast after surgery make women uncomfortable and unhappy with their body images. This negatively affects their sexuality and femininity (American Cancer Society, 2013). Treatment, such as chemotherapy, adversely impinges on the sexual interests of women with breast cancer due to changes in their hormonal levels. The diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer may result in sexual disorders among women (Avis *et al.,* 2005; Pelusi 2006; Pilarski, 2008; Pumo *et al.*, 2012). Research by Pumo *et al.* (2012) revealed that 34.7% of women with breast cancer complained of pain during sexual intercourse as the most common problem. A cross-sectional study conducted in the USA by Schultz (2005) found that 63% of the research participants experienced painful sexual intercourse and 69% experienced hot flashes among other major problems during the treatment of breast cancer. McPhail and Wilson

(2000) in the United Kingdom found that 29% of the research participants experienced diminished sex interest, whilst 25% felt sexually inhibited and 18% experienced negative changes in sexual relationships.

Sexual dysfunction is a cancer treatment-related problem, rather than the disease itself. Tamoxifen, for example, is a drug used for breast cancer treatment. It may cause vaginal dryness, irregular menstrual cycles, mood swings and hot flashes (Pelusi, 2006). Hunter *et al.* (2004) conducted a study in the United Kingdom that revealed that night sweats and hot flashes are commonly experienced by women on tamoxifen drugs and this negatively affects the sexual drive among women treated for breast cancer. In his study, Pelusi (2006:34) further states that "cancer therapies have the potential to affect sexuality directly by gonadal and hormonal effects and indirectly by causing fatigue, apathy, nausea, vomiting and malaise". Likewise, a study by Herbenick *et al.* (2008) compared the levels of sexual dysfunction between women without breast cancer and breast cancer survivors. Results indicated that breast cancer survivors experienced sexual difficulties in orgasm, arousal, satisfaction and sexual desire compared to women with no history of cancer.

Several studies indicate that lymphedema is a common cancer treatment-related side effect (McPhail and Wilson, 2000; Schultz, 2005; Pilarski, 2008; Fu and Rosedale, 2009; American Cancer Society, 2013). Lymphedema is the swelling of the arm from the accumulation of lymph fluid that is caused by the removal of the lymph nodes during surgery (American Cancer Society, 2013). Fu and Rosedale (2009) conducted a study in the USA among breast cancer survivors on lymphedema-related symptoms. The results of this study showed that participants experienced numerous lymphedema-related symptoms daily. These symptoms include tightness, fatigue, heaviness, pain, numbness, soreness, aching, rigidity, tenderness, burning and stabbing. The study further indicated that women experienced some of these symptoms daily along with swelling of the arm. Studies in the USA (Schultz, 2005) and the UK (McPhail and Wilson, 2000) show that 34% of participants suffered from lymphedema and 49% had arm problems, respectively, following surgery.

Several studies (Pinheiro *et al.,* 2008; Gundani and Mudavanhu, 2012; Mulder, 2012) indicate that women who have experienced breast cancer employed various coping strategies among which are: positive attitude;

wishful thinking; acceptance; social support; spiritual healing; talking to other patients, their families and relatives, hospital staff; and participating in a support group. Psychosocial support from close family and healthcare personnel is crucial to breast cancer patients in their quest to adjust to the treatment of the disease (Landmark *et al.,* 2008). Studies conducted in Australia by Raupbach and Hiller (2002) and Davis *et al.* (2004) indicate that the sources of support for women diagnosed with breast cancer included families, surgeons, family doctors, oncologists, nursing staff, psychiatrists or psychologists and breast cancer survivors. It is important to understand the challenges and experiences of breast cancer patients to provide them with the best possible support.

A study conducted by Gundani and Mudavanhu (2012) in Harare, Zimbabwe, showed that most women accepted their condition, 90.5% resorted to talking to other patients, whilst 51% relied on their relatives as strategies to manage the breast cancer mastectomy treatment. The study by Gundani and Mudavanhu (*ibid.*) concurs with research done by Mulder (2012) in Cape Town, South Africa, that revealed that most research participants maintained a positive attitude and outlook towards breast cancer because of very supportive families who constantly motivated and encouraged them. Dvaladze (2012) established that networking with other breast cancer survivors and witnessing their treatment had a profound mindset transformation on the likelihood of surviving breast cancer.

A grounded faith and trust in God were also identified as coping mechanisms (Dvaladze, 2012; Mulder, 2012). Research participants highlighted that speaking to their religious leaders about their condition and praying about the situation helped them to realise that they were not alone and that God would intervene in their situations (Mulder, 2012). This was vital in coping with the diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer. As argued by Dvaladze (2012), participants in Georgia viewed breast cancer as God's will and one of life's challenges that one can overcome through faith in God. Ahmad *et al.* (2011) conducted a qualitative study on religion and spirituality in coping with breast cancer among Muslim women in Malaysia. Results showed that spirituality plays an important role in how people become accustomed to cancer.

Research (Pinheiro *et al.,* 2008) focusing on coping strategies for breast cancer found that participation in support groups promotes a sense of

belonging where women felt at liberty to express their feelings, fears, concerns and their thoughts about breast cancer to other women who have and are experiencing the same illness. Participation in a support group proved enlightening, it provides social and emotional support from other women and promotes the exchange of experiences. Buchi (2010) found similar results concerning receiving social support from other women who have experienced breast cancer, in her study, the women were fully persuaded that only people who have experienced the same illness in their bodies could understand what it means to be diagnosed with and treated for cancer. Women in this study relied more on the social support offered to them by other women who have experienced breast cancer.

The use of complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) and its related therapies is gaining momentum among people who experience cancer (Boon, Olutande and Zick, 2007; Jacobson *et al.,* 2000; Humpel and Jones, 2006; National Center of Complementary and Alternative Medicines, 2009; Stark, 2010). Humpel and Jones (2006) established that CAM enhances the immune system of people who experience different types of cancers. Likewise, Kremser *et al.* (2008) found that CAM is used among breast cancer patients in Australia to enhance the immune system, ease side effects of treatment and improve their physical and emotional well-being. Similarly, studies conducted in Shanghai, China (Cui *et al.,* 2004; Chen *et al.,* 2008) reported that women who experience breast cancer use CAM to boost the immune system and ease menopause-related side effects. It is reported by Morris *et al.* (2000) that women who have breast cancer use CAM more than people who experience other types of cancer. Boon *et al.* (2007) indicated that 81.7% of women experiencing breast cancer use CAM products and are involved in CAM therapy in comparison to 66.7% in 1998. The uptake of CAM is an effort by people with cancer to deal with the unwanted side effects of conventional treatments of the disease (Jacobson *et al.,* 2000).

The literature further reveals that the use of CAM is common among cancer patients in Thailand (Wonghongkul *et al.,* 2002; Sirisupluxana *et al.,* 2009; Piamjariyakul *et al.,* 2012). A qualitative study conducted by Sirisupluxana *et al.* (2009) showed that Thai women with breast cancer recognised that complementary medicines are natural therapies, mental strengtheners, cancer-controlling therapies and mind and body therapies. A study among Thai breast cancer survivors by Wonghongkul *et al.* (2002) concluded that

the quality of life is improved by the uptake of CAM. This study further revealed that among Thai breast cancer survivors, 38.1% take herbal medicines and 36.5% changed their nutrition. Piamjariyakul *et al.* (2010) highlighted different categories of complementary treatments used by Thai cancer patients, which include nutritional diet changes to deal with fatigue, vitamins for difficulties in eating, massage for numb toes and fingers and herbal medicines for hair loss. Though the use of CAM is common among women who experience breast cancer, it should be noted that these women are afraid and unwilling to commune their CAM beliefs to their healthcare practitioners (Astin *et al.,* 2006; 2008; Adler *et al.,* 2009).

METHODOLOGY

The study used a qualitative research methodology with a case study research design. Due to the anthropological nature of the study, the case study fits in as it explores life histories of participants (Blackstone, 2015). The study first engaged literature of online databases, including PubMed, MEDLINE, IARC and CINAHL Plus on breast cancer, reveals that most studies that have been carried out are quantitative in nature, dealing with the biomedical aspects of drugs and medical treatment. It then utilised in-depth interviews with cancer patients at Parirenyatwa Hospital. The study used purposive sampling to sample the outpatients of the cancer treatment at the hospital. Thematic data analysis to analyse the experiences of women during cancer treatment were used.

RESULTS AND CASE STUDIES IN ZIMBABWE

Breast cancer has become a public health, threatening women in Zimbabwe. This study tries to capture the experiences of women that have gone through cancer treatment. It used the case study of Parirenyatwa Hospital in Harare as there are no national referral centres for radiotherapy, chemotherapy and specialised surgery in Zimbabwe and these are expensive and affected by the current power cuts that Zimbabwe has been going through in recent years.

BREAST CANCER TREATMENT

A comprehensive understanding of breast cancer is imperative for effective early detection, treatment and improved treatment of the disease. Studies done in the past indicate that in Zimbabwe curable cancers are cervical cancer and lymphoma. Most breast cancer patients regard the ailment as a death sentence that cannot be cured by biomedicine. The study investigated the treatment-seeking behaviours of women of childbearing age suffering from breast cancer. The knowledge about breast cancer treatment was found to be lacking among the participants, with some indicating that breast cancer treatment was impossible and a death sentence in Zimbabwe as most people that fought this battle ended up losing their lives. The participants

indicated that they were reluctant to go through treatment as this treatment was painful and there is no pain palliation medication in Zimbabwe. If there was, the supply was erratic, with morphine the main drug available for pain reduction. One participant indicated that,

> *nzira dzekurapwa kwegomarara dziripo dzinorwadza kunge uchafa nekuti pamwe pacho vanoita kucheka kana kupisa.* (The available treatment methods are very harsh and life-threatening. These treatments are surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, biological treatments and hormone therapy.)

These treatments depend on the stage of the cancer. As a result, those in the later stages when the cancer has become invasive, reject going through treatment as they deem it pointless to fight this battle. The findings indicated that there is a lack of knowledge on breast cancer treatment in Zimbabwe, with the majority of the patients indicating that their knowledge about the screening and diagnosis was very slim until the cancer had grown.

Findings also indicated that cancer treatment was hindered by financial constraints on the part of the women who reported to be from low-income housing and predominantly independent. Participants pointed out that their precarious financial situation hindered their treatment-seeking as they would undergo treatment only in the later stages of the cancer, while trying to save money by managing the pain using cheaper cancer alternative medicines. Financial restraints hindered treatment seeking participants and led to cancer spreading or becoming invasive. One of them indicated that,

> There is a lack of knowledge on the treatment of cancer among women in Zimbabwe as there is no dissemination of information on breast cancer and self-examination. We got information of the self-examination only after being diagnosed with breast cancer.

It was found that attitudes towards breast cancer treatment influence behaviours related to prevention and seeking healthcare services. Positive attitudes, such as self-examination and regular screening, were reported to enhance early detection and treatment of cancer by the participants. They indicated that cancer was a spiritual disease, a manmade disease that manifested through witchcraft and was curable through spiritual treatment, hence seeking treatment in the conventional medical sector was a waste of time. The treatment was dreaded by most women as it automatically meant financial expenses and in addition to that, chemotherapy was reported to be very painful, coupled with the lack of pain management in Zimbabwe, making most women in the study dread using cancer treatment medication. The study indicated that it is the attitudes and knowledge about breast cancer that influence the treatment of breast cancer in Zimbabwe.

COPING STRATEGIES FOR TREATMENT

The study set out to understand the management of cancer treatment by the cancer patients at Parirenyatwa Hospital as the findings indicated that patients were having difficulties managing the treatment of cancer using biomedical strategies. Findings indicated that the treatment of cancer was regarded as the first line of treatment, but there was a second line of treatment using cancer alternative medications. A respondent indicated that,

> The treatment methods offered in the hospital are painful and have side effects that need to be managed using indigenous methods of treatment such as herbs.

Yet another participants indicated that,

> The chemotherapy gave us nausea and to deal with this nausea and the pains caused by chemotherapy, we took herbal treatments.

These findings indicated that participants opted for the use of herbal or traditional medicines because these medicines are not harmful to the human body as such, but were used for the palliation of the pain caused by radiation and chemotherapy. It was found that participants regarded cancer as a spiritual disease and, as such, the treatment was pursued on both ends, the faith-based treatment and the bio-medicine so that the spirit would be rid of the disease and the body. Participants indicated that breast cancer was a death sentence, so to cope with this notion, patients engaged traditional healing methods to connect with their spirituality and their ancestors for guidance and treatment so that the disease would respond to the treatment. Participants indicated that they engaged traditional healers to be told of their chances to survive the cancer. They said that engaging in both treatment processes gave them solace and hope for survival rather than gambling with just one method. Health-related traditional and alternative practices play a crucial role in the treatment of breast cancer in Zimbabwe as this improves help-seeking behaviours among cancer patients. These help in giving cancer patients a chance to survive as they can debunk the view that cancer treatment is a death sentence and help them in seeking treatment for breast cancer.

DISCUSSION

Zimbabwe has made steps towards developing national cancer control policies, but there are still institutional challenges in terms of the capacity to support these policies and even their implementation. The results indicated that cancer treatment in Zimbabwe is expensive and patients lack the knowledge on the importance of early detection and treatment of breast cancer. Due to this expensive cancer treatment, patients turn to herbal

medicines. Concurrent with these verdicts are Horbst and Schirripa (2017) who allude to the conceptual framework, arguing that people employ multiple medical practices based on cost, availability and personal beliefs. In this case, medical pluralism is coming into play due to the cost of biomedical practices. There is a lack of information dissemination, with institutions lacking the capacity to mainstream breast cancer as a public health concern (Tapera, 2019). The findings indicated that there is a void that needs to be filled in terms of breast cancer information circulation in the public domain as breast cancer is equated to a death sentence among women in Zimbabwe. The verdicts indicated that there is more mainstreaming of diseases that are collective such as HIV&AIDS than breast cancer, with the results indicating that cancer patients view cancer as a spiritual disease caused by witchcraft and this also influences the attitudes of cancer patients in Zimbabwe.

Results indicated that there is a gender disparity in the focus of information dissemination, with diseases that affect mostly women being relegated to the fringes of the agenda in Zimbabwe. In support of these findings on the lack of prioritisation of information dissemination are Mukurirofa *et al.* (2019), who postulate that to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 and the World Cancer Declaration (WCD), 2013 there is need for the mainstreaming of cancer treatment information dissemination to have informed global citizens, and this goes a long way in reducing premature cancer deaths. The study indicates that there is also need to empower women with information and knowledge about breast cancer treatments that are available in Zimbabwe to demystify myths surrounding cancer treatment side effects in Zimbabwe.

The study showed that there was an acute shortage of pain mitigation medicines in Zimbabwe, with morphine being the only drug provided by hospitals. Cancer patients shun cancer treatments due to the lack of sedative medication to deal with the pain caused by the therapies. The results unveiled that due to the shortage in pain palliation medication in Zimbabwe, women with breast cancer end up using cancer alternative medicines to reduce the pain. Concurrent with the findings from this study are Asuzu *et al.* (2019) who argue that in Nigeria, despite the existence of conventional medicine, women with breast cancer have been observed to be on traditional medicines to deal with their cancer. Similar to these results is the conceptual framework that confirms the medical pluralism and the use of alternative medical practices as alluded to by Janzen (2002 that medical realities are multiple. The results directed that there are several factors not limited to cultural beliefs, personal preferences, cost, accessibility and the pain associated with conventional medical practices that determine the modality of treatment in Zimbabwe. The findings indicated that breast cancer is viewed as a death sentence in Zimbabwe with most people dreading treatment as a waste of money when the final result is known to be death.

Concurrent with these findings are Kyei *et al.* (2018) who postulate that in Ghana most people believe that breast cancer is incurable and they end up engaging spiritualists and herbalists. These practices concur with the conceptual framework on the pluralism of medical practices and there is only the need for the creation of a treatment modality that houses these plural medical practices (Horbst and Schirripa, 2017). The treatment of breast cancer is not popular in communities in the third world as the common belief is that it is incurable.

Traditional medicines have been around on the African continent and are used by most of people as most of them do not have health insurance. Due to the uncertainty caused by breast cancer, patients engage both modalities to manage the pain and as a way to recover fast by complementing the two methods. Concurrent with these findings on the use of cancer alternative medicines are Mwaka *et al.* (2021) who postulate that cancer patients in Uganda prefer the use of traditional medicines due to fear of surgery, dissatisfaction with conventional medical care, multiple side effects of conventional cancer medicines and affordability.

The findings indicated that breast cancer patients prefer to use traditional medicine in managing the pain from the therapies due to the acute shortage of pain management medication. In line with these findings are Wei *et al.* (2016) who are of the view that Huachansu, a traditional Chinese medicine extracted from the skin of toads that is believed by some to slow the spread of cancerous cells, is commonly used to treat or reduce the toxicity induced by chemo and radiotherapy as this herb can suppress pain and growth of tumours. The findings of this study can guide the development of patient education materials and support systems that can mainstream information about breast cancer and test the efficacy of alternative cancer medicines.

CONCLUSION AND LESSONS DRAWN

Exploring breast cancer treatment and how patients in Zimbabwe manage the treatment and cope with the shortcomings associated with the treatment of breast cancer is essential for the crafting of responses and informed policies. Breast cancer continues to kill women in Zimbabwe and Africa because of lack of cancer treatment. It is important to create a decentralised healthcare system with a centre for such diseases. There is need for the creation of more cancer centres and decentralisation of cancer treatments through the devolution policy to include patients on the peripheries,

achieving the government's rhetoric of "leaving no one behind". Africa is a place steeped in mysteries and secrets of spirituality that cannot be explained by biomedical practices and there is need for the creation of a complementary healthcare model that is conscious of the existence of the spiritual world.

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EXPLORING ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE - THE KHOISAN

PRINCE MUZUVA[1]

Abstract

The article seeks to unpack the status of access to university education by the Khoisan people in South Africa. Access to university education is one of the critical issues that concern the indigenous people, the first nations people – the Khoisan. In South Africa, access to university education is a challenge for the 'Coloured' people, who include the Khoisan community, who are relatively behind in terms of accessing university education compared to other groups. The question to be answered is how are the Khoisan people, as the aboriginal people in South Africa, accessing university education as their classification of being 'Coloured' does not depict the actual situation prevailing in Khoisan society. Data was solicited using document search and thematically analysed. The major findings of the study are that the Khoisan people are not accessing university education equally with other groups in the country.

Keywords: coloured, constitution, aboriginality, indigenous, post-apartheid, decoloniality

INTRODUCTION

The commonly accepted understanding and definition of the term "indigenous communities, peoples and nations" is defined by Cobo (1986/7:379-382) as:

> those that, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them.

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First Nations people across the globe exhibit some commonalities in their quest to participate fully in post-colonial societies they inhabit (Saito, 2020). This exhibits the struggles of the indigenous people in their quest for equal access to social services in the contemporary world, be it in Australia, Botswana, Brazil, New Zealand or South Africa, as colonisation processes, struggles, confrontations, industrial transformations and, more recently, globalisation, have shaped current discourses (Mello *et al.*, 2018).

Debates among and about indigenous, original or first nations people the world over, revolve around aspects such as self-determination, territorial and tradition/cultural preservation (Mello *et al.*, 2018). Minority school education (especially tertiary) if discussed is directly connected to such debates and themes but as a tool of acculturation, self-determination and emancipation *ibid.*). Indigenous peoples bear the brunt of "historic injustice, including colonisation, dispossession of their lands, territories and resources, oppression and discrimination and lack of control over their ways of life"(Carino, 2009:25).

Statistical information on the conditions and situations of aboriginal people the world over is not readily and easily available as few countries are keen to collect the data by ethnicity. Nevertheless, there is differential progress by the indigenous peoples in the world in their social and economic development aspects, hence depicting specific national legal and policy frameworks that recognise, respect and promote their rights (Carino, 2009). As argued by Carino (*ibid.*), a recent study that used UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI)[2] in studying the well-being of indigenous peoples, articulated that in both developing and developed countries (for example, in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States),

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[2] According to Carino (2009), the Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that summarises that country's average achievements in three basic human development aspects, namely health, education and a decent standard of living. Health is reflected by life expectancy at birth, with education being a function of adult literacy rate, combined primary, secondary and tertiary total enrolment ratio. The standard of living is measured in terms of GDP per capita (PPP USD).

indigenous people lag consistently and significantly behind the non-indigenous general populations in the sense that they live shorter lives (hence low life expectancy at birth), have poorer health care and education and even have higher unemployment rates. Indigenous peoples face huge disparities in terms of access to and quality of education and health *ibid.*).

Indigenous peoples are typically characterised by a general lack of access to education due to their geographic and politically marginalised status (Champagne, 2009). Too often, in many countries education systems and "… programs fail to offer indigenous peoples the possibility of participating in decision-making, [and] the design of curricula, the selection of teachers and teaching methods and the definition of standards" (King and Schielmann, 2004:19) exclude indigenous issues - their cultures and practices. This results in education gaps that render indigenous students to have lower enrolment rates, report higher dropout rates and register poorer educational outcomes than their non-indigenous counterparts (Champagne, 2009).

The Maori people of New Zealand, Aboriginal Australians and the Khoisan[3] people in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia generally face similar challenges (Suzman, 2001). The challenges these indigenous people face include limited access to health and education (inclusive of university education) compared to other groups (Wodon and Consentino, 2019) and their original economies were destroyed with a "…good deal of [annihilated] social organisation, precipitous population declines and subjection to tutelary and assimilationist policies antagonistic to indigenous cultures" (Cornell, 2006). The issue of the Khosan people is a peculiar one as a minority class in Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia (Barnard, 1988; Nurse *et al.* (1985) and they have remained on the periphery for centuries in terms of political representations, economic

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[3] The name "Khoisan" is a merger of Khoikhoi and San tribes or two groups of different people who shared similar cultures and languages.

empowerment and privileged policy-oriented access to education as a minority class (IWGIA, 2022).

In South Africa, the first people to be colonially oppressed were the coastal Khoisan communities in 1488, first by the Portuguese and later by the Dutch, who first camped at the Cape in 1652, seizing Khoisan land and farms in 1657. The seizure sparked the 1659-60 and 1673-77 wars of resistance by Khoisan warriors (Johnson, 2007; Boezak, 2017). The Dutch (1652-1800) and the English (1800-1910), two successive colonial regimes, used oppressive Roman-Dutch law and violence to dispose the indigenous people of their precious land (Bredekamp, 1986). The Khoisan tribes, despite being the first inhabitants of Southern Africa (Secorun, 2018), were given derogatory, insensitive and ill-informed names like "Bushmen" and "Hottentots" by the European settlers to classify and simplify them (Bredekamp, 1986; Elbourne, 1992; Robins, 2000; Boezak, 2017;).

Collectively known as the Khoisan, the various indigenous African communities in South Africa are known as the Khoisan, comprising the Khoikhoi and the San and the San groups include the Khomani San (found mainly in the Kalahari region) and the Khwe and Xun,residing mainly in Platfontein, Kimberley (IWGIA, 2022). On the other hand, The Khoikhoi comprises many groups, namely the Nama (Northern Cape Province); the Koranna (Kimberley and the Free State Province); the Griqua (Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces); and the Cape Khoekhoe (Western Cape and Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Free State Provinces) (IWGIA, 2022).

In South Africa, the Khoisan are generally not considered black; they were designated as 'coloured' and it is estimated that as of 2017, 8.8% (5 million people) of the country's population were 'coloured',though it is a bit difficult to trace them to the Khoisan indigenous ancestry (Boezak, 2017; Secorun, 2018) as argued by IWGIA (2022), Indigenous groups in South Africa are approximately 1% of the 59 million total population. However, indigenous African San and Khoikhoi peoples are not formally recognised in terms of national legislation, but the South African Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Act, enacted in 2021, is enabling many previously "coloured" people to exercise their right to self-identification as San and Khoikhoi (*ibid.*). The amorphous categorisation of the Khoisan as coloured in South Africa condemned much of their history to oblivion and facilitated their

social and economic exclusion (Van der Ross, 2015). Furthermore, the Khoisan, as coloureds in post-apartheid South Africa, are categorically among the lowest number of people with post-secondary education, standing at 2.4% compared to the Indian/Asian at 5.6%, White at 4.5% and Black Africans at 4% (STATS SA, 2016).

It is upon this background that the study is seeking to explore the extent to which the Khoi-San, as the First Nation of South Africa, are accessing university education, *vis-á-vis* other groups. The study highlights the reasons behind the superficial lack of access to university education by the Khoi-San.

THEORIES UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

The study employs two theories, the Decolonial Theory and the Critical Race Theory. The Decolonial Theory emphasizes the need to correct past errors brought by colonisation, whilst the Critical Race Theory explains how racial inequalities can shape the form and development patents of a community. These theories become relevant in the context where the Khoisan have been recipients of racial segregation through colonialism in South Africa and the effects of colonialism are still defining their social status.

DECOLONIAL THEORY

Decolonisation is about "cultural, psychological and economic freedom" for indigenous people to achieve indigenous sovereignty — the right and ability of indigenous people to practise self-determination over their land, cultures and political and economic systems (Belfi and Sandiford, 2021. As argued by Mignolo (2011), decolonisation questions or problematises the histories of power emerging from Europe, a relevant claim in the context given the experiences of the Khoisan and colonialism by the Europeans in South Africa.

The Decolonial Theory is relevant in this study as its tenets of anti-Eurocentric hegemony (Quijano, 2007) best explain inequalities and lack of opportunities for education in an independent South Africa and Africa at large. Access to university education from the oppressed people's point of view is a result of prohibitive Westernised policies and procedures (Ranjeni, 2015). In line with the above, Mignolo (2011) describes decoloniality as a form of epistemic disobedience. The disobedience comes in the context of disobeying and challenging the status quo brought by the Eurocentric

supremacist exclusive policies to the local people and the failure of the government of the day to make corrections to past exclusive errors. The Khoisan are part of the locals who have been on the receiving end of this discrimination and exclusion in the general social sphere (HRC, 2016). The above justifies the need for the question of access to university education by the First Nations people in South Africa to be answered as it is evident that they have been relegated from the general social front.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

The theory was first applied as an analytical framework to assess inequity in education in the United States in 1994 (Decuir and Dixson, 2004). The theory is premised on attempting to make a strong case on patterns of exclusion, which is usually absent when analysing race and privilege in society (Parker and Villalpando, 2007). Further to the above, as argued by Hilirado (2010), the Critical Race Theory can play an important role when higher education institutions work toward becoming more diverse and inclusive. Thisassertion is relevant in the current study, where diversity and inclusivity could be the missing link toward enhancing access to university education by the Khoisan people in South Africa. In line with the above, Adonis and Silinda (2021) have argued that the Critical Race Theory can interrogate why transformation has remained elusive in higher education post-apartheid South Africa. This fits well into the scope of this study as the issue of transformation post-apartheid is a key component to be interrogated in the apparent aloofness of the Khoisan people in the contemporary mainstream university education of South Africa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

From various authors, the study reviewed literature related to the Khoisan, particularly to do with their access to social development services. The literature covered the historical aspect, a comparative analysis with other indigenous people in other countries and how the Khoisan in contemporary South Africa is faring in terms of access to social services in the country.

Indigenous people the world over, are an extremely important resource to mankind in terms of their diverse "belief systems, cultures, languages and ways of life [but they] continue to be threatened, sometimes by extinction". These people suffer discrimination, marginalisation, extreme poverty, undermined livelihoods and conflict (Zukang, 2009: v). Even though governments, multi-lateral bodies and international law are converging on

rectifying the ills faced by indigenous people, the state of the world's indigenous peoples and issues relating to them, for example, poverty and well-being, culture (land, language, identity, spirituality and belief systems), environment, education, health, human rights, violence, militarism and many other emerging issues, have featured in thematic areas within various debates and writings in the last 60 years (DESA, 2009). Notwithstanding the unprecedented, extraordinary and unparalleled progress,

> there remains a lingering frustration that the [indigenous] poorest of the poor, the most marginalised and discriminated against, still do not enjoy their basic human rights, development or security" (DESA, 2009:1).

The world over, at all levels, it seems indigenous peoples have lower levels of literacy, experience fewer years of schooling and are among the most to likely drop out of school (DESA, 2009). Thus, the First Nations people have the least access to education of all the groups in various countries (Suzman, 2001). In New Zealand, only 13 of every 100 indigenous Māori school leavers achieve a bachelor's degree, compared with 33 non-Māori. The Maori, as argued by Gagné (2013), are suffering from alienation in participating at higher levels of education due to persistent institutional and structural alienation against the indigenous people and in favour of European settlers. In the USA, only 7.6%of Native Americans have a bachelor's degree, compared to 15.5% of the total population (Tsai and Alanis, 2004). This depicts an education gap and deficit among natives in both New Zealand and the USA. Studies and statistics of such a nature are lacking in Sub-Sahara Africa and it is the crux of this research to close such gaps in the literature.

Several international instruments treat education as a fundamental human right, for instance, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the World Declaration on Education for All (1990) and the Dakar Framework of Action (2000), entirely echo the commitment and sentiment of world leaders and the international fraternity to provide access to quality education to all (children, youth and adults) (Champagne, 2009). However, worldwide, high levels of illiteracy, dropouts, low enrolments and lower academic performances are prevalent in and among indigenous communities in many countries due to educational exclusion owing to poor access to education, lack of funding, "culturally and linguistically inadequate education and ill-equipped instructors" (Larsen, 2003; Hays, 2004; Mellor and Corrigan, 2004; Lasimbang, 2005; Champagne, 2009).

Even though literature is awash with concerns about indigenous peoples' education, for example by authors like Larsen (2003), Mellor & Corrigan (2004), Lasimbang (2005), Cornell (2006) and Champagne (2009), ; much attention has been afforded to other continents as compared to Africa. For Africa, a few authors like Hays (2004) have written on indigenous rights in education. This is commendable but still, there is need to expand the narrative to include the privileges of access to university education in South Africa by the Khoisan, even though the author focused on the San people in Southern Africa (Angola, Zambia. Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa and Botswana).

As argued by Hays (2004), the South African government is working very hard to make formal education easily accessible to the San people but, just like in other Southern African countries, there are high drop-out rates, low success rates and communities everywhere are frustrated and disappointed over lack of educational options availed to them. Studies are scanty on educational issues combing the Khoikhoi and San communities.

Furthermore, research related to the Khoisan has focused on culture , languages they speak and spoke (Barnard, 1988; Boezak, 2017), place names (Pettman,1931: 13-17; Nienaber and Raper, 1980; Raper, 2014), land, identity (Robins, 2000; Gabie, 2014;Boezak, 2017), leadership and social structures and religion (Barnard, 1988; Elbourne, 1992; Boezak, 2017). However, there is a standing lacuna in the literature on the issue of the Khoisan's access to education in South Africa, especially their access to university education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The study takes an interpretivism paradigm as it seeks to embrace the notion of subjectivity (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). A qualitative research approach purely guided the research. Data for the study was collected from secondary sources retrieved from existing databases and published scientific works including Google Scholar, Bok.org, local newspapers and international news media, among other sources. The literature search was guided by research questions that focused on the themes addressing the scope of the study. Content analysis was then used to analyse this data which was coded and then grouped into themes eventually used for the write-up of the study.

RESULTS

The major findings point to the issues surrounding the legacy of colonialism, education, apartheid and the use of the coloured identity to denote the Khoisan as the major stumbling blocks. It has been found that the amorphous categorisation of the Khoisan as coloured in South Africa condemns much of their history into oblivion and facilitates their social and economic exclusion (Van der Ross, 2015). Furthermore, the Khoisan as coloured in post-apartheid South Africa is categorically among the lowest number of people with post-secondary education, standing at 2.4%, compared to the Indian/Asian at 5.6%, White at 4.5% and Black Africans at 4% (STATS SA, 2016). This reflects that the Khoisan are behind compared to their counterparts.

The findings of the study also indicate that Khoisan activism and debates in the form of advocacy and demonstrations have drastically increased in recent years. This could be attributed to persisting disparities and deplorable socio-economic circumstances the First Nations people find themselves in compared with their advantaged counterparts (South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), 2018).

The legacy of colonialism is still negatively impacting the general well-being and particularly the education affairs of the First Nations people, the Khoisan. Since the arrival of white settlers which resulted in forced migrations, assimilations and local cultural erosions, the group continues to be absent in the mainstream affairs of the rainbow nation. The exploitation and exclusion from the affairs of the country from pro-democracy to post-democracy explain why the Khoisan people are still in the same status in terms of access to university education.

The study found out that there is an education 'apartheid' in South Africa, particularly looking at the accessibility of university education by South Africa`s Khoisan people. The playing field is not level for all groups in the country to access university education as groups like the Khoisan have more structural and social barriers compared to others. These disparities in education access remain a threat to the sustainable development of the country. Efforts have been put in place to promote an inclusive rainbow nation. However, in practice, the Khoisan are lagging behind in terms of access to university education.

DISCUSSION

As argued by Benatar (2010), South African universities and other institutions of higher education are giving students preferential admissions based on race. He, however, argues that it is "morally indefensible" to have such a platform. Matsepe *et al.* (2020), noted that these universities

progressively tackled the "race problem" in enrolment strategies, even though their main target group remains students from rich or affluent communities. However, they are still excluding potentially good students from marginalised groups, particularly those from poor township and rural schools. This resonates well with the Critical Race Rheory employed in this study which emphasizes the need to include all races, particularly the minority in the social affairs of communities.

South Africa has a high number of marginalised rural minorities and the educational needs of these populations often exceed the resources available to address them (Hays, 2004). Hence, the topical challenge in formal access to higher education in South Africa is no longer on the racial card but is of social class as merit cannot be reconciled with equity and social justice concerns (Matsepe *et al.*, 2020). This further explains how the Khoisan people are finding themselves on the periphery of social development in South Africa.

The birth of South African democracy is widely renowned as a remarkable milestone in different dimensions in Sub Saharan Africa. However, the new administration post-1994 took over the reins with an unequally educated population (Asmal and James, 2001). As argued by Grant and Hallman (2008), the effects of apartheid are still available in the nation's education system, for disparities in education still have the pivot tilted against the formerly disadvantaged communities, including the Khoisan. Even though policies are there that aim to regulate and govern higher education, including universities, to ensure quality and equality of services within the system (Higher Education Act, 1997), it remains evident that the Khoisan, the First Nations people of South Africa, are being excluded from mainstream social dispositions of the democratic republic. The Decolonial Theory guiding the study speaks to the above assertion, given that it is evident that the end of apartheid was not a panacea to the First Nations people of South Africa's woes, but the situation remains, hence the need to decolonise the education system to be more inclusive.

Despite the advent of democracy and the fall of apartheid in 1994 in South Africa, empty promises have characterised the address of Khoisan's grievances (Holmes and Loehwing, 2016). The "Coloured" conflation is one of the key factors excavating the social status of the First Nations people, given that the marginalised group is not distinctively recognised. Along the same line, existing literature over the same period has failed to address reliably the issue of access to university education by the Khoisan, even though in South Africa, the constitution stipulates that all people must have the right to be educated even in their mother tongue.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The emancipation and correction of past exclusive policies, relegating the First Nations people to the periphery of the country's socio-economic key participative roles, remain more on paper than practical, particularly looking at access to university education. It is recommended that the government should take it upon itself to ensure that the emancipation of the Khoisan people is radically expedited in South Africa. Since the term 'coloured", in which the Khoisan are included, is playing to their disadvantage, it is critically essential that the group be distinctly identified so that they are not conflated with Coloured which is way better than the Khoisan in terms of social emancipation.

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TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR MOULDING STUDENT LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS FOR A CHANGING AND DYNAMIC TERRAIN IN QUEST FOR CREATING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES IN ZIMBABWE

EVERNICE MUNANDO[1]

Abstract

This study intends to develop and introduce a framework that can be used in Zimbabwe's higher education institutions in moulding student leadership that suit the changing dynamics of these institutions. In a bid to know how the terrain and dynamics are changing in higher education institutions, the role of student leadership, and the strategies being implemented to foster student leadership, this study therefore seeks to develop a framework that guides the development of student leadership and enforce it in a sustainable manner that leads to the fulfilment of the needs of students as well the good governance of higher education institutions. The adoption of a student leadership framework includes certain policies such as the Student Representative Council (SRC), which governs or regulates student leadership on campus. Moulding student leadership implies the introduction of a methodology or concept that can be employed to achieve the required results. Hence, the aim of this study is to proffer a leadership framework for higher education institutions. The study used desktop analysis to gather and analyse the qualitative information presented in this document. The results indicated that a framework is significant for strengthening student leadership in Zimbabwe. A framework proved important for the proper development of leadership skills in students as well as providing the legal foundation on how functional it can be through policies guiding it. It can be argued that though a framework can be drafted and introduced to these

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institutions, without enforcement, it is meaningless. It can be argued that the framework is the way to go towards the empowerment of student leaders in school governance and the expected leadership that will result in sustainability of higher education institutions regardless of the current changes. The study recommends enforcement of a leadership framework and the assessment of the success of the framework in moulding student leaders.

Keywords: leadership moulding, policy, university and representation, authority, policy

INTRODUCTION

This study aims at developing a framework that can be used to mould student leadership in universities and colleges in Zimbabwe. Student leadership has proved to have little attention in addressing students' grievances due to lack of capacity and skills to confront the status quo. Hence, it is important to have a framework that will speak to the procedures and processes that inform effective student leadership in a bid to serve the students' body. This has led to the failure to adapt and solve the challenges emanating from the changing dynamics and terrain in higher education institutions. This is an important strategy to ensure that student leaders are equipped with certain skills that are critical for the fulfilment of their duties. They are protected and free to exercise their power and provide a guideline that suits the present changes occurring in higher education that needs to tie with leadership skills. Haber (2011) is of the view that in the past two decades, leadership development programmes have been proliferating across universities worldwide. Cáceres-Reche *et al.* (2021) argue that leadership is a great challenge to both societies and institutions that requires to be solved to achieve their goals, aspirations and objectives. It has been noted that there is an absence of student development techniques leading to inefficient of moulding of effective leadership among students. More so, there are no supporting policies for the development and promotion of student leadership, hence this study seeks to develop a framework which takes into consideration the benefits of providing proper policy framework in support of student leadership development. Singh and Widen (2021) argue that leadership has been required among administrators and managerial positions in the past but with the rapid use of technology, leadership skills have become vital in the library and information science field and so as in higher education institutions.

Though universities have a mandate to develop student leaders. less consensus is noted on how they should do it in a way that produces the best leaders to help solve contemporary issues in higher education institutions in

Zimbabwe, hence the void which this study hopes to cover through the development of the leadership framework. Rusmussen and Hansen (2018) argue that the understanding of student leadership has varied in the last two decades, from the traditional concept to contemporary concepts of leadership development, hence the need for a leadership framework to guide the development of student leaders is vital in higher education institutions. Black *et al.* (2014) are of the view that the student leadership policy framework has been implemented both at different national levels and internationally and this has expressed the intent to encourage students to take greater ownership of their learning and participate in decision-making and change processes in their institutions.

Desktop review was used for the purpose of this research. Qualitative data was gathered, analysed and presented in this study as collected from different data sources such as articles, policies, books, journal and newsletters from different universities and research labs worldwide. The results show that the introduction of student leaders does not only lead to the development of leaders within the institution, but leaders that will transform the world and society. The results show that the framework proliferates the solutions that will lead to the sustainability of student leaders who contribute solutions towards the changing terrain and dynamics in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe. The results indicate the need for a new paradigm shift that recognises student government as integral to effectiveness of student leadership for sustainability of student participation in decision-making processes. It can be argued that a student leadership framework is the solution towards student leadership development, as it will provide specific steps and measures that can lead to successful development of student leaders. Zimbabwe has a high record of drafting proper policies and frameworks for different kinds of development, but lack the implementation, hence lack of higher education framework implementation will lead to the failure of the framework. In conclusion, it can be said that the student leadership framework is key to the success of student leadership in higher education institutions, hence the need to be drafted and be implemented.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The notion of this study is to introduce a framework that is applicable in the contemporary student leadership scenario suiting the changing dynamics and terrains of higher education systems as a solution for promoting full engagement of students as main stakeholders of these institutions. Black *et al.* (2014) assert that traditional leadership models, for instance Student Representative Councils, had a tendency of benefiting only those directly involved in it, instead of building the skills and knowledge of students. It can be argued that traditional schools' hierarchy do not support student leadership that has become one of the most important and significant concepts for solving and embracing the changing dynamics in higher

education institutions, raising the need for the introduction of a framework that governs the grabbing of student leaders into the systems. Hence, this framework aims at promoting student leadership in such a way that all students are represented rationally, and their voices are heard and responded to without failure, thus benefiting the whole institution. Besides, this framework ought to ensure that there is full representation of students at all levels of education, from the classroom, the school, the school systems and the community.

The University of Dayton (2019) is of the view that leadership is a collaborative and values-driven process that interrogates and challenges organisations and systemic dynamics to transform the community positively. Cáceres-Reche *et al.* (2021) describe leadership as a process, rather than a position that requires the designing and planning of series of real and practical strategies with alternative models of action and problem solving, hence the need for developing a framework that guides this leadership development process that allows one to have a clear vision of what a student leader requires to be. Black *et al.* (2014) put forward several student leadership moulding opportunities that can be adopted in higher education systems for effective leadership. It can be argued that the development of a leadership framework is based on different ideologies and beliefs that govern institutions, hence the need to structure a framework for student leadership in Zimbabwe based on the culture, customs and traditions of its higher education institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

On an international scale, a shift in education policy towards the incorporation of student leadership has been experienced over the past two decades (*ibid.*). This has been done after the realisation that schools are ideal institutions for the transmission of social norms, including civic leadership and participation, among others. Student leadership education is vital in improving students' values and their development of social core values among universities in Shanghai, China (Zhang and Chen, 2015). Student leadership in the United States of America is regarded as important in enhancing the national core values of education in the aspect of civic responsibility and community participation of young students (Wagner, 2009). In China, it has been discovered that there are no formal leadership development models among its universities, hence Weng and Yan (2019) suggest the development of formal leadership courses, mainly the value-based leadership curriculum that aligns with the Chinese values, current

leadership theories, philosophy and main national conditions (Abbott, 1996). According to the American Association of Colleges and Universities (2007), higher education's important learning goals are citizen participation and social responsibilities which American colleges and universities are trying to provide through the development of student leadership.

The idea of leadership development among students has been grabbed by school systems internationally and has been taken as higher education institutions' responsibility. International organisations have started to draft, introduce and implement some policies related to the development of student leadership and their participation in the governance of higher education institutions around the globe. Black *et al.* (2014) note that the United Nations, in its capacity, provides an over-arching international policy context through the Convention on the Rights of the Child, aiming at coordinating and integrating student leadership into the education policy, providing a foundational direction for engaging students in decision-making and passing their views and ideas freely. The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) (2012) argues that there has been a shift in education policy in the European Union as they seek to coordinate different stakeholders, thus a shift from a student-based approach to a comprehensive approach. ETUCE (*ibid.*) discovered that several student leadership policies have been implemented in Europe among its higher education institutions, with Australia following suit. In Europe and the United Kingdom, several systems have been used to locate student leadership practice within the framework of citizen leadership (Black *et al.* 2014). ETUCE (2012) asserts that the participation of students at different levels has been central and of great importance to the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Hatlevick and Ernseth (2012) observe that the notion of citizenship is highly explored as part of the curriculum across the world as noted by a study conducted by the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study in 2009.

In Europe and Asia, leadership the is being adopted in different forms which includes the introduction of several policies and curricula to guide the development of student leadership in higher education institutions. Black *et al.* (2014) understand student leadership the as a document that upholds certain policy frameworks that encourages and support innovative student leadership practice by pampering the students with perfect skills and civics

education in the curriculum, supporting the transfer of information and knowledge as well as practice models among students and many other intended leadership development tactics.

The education policy introduced in the United Kingdom is one of the proofs that democratic student leadership is being supported in that country and the national curriculum that identifies young people as the players of the most active roles in higher education institutions (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007). Apart from that, the UK Department of Education and Skills (2003) insists that the United Kingdom Education Act has been used as a legal framework which gives a mandate for governing bodies, education authorities to give hid to student perspectives and integrate them in processes of democratic decision-making in the education department. In Zhejiang University, leadership courses with the main focus on the improvement of student's leadership capability in communication, adaptation, innovation, influence and decision-making, are being developed to ensure that student leaders acquire all the necessary skills for a sustainable future of higher education institutions (Hu, 2011). Weng and Yan (2019) note the rising need for young leaders around the world has led to the development and introduction of theoretical leadership models, leadership curriculum and leadership courses in colleges scattered around the United States of America. It can be argued that Zimbabwe, as one of the developing countries, should adopt such ideas and implement them in its own context, supported by new innovations and remodelling of such concepts as this leads to high quality student leadership development. In China, the leadership framework has been found to be more systematic, developing internal psychology and emphasizing the student's subjectivity, forming different leadership skills in a student (*ibid.*). In this sense, it can be argued that the introduction of a student leadership framework in Zimbabwe will lead to basic practices that facilitate individual growth and assist students with supportive skills, building them into the anticipated vision of a great leader. As a way of promoting leadership in Chinese universities, the introduced leadership courses done through project activities, designed and implemented by students, have managed to improve in them self-management, project management, communication skills and decision-making skills, among others (Chen, 2011).

Another leadership framework that has been discovered to be effective in producing quality student leaders is the Northwestern Leadership

Framework that is grounded in the values and mission of Northwestern and the Division of Student Affairs connect and weave a coordinated and integrated cross campus approach to leadership development. The quest of the Northwestern Leadership Framework is to expand the student's capacity to provide change as world leaders (Northwestern Student Affairs, 2022). It is argued that the framework guides the work of the university staff in supporting student leadership development and their outcomes. This framework is guided by nine principles adapted from Shankman *et al.* (2015) which are: students are partners in this process; leadership can be learned and developed; leadership does not require a title, it is available to all; leadership is both an art and a science; leadership brings positive change; leadership is an interpersonal activity; no theory is the best theory; leadership requires inner work and self-care; and there is wisdom beyond the walls of our university. The leadership framework is meant to benefit the student and secondarily be used in the examination of leadership development among university staff. It can be argued that this framework is against the notion that leadership is an inborn skill in a person but, rather, it can be taught and developed in anyone and does not need a title for one to fulfil it.

In Zimbabwe, student leadership is perceived as a political game, generating polarisation of student leadership. Though there are SRC constitutions, student leaders are somehow imposed to serve the interests of the nominating board than those of students. More so, SRCs are not a homogeneous group where individuals may be drawn from various unions, in this case there is the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) and the Zimbabwe Congress of Students Union (ZICOSU) as major unions who also purportedly are affiliated to major political parties in Zimbabwe (*ibid.*). This means that their activism is largely influenced by political ideologies of the day. However, it is also implicitly in stigmatising political arenas such as student governments where student leadership takes place to a realm of political stimulation and pedagogical exercises (Patrick, 2022). Upon the realisation that student activism is 'political', a game of power, students may have divergent views from that of the authorities, hence this may determine or influence the operating terrain.

The need for student leadership development has led to the discovery of the Residential Life Leadership Model at St Cloud State University. This model was developed to foster and develop leadership skills in student leaders in

the Residential Life Community (St Cloud State University, 2016). The student leadership development has a number of tools that were used by both the student and their supervisors in the development process of leadership skills. The first of these tools is the initial leadership assessment which is used by students in assessing themselves at the beginning of their leadership position as a way of identifying the areas of potential growth and development, thus leading to the second tool, which is the formulation of a goal (PaperClip Communications, 2002). The third tool of this framework is the goal post, followed by the evaluation of goal and achievement tracking form and, lastly, leadership evaluation, whereby they evaluate themselves on the areas of focus that makes or breaks the leader. It can be noted that this is significant in the development of the student leadership skills as they have the opportunity to assess themselves and help them to continuously develop in the leadership field through the series of tools available for their growth.

In order to promote student leadership, the development of the student leadership framework was done at the University of Tasmania to guide the development and implementation of student leaders in the university and four more universities, Curtin University, Otago University, Monash University and Wollongong University. Skalicky *et al.* (2018) note that in Australia, a number of universities were involved in the formulation of what is known as the Developing and Supporting Student Leadership Framework which was done through a multi-institutional research project funded by the Australian Government's Office for Learning and Teaching, with the University of Tasmania leading. Skalicky *et al.* (*ibid.*) argue that the Developing and Supporting Student Leadership Framework accommodates the diversity of leadership conceptualisations and at the same time gives principles and guidelines that support good practice and continued improvement.

This framework was developed to equip student leaders to be practitioners across a range of programmes and guide more comprehensive and international consideration of student leadership. Skalicky *et al.* (*ibid.*) note that there are five elements that constitute the student leadership framework: purpose, people, positioning, practice and progress. Besides these elements, there are four components that were designed to support program coordinators: a reflection tool and action plan; a set of good practice principles and guidelines; a series of case studies; and supporting resources. It can be argued that this framework has intentions of providing student leaders with experience and training as well as volunteering

opportunities that later help them in fulfilling their leadership roles in their institutions and outside educational premises in their communities.

As a solution for the development of leadership to meet the increasing competition and need for young leaders, a model, known as the Four-stage Value-based Leadership Development Model (Weng and Yan, 2019), was developed in China. This resulted in the development of leadership courses in a few Chinese universities and colleges categorised into three forms, namely project-oriented leadership activities, skills-oriented leadership courses and leadership courses, focusing on theories and skills (*ibid.*). At the University of Dayton, the leadership framework was developed based on the lens of Catholic and Marianist identity through which six tenets were the basis of student leadership development. The awareness of one's identities and values has been vital for student leadership, followed by the sense of social responsibility that unites one with the needs of other people, which the leader ought to familiarise with. Another tenet is the relationship one shares with the community where commitment to the development of meaningful, inclusive and reciprocal relationship is required. Leaders intend to have a vision that promotes justice and positive social change and having this vision, they are expected to act to support the goal and, lastly, reflection and growth which emanate from the ability to reflect on and assess one's strengths and challenges with a focus on continuous improvement (University of Dayton, 2019).

Gore and Kanyangale (2022) proposed an integrative framework for strategic leadership in higher education in Zimbabwe, bringing up six components that are: organisational capabilities, inclusive envisioning of the future, leading self, sense-making of dynamic reality in a context of the university, and interfacing with key stakeholders to collectively shape and reshape. Literature, as noted, has a lot of information concerning the development and implementation of the student leadership framework meant to promote and be used in the leadership skills among students and its benefits have shown to increase the adaptation of the changes that are being noted in higher education institutions and a tunnel that leads to sustainability in the higher education sector. The development of the leadership framework, as noted, being done in other regions and universities, is vital for higher education systems in Zimbabwe, hence the need to frame it, ensuring that all aspects of leadership are looked into and given enough consideration and attentions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used desktop analysis to gather and analyse the qualitative information presented in this document. Previous studies were reviewed so as to understand how the student leadership framework has been successful and useful in many higher education institutions around the world and also get clarity on how these frameworks are developed and what in particular they intend to address in relation to the development of sustainable student leadership in universities and colleges. Documents, including journals, reports, articles, legal frameworks and books were used as data sources for this study. The qualitative research design was used to gather, analyse and present data contained in this study as it gives an opportunity to the author to bring full explanations and debates related to the matter being studied by the research.

RESULTS

The findings portray that a leadership framework for the development of student leadership skills is the way to go towards the proper enforcement of leadership roles of students in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe. It provides opportunities and resources for students to gain leadership experience through the use of various strategies and systems. Student leadership is declared to be a purely leadership development and training for the future, rather than the present, hence the framework is the guideline of leadership of students to feature into the future dynamic and lead to sustainable development of education institutions in Zimbabwe. Muyambo *et al.* (2022) is of the view that there have been rapid changes in the way humans live and work that has led to an outcry for global educational reforms with the consideration of student leadership leading to the development of a number of policies for its moulding and development. The development of student leadership among the students requires a common agenda where the vision of the institution and the student aim at the same goal of working towards the sustainability of these institutions, hence. the need for effective communication which is consistent and open so as to create more ground for interaction and sharing of leadership skills through mentorship and coaching.

Results have indicated student participation in community development as a strategy towards student leadership development. The framework insists on giving students chances and allows them in leading development in communities and volunteerism as a solution that leads to the development of

leadership skills. This has indicated to be productive as the students get a chance to interact with different leaders from the society where they get an opportunity to be coached and mentored into the expected leaders that will guide the governance and development of their institutions in adapting to the chances occurring in this 21st century. Patrick (2020) argues that fostering student leadership is important not just political education, but student representation, activism and advocacy.

The results prove that student leadership development requires the moulding of oneself into the best vision of what a leader ought to be. The results indicate that leadership is something that can be developed in oneself, though others are born leaders. Leadership skills can be taught and learnt by individuals and become successful leaders of communities (Northwestern Student Affairs, 2019). Therefore, students should be introduced to leadership courses in their universities. Curricula should focus on the development of leadership as young leaders and the youth are regarded as the future of this planet and their participation in the planning and management of the universe has become one of the major priorities of the United Nations' Sustainable Goals. The lives of students on campus should help them learn leadership skills through their participation in student organisations, their interactions with roommates, collaboration on group projects in their classrooms, among other occasions where they are involved in certain projects with their lecturers and other students. In other words, the development of mutually reinforcing activities which promote coordination and activities with a range of interest to the students, results in leadership development at multiple stages of their training.

Leadership has proved to be one of the modes of student participation in higher education institutions and with the changing dynamic and terrains where student involvement has become a priority, ensuring that it is being met, is significant for growth and productivity of universities and colleges. Leadership in Zimbabwe has remained a traditional way of participation where the SRC and other student leaders are involved whilst student leadership is now being considered to be the participation of every student with leadership skills developed. The student leadership framework aims at compulsory leadership development in all students through a curriculum that persists on leadership courses, an essential tool for student leadership development in Zimbabwe. Patrick (2022) notes that most student leaders risk their lives trying to promote their thoughts in the management of higher

education institutions which has resulted in imprisonment and harassment of these leaders, hence the need for a safe and secure environment for students to participate.

In this regard, this framework emphasizes on introducing ways in which students participate in the governance and decision-making processes at their institutions with no fear of being harassed. This eventually promotes the sense of belonging in students as they feel that they are a priority. Networking students and allowing them to act in different programmes and projects gives them opportunities to reflect on leadership and apply the knowledge and the skills learnt from leadership courses as well as think about how they are doing in leadership through self-assessment for their development.

The results indicate that there is lack of policy framework on how student leadership ought to be delivered, which is a constraint in the development of student leadership in higher education institutions in Zimbabwe (Muyambo et al., 2022). The framework should have strong supportive policies that are enforced to guide and monitor leadership development by ensuring that students are given enough opportunities to develop their leadership skills in their full capacity. Student leadership framework enables students to be integrated into the planning of the institution and leads to effective decisions in which everyone and all ideas are represented. The findings have demonstrated that the higher education sector of Zimbabwe is lacking structural organisation for the moulding of student leadership skills, hence the need for the development of such structures that will promote coaching and training of the students. Patrick (2022) notes that the lack of structure to foster effective leadership activities is a fundamental challenge to student leadership. The implementation of a leadership framework in Zimbabwe's higher education institutions is important as it maximises student participation in the decision-making process which ensures that the principles of equity and fairness are presented in every practice in these institutions.

DISCUSSION

It can be argued that though a framework can be drafted and introduced to these institutions, without enforcement, it is meaningless. Lack of implementation of the framework will only increase the inefficiency of student leadership and the lagging behind of student participation in the

governance of these institutions. Failure of the establishment and use of this framework limit the capacity of student leaders to solve the problems faced by the institutions that are calling for sustainability and proper measures to foster and manage the changing dynamics and terrain in higher education systems.

The influence of politics on the implementation of student leadership frameworks is a barrier to the development of student leadership in higher education institutions, as can be realised from the current involvement of the ruling and opposition parties in student politics, focusing more on state politics, causing chaos and more harm than coordinating and developing student leaders who are effective and efficient in addressing the challenges of the institutions. The continued clash between different leadership parties in higher education institutions will eventually limit the effectiveness of this framework, thus there is need to address these issues for successful leadership development among the students and letting them contribute towards the result that is required among these institutions.

Lack of cooperation between higher education institutions governance and the students can be argued to be another challenge that might lower the success of the framework. Institutional governance authorities have lots of powers vested in them and the institutionalisation of this framework might be a threat to them losing power to rule these institutions, leading to them to discouraging student leadership involvement. In this regard, authorities should be ready to decentralise their powers and allow students to contribute in various forms. They should be ready to introduce various strategies of leadership development in students that will equip them with proper skills and knowledge on how to vest their power as institution leaders and student representatives that contribute to proper and efficient governance of their institutions for sustainable future.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, it can be argued that the framework is the way to go towards empowering student leaders in school governance and the expected leadership that will result in sustainability of higher education institutions regardless of current changes. The success of the leadership framework is key to the development of student leadership skills and the sustainable development of higher education institutions. It is argued that the student leadership framework has various benefits that boost student leadership

development among students and govern its proper implementation for the productivity of their institutions through the contributions of young brains that work well towards the growth and sustainability of the institutions in dealing with current issues that affecting them. The framework will not only benefit the institutions, but the students themselves in shaping themselves into future leaders who will transform the world and their personal lives in managing different companies and organisations in Zimbabwe and all over the universe.

The study recommends enforcement of a leadership framework and the assessment of the success of the framework in moulding student leaders. The study persists that the implementation of the framework will lead to the acquirement of knowledge, development of skills and experience in leadership in students. The study recommends the introduction of programmes that support student leadership development through involvement in the governance of institution or community development programmes that require their ideas and lead roles.

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TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND ACQUISITION IN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS: THE CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES IN SOUTH SUDAN

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Abstract

The article explored the identification and acquisition of talent in international humanitarian organisations in South Sudan. The study is premised on the argument that superior talent identification and acquisition strategies are vital to achieve competitive advantage in South Sudan. This is fundamental to satisfy both donor and host government and community requirements. The study aimed to establish methods of talent identification and acquisition in South Sudan. The competence conceptual framework was used to guide the study. The study utilised a qualitative methodology towards the direction of a case study design. It used a population of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) employees for this study. To understand talent identification and acquisition in South Sudan, a sample of 13 supervisors was used. The study used thematic data analysis to analyse the data findings. It was found that for humanitarian organisations use the referral method due to the lack of talent in South Sudan because of talent exodus. The findings indicated that employer branding and employee value proposition are key factors in talent identification and acquisition in IFRC in South Sudan. The study revealed that good remuneration and manpower development are also other talent acquisition methods. The study concludes that methods used for talent identification and acquisition in South Sudan are more linked to internal organisational policies. The study

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recommends a policy-based framework for talent acquisition and identification.

INTRODUCTION

The ground-breaking work by the McKinsey consultants who coined the expression 'war for talent' has resulted in significant interest in Talent Management (TM) from both academics and practitioners (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.,* 2013). These consultants posited that a fundamental belief in the importance of talent is needed to achieve organisational excellence (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). Proper talent management is considered a critical determinant of organisational success, and imperative for the livelihood and sustainability of organisations (Lawler, 2008; Chuai, & Preece, 2010).

The talent identification and acquisition is a critical phase of the TM process as it focuses on attracting and selecting high-potential candidates who possess the skills, knowledge, and cultural fit necessary for success within the organisation (Pruis, 2011). It involves strategic workforce planning, targeted recruitment campaigns, and effective selection processes that assess candidates' competencies and potential. By leveraging various channels, such as job boards, social media, and networking events, organisations can cast a wide net and attract diverse and qualified talent. It involves strategic planning, job analysis, and creating compelling job descriptions. By identifying the skills and competencies required for each role, organisations can effectively target and attract individuals who possess the desired qualities. The acquisition phase also includes sourcing candidates through various channels, such as job boards, social media, and professional networks.

A well-executed talent identification and acquisition strategy ensures that the organisation has a pool of qualified candidates to choose from. Managed talent relationships contribute significantly to talent acquisition and recruitment efforts. By building strong relationships with potential candidates, HR professionals can cultivate a talent pool of qualified individuals who align with the organisation's values and culture. These

relationships enable organisations to tap into passive candidates, enhance candidate experience, and expedite the recruitment process (Deloitte, 2019).

Inclusive sourcing and recruitment practices focus on attracting a diverse pool of candidates from various backgrounds and underrepresented groups. This may involve implementing strategies such as targeted job postings, partnering with diverse professional organisations, using diverse recruitment channels, and implementing blind hiring techniques to reduce bias. It also the Implementation of strategies to attract a diverse pool of candidates, such as targeted job postings, partnerships with diverse professional organisations, and using diverse recruitment channels.

In summary, talent identification and acquisition relate to recruiting, selecting, and socializing top talent in the organisation. Examples include opportunistic hiring practices, collaborative sourcing, employee value proposition practices, and employee-raiding practices. Effective attraction-based talent systems are able to attract applicants with the competences needed to perform a wide variety of strategic or critical jobs. One way this can be achieved is by sending applicants signals such as being "employer of choice" and the "most admired company to work for." The objective here is to build a talent-management reputation that can attract the best people and then select them for positions rather than trying to select specific people for specific positions (Tarique and Schuler, 2010).

Organisations should align employees with the company's vision, fostering long-term collaboration and preserving organisational knowledge (Vural et al., 2012). With heightened Human Resource competition, career planning is now essential, accompanied by innovative tools like talent management (Erdogan, 1996). Growth-focused companies prioritise human capital, realising the significance of investing in, developing, and retaining employees adaptable to diverse cultures and geographies (Vural et al., 2012). Unfortunately, talent management often neglects core organisational functions, with identification perceptions confined to market-oriented structures, particularly strategic work units, rather than basic skills (Dale, 1996).

It is inevitable that organisations focus on final products, but this must be complemented by focusing seriously on basic skills. Organisations should not be seen as just portfolios of products or services, but also portfolios of skills (Vural *et al.*, 2012). Vural *et al.* (*ibid.*) define talent as the qualification to understand something or fulfil a task or the innate power in organism to capably adapt to situations. Erdogan (1996) defines talent as the sum of a person's mental abilities such as to understand relations, to analyse and

conclude physical features and to get facts. Humanitarian disasters are constantly in the news, anything from earthquakes and tsunamis to war and famine (Rajakurana *et al*., 2017). The international community reacts to these disasters by providing aid in one form or another, shelter, food and clothing being usually top priority. Once the requirements are known, the supply chain kicks in and the reaction becomes an exercise in humanitarian logistics (Rajakurana *et al*., 2017).

One school of thought argues that skills and competencies are essentially the same both denoting an individual's ability to successfully perform specific activities through training and experience (Airia *et al*., 2014). Amir and Imran (2013) posit that skills are specific learned activities, and they range widely in terms of complexity. By identifying the skills required to perform a specific function, an organisation can identify the individual to carry out that function (Rajakurana *et al*., 2017). Competencies, on the other hand, are the methods of translating skills into the ability of an individual to perform the job requirements competently (*ibid.*). Artificial intelligence (AI) stands as a disruptive innovation ready to unleash the next wave of organisational digital transformation, driven by rapid advancements over the last decade (Queiroz *et al*., 2019).

AI is reshaping human resources management in organisations, defined as imbuing machines with intelligent behaviours akin of human actions (Pillai and Sivathanu, 2020). In talent acquisition, some organisations integrate AI to assist human resource managers in select and acquire the best and talented individuals (Muduli and Trivedi, 2020). Engaging in humanitarian work is associated with high risks of trauma and exposure to chronic stress (Strohmeier, 2019). Although some humanitarian workers manage crises without developing mental health issues (McKay, 2011), common problems like post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, burnout and alcohol abuse prevail (Ager et al., 2012). It is against this backdrop that the article seeks to understand how humanitarian organisations choose people who can handle the stress and pressure from the humanitarian work.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study relies on the competency framework employed in the humanitarian sector as its conceptual framework. This framework serves as a key instrument in human resource management and talent management within humanitarian aid organisations. Essentially the competency

framework or model aids in identifying f the skills, knowledge, personal characteristics and behaviours necessary for effective performance within the organisation. By achieving effective performance, individuals contribute to the organisation meeting its predetermined strategic objective (Tuomala, 2021). Thus, a competency framework is often seen as a link between human resource development and organisational strategy (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005).

Lucia and Lepsinger (1999) incorporate the quality outcome into their definition of a competency model asserting that it is an integrated set of competencies crucial for excellent performance within a specific organisational context. A competency framework serves as a a broad framework for integrating organising and aligning various competency models for reflective of the organisation's strategy and vision (Campion 2011). Competency models are collections of competencies that are relevant for performance in a particular job, functional area or job family (Campion 2011). According to Hall and Briscoe (1999), competency frameworks guide hiring and promotion decisions, offering insights into development needs. Additionally, they identify valuable learning experience for future leaders. The basis for developing competency frameworks varies from a research-based approach to a value-based one (Tuomala 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the literature review that shaped the discourse of this study, providing guidance through existing literature. Kunz and Reiner (2017) contend that there has been a dearth of research into human resource management in humanitarian recruitment. The literature was reviewed along the lines of definition of talent management and talent management in humanitarian organisation talent identification and acquisition in humanitarian organisations.

DEFINITION OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

multiplicity plethora of Talent Management definitions exists, with Gallardo *et al* (2015) asserting that the definition by Collings and Mellahi's (2009: 304) has gained widespread adoption. According to Collings and Mellahi (2009:304) TM involves the systematic identification of key positions that differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage. It encompasses developing of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performing individuals for establishing these roles, establishing a

differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent individuals and to ensuring their continued commitment to the organisation (Collings and Mellahi 2009). The term talent has its origins in the ancient Greek word "*talanton*" and "*talenta*" in Latin that used the word for unit weight or money (Tansley 2011). Later the word adopted other meanings and the 14th century it began to stand for a special natural ability or aptitude (Meyers *et al.*, 2013). Meyers *et al.* (2013) posit that the meaning of the word can be viewed metaphorically whether talent is used to describe monetary units or natural abilities the subtext is value, talent should not be wasted. Collings and Mellahi (2009) asserts that the organisation's strategy and related competitive advantage should be the foundation for the defining talent. They argue that individuals filling the roles that contributing to an organisation's sustainable competitive advantage should be deemed talented or high potential.

In defining the discourse of talent management Lewis and Hamilton (2006) asserts that pinpointing the precise meaning of talent management proves challenging due to authors using terms like talent management, talent strategy, succession management and human resource planning interchangeably. Despite the proliferation of articles, books, and practitioners in talent management, Lewis and Hamilton (2006) argue that a review of literature reveals a disturbing lack of clarity regarding scope and overall goals. Dries (2013) argues that the talent management literature's tendency to veer into vague but appealing rhetoric raises questions about whether talent management is not just a management fashion. Management fashions are characterised by conceptual ambiguity and a sense of urgency set by fashion setters (consultants business schools management gurus) lack legitimisation through sound evidence and robust theory (Dries 2013).

The above definition is fundamental for this research study for the following reasons. It emphasizes key positions as the point of departure for any TM system. These key positions are defined by their pivotal importance to organisational strategy, their rarity (generally 10–20% of positions in any organisation) and the fact that increasing the quality (quality pivotal) or quantity (quantity pivotal) of people in these positions is likely to generate a disproportionate return to the organisation (Becker and Huselid, 2006; Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007; Cascio and Boudreau, 2016; Collings and Mellahi, 2009). Once these positions are identified, the talent-pool strategy

focuses on recognising high-potential and high performing employees to fill those critical roles, advocating for proactive recruitment rather than demand-led recruitment (Sparrow, 2007). Additionally, mitigating, managing and optimising human capital risk is a central aspect to any talent pool strategy (Cascio and Boudreau, 2011, 2012). Lastly, the definition acknowledges the importance of tailoring HR practices based on the varying potential of pivotal roles to generate value. This marks the departure from historical approaches to HR approaches that applied, relatively standardised polices and processes to all employees, regardless of their positions or levels in an organisation.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

It can be argued that talent management has become a critical competitive tool for organisations globally (Beechler and Woodward 2009). However, even if talent management is strategically important for organisations research on the topic has been growing at a slow pace (Kontoghiorghes 2016). A lack of clarity and consensus concerning the definition and practices of talent management seems to still prevail in the academic discussion and debate even if the research area as such is considered to have moved from infancy to adolescence (Mellahi and Collings 2010, Collings, Scullion and Vaiman 2011). The transformation from infancy to adolescence can be attributed to many US based researcher that in turn as presented raised the question of applicability and adequacy of current concepts and approaches in talent management related to US-based private and humanitarian organisations and small and medium enterprises (Thunnissen *et al.,* 2013).

Collings *et al.* (2011) acknowledged significant distinctions from the North American thinking and research highlighting variations in organisation and structure between North American and European organisations. The formertends to place more emphasis on the formalisation of structures and processes while the European counterparts emphasise socialisation that in turn can be argued to require different approaches to talent management. Demographically, European organisations are influenced by factors such as the retirement of the baby boom generation, resulting in a loss of capacity and knowledge, as well as global talent gaps (Tuomala, 2021). (Another generation of significance mentioned by Collings *et al.* (2011) is the millennials born after 1980, known for their emphasis on cooperate social responsibility and a strong focus on training and development as key work-

related attitudes. For talent management aid and human resources management in general, this means that organisations need to understand leveraging employer branding or cooperate branding more broadly to attract and retain millennials (Tuomala 2021). Equally important is understanding how to engage and motivate this generation (Collings *et al.*, 2011). Vaiman, Scullion and Collings (2012) argue that millennials consider the reputation of a socially responsible company as important in talent management and retention. Cooperate social responsibility can be used to enhance employees' perception of intrinsic rewards instead of being extensively dependent on increasing financial compensation.

McGinnis Johnson and Ng (2015) argue that millennials seek meaningful work more than other generations. Public and non-profit sectors, including NGOs and humanitarian aid organisations are arguably positioned to offer interesting work through their missions. Meyers *et al.* (2014) posits that millennials are targeted by talent management activities due to the ongoing retirement of baby boomers and the current influx of millennials into workforce. Millennials emphasised different values and attitudes and career decisions. Younger millennials in particular, desire for interesting and meaningful work, personal growth and developing new skills (McGinnis *et al.* 2015).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sometimes methodology is called the philosophy of methods and can be defined broadly and schematically that is quantitatively and qualitatively or narrowly and precisely that is grounded theory case study (Eriksson and Kovalainen 2008). The study used qualitative methodology with a bias towards the case study research design. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) define qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world and consist of a set of interpretive practices that make the world visible the practices transform the world. The study used in-depth interviews to craft the discourse of talent identification and acquisition in South Sudan in humanitarian organisations. The study used a sample of 15 officers from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) operating in South Sudan. The participants were chosen using purposive sampling. The study used thematic data analysis to analyse the findings as observed by Hungwe (2011) who posits that thematic data analysis must follow cataloguing, coding reading, rereading and writing. The study observed the ethical considerations of informed consent, respect of privacy

and confidentiality as posited by Creswell (2016) that research must respect and adhere to ethical principles and encourage fair treatment of participants. The study answers the question that how talent is identified in South Sudanese humanitarian organisations and how is talent acquired in South Sudan. IFRC has been present in South Sudan since independence in 2011 and it supports the National Society in the areas of disaster risk reduction, response to protracted crisis and its efforts towards humanitarian aid provision (IFRC 2023).

RESULTS

The section presents the findings of the study as the findings emerged from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies recruitment officers operating in South Sudan responded to the questions of talent identification and acquisition in their organisation.

EMPLOYER BRANDING

The article aimed to understand talent acquisition in the IFRC, an international humanitarian organisation in South Sudan and employer branding emerged as one of the strategies deployed for talent acquisition. One Participant indicated that:

> "For the acquisition of superior talent, employer branding and employee value proposition are fundamental due to the fierce competition on the labour market. The organisation should focus on developing its brand name as well as take a keen interest on the employees it already has through talent development and management of that talent."

The study revealed that for talent management, employer branding plays a vital role as how the brand name of the organisation is perceived by potential talent influences how talent is acquired. Another participant noted that:

> "Employer branding is a strategy for talent acquisition that is used at IFRC to lure, acquire and recruit young talent. The organisation strives to maintain an international status on its brand to acquire top-tier talent and this works through how the brand is perceived by potential recruits."

The findings of the study indicated that how the organisation is perceived by potential recruits has a bearing on the acquisition of talent. IFRC as an employer and a brand strives to focus on the available talent and developing internal talent. One participant said:

> "The organisation as a brand must be perceived by potential recruits as an organisation that allows for the growth of talent by creating a conducive environment for a successful career journey. At the moment, IFRC as a brand is

weaker compared to other international humanitarian organisations such as Save The Children, International Refugee Council and Norwegian Refugee Council".

In one of the first works to address employer branding, Ambler and Barrow (1996) argue that one of the key aims of employer branding was to help attract the "best applicants" and employ the "best people." One can reasonably translate "best" applicants and people to the idea of "talented" applicants and people; thus, one of the key aims of employer branding is to attract and retain talented employees.

Edwards (2012) argues that one of the reasons for the growth in employer branding as a field is the growing pressure to compete in the "war for talent." Arguably, having a strong, attractive employer brand should help organisations ensure they attract and retain talented people (Collings *et al.,* 2017). In defining employer branding, some scholars argue that attracting talent is a central aim. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2007:3) argues that a successful employer brand will be one that appeals to "people who thrive and perform to their best in its culture" (2007: 3). Crucially, Edwards (2014:71) defines employer branding as "an HR activity which involves the systematic management of how an organisation is perceived as an employer; specifically, to potential new recruits as well as current employees". The management of an organisation's employer brand is increasingly considered a core activity on which strategic HR functions need to be focusing their energies.

Looking at employer branding from the perspective of talent management, a successful employment brand would be one that helps to attract and retain talented employees who perform to their full potential and thrive in the organisation's culture. The branding of an organisation as 'employer of choice' and 'best company to work for' is important in supporting talent management initiatives, as the organisation will have a reputation of being a great place to work for (Gatherer & Craig, 2010). Li and Bryan (2010) emphasised that in the quest to become employer of choice, organisations need to create and sustain a workplace which brings a deeper understanding of elements contributing to the workplace climate.

Importantly, an effective employer brand should do two fundamental things. First, a strong and effective employer brand should ensure that potential and actual job applicants (as potential recruits) find the organisation, its

employer brand, and the potential unique employment experience, highly attractive. Associated with this, potential recruits should have a desire to work at the organisation and concrete intentions to apply for a job at the organisation. Second, a positive and strong employer brand should mean that existing employees will want to continue working at the organisation; they should also be committed to the organisation, have a higher degree of organisational identification, and be willing to put themselves out for the good of the organisation (Collings *et al.,* 2017). Therefore, IFRC should revamp its employer brand to enhance the identification and acquisition of talent in South Sudan.

ORGANISATION'S POSITIVE REPUTATION

The study aims to explore talent identification and acquisition in South Sudan by the IFRC. The findings revealed that the organisation reputation as a humanitarian entity significantly aids in both talent identification and acquisition. The study indicates that the organisation's esteemed reputation attracts competent candidates' reputation attracts competent candidates with strong qualifications to apply for jobs within the organisation. Employee value proposition (EVP) emerges as an important component in talent attraction aligning closely with employer branding. EVP directly influence corporate reputation, talent management and employee engagement agendas. One participant said:

> "The IFRC as a humanitarian organisation has a reputation here in South Sudan such that young brilliant and competent individuals apply, and the organisation identifies the competent and talented and acquire them through promising them experience gaining and social mobility."

The study indicated that the reputation of the organisation plays a pivotal role in the identification of talent in South Sudan as the IFRC has a reputation of working with international organisation. Participants indicated that young graduates with the hope of social mobility and migrating to work outside the country apply hence the company identifies and acquires talent. One participant said:

> "The IFRC is one of the biggest humanitarian organisations in South Sudan and it has a reputation due to its partnerships with organisations such as the European union and United Nations. Most young competent and talented minds apply to the organisation with the hopes of one day leaving this country to work with one of the organisations that the Society partners with. It is this reputation that makes IFRC identify and acquire talent."

The study revealed that most of the talent is identified by the organisation through the reputation of the organisation as it partners with most of the

humanitarian organisations that have international links. The findings revealed that it is due to this reputation of working with international organisation that help the organisation identify talent and acquire it as young people apply with the organisation in the hopes of an exodus from the conflict-ridden country.

The results of the study revealed that Employee Value Proposition (EVP) plays a crucial role in talent identification and acquisition. Armstrong and Taylor (2017:233) point out that an organisation's EVP "consists of what it offers to prospective or existing employees that they will value and that will persuade them to join or remain with the business". EVP describes the mix of characteristics, benefits, and ways of working in an organisation. EVP is the deal struck between an organisation and employee in return for their contribution and performance. This deal characterizes an employer and differentiates it from its competition. Collings (2014) asserted that employees who create and contribute value to the organisation should get value back from their organisation in the form of employee value proposition. Bell (2005) views the Employee Value Proposition as a key differentiator of success for organisations competing to recruit, develop, inspire and retain talented people. The best practice is to develop a convincing, credible and competitive Employee Value Proposition that can be responsive to the expectations of talent.

EMPLOYEES REFERRAL AS TALENT IDENTIFICATION AND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

The study sought to understand how talent is identified at the IFRC in South Sudan the recruitment officers were asked on how talent was identified and acquired at the humanitarian organisation. Participants indicated that the identification of talent was done by employee referral mostly through internal employees. In the words of one participant.

> "The situation in this country has been volatile with the conflicts always arising and this forced the exodus of qualified young people to move out of the country. To identify talent at the organisation, internal employees refer hiring managers to potential recruits actively or passively looking for jobs."

The findings indicated that the IFRC in South Sudan faces a huge challenge of talent identification as there is an acute shortage of qualified personnel due to the conflicts in the country since independence. One participant said:

> "The organisation has been struggling on the market for qualified talent as people leave the country in search of peace as this country has never known peace since independence hence the need for humanitarian workers. To identify talent is a big challenge and referrals are extremely helpful as the market is volatile."

The humanitarian organisations in South Sudan identify talent through the employees that are already employed in the organisations as there is a lack of qualified people as most of the educated people are migrating out of the country in search of peace while running away from the conflict. The use of the employees in the talent identification was indicated by the one of the participants as one of the most useful ways of talent identification and acquisition. In the participant's words:

> "These are humanitarian organisations with a limited funding and advertising for a recruitment can be costly and it can lead to the employment of unqualified personnel due to the workers union's pressure on employing the youths therefore, the use of employee referral to identify and acquire talent becomes important."

An employee referral program is a recruiting strategy in which employers encourage current employees, through rewards, to refer qualified candidates for jobs in their organisations (Bidwell, 2011). It is a popular strategy because recruiters have long known what research confirms: Employee-referred new hires tend to be better performers than nonemployee-referred new hires and to stay with their organisations longer. Employee referral programs are also more cost-effective than other recruiting strategies and often are the fastest way to find external talent. Referral programs play a significant role in talent management. It involves getting new people in and about building your reputation. This is done to attract new employees or to leverage your employees to expand your customer base. By encouraging employees to refer qualified candidates, organisations tap into their networks and attract individuals who are more likely to be a good fit for the company culture. Referrals often result in higher-quality candidates and can significantly reduce recruitment costs. Moreover, employees who refer candidates feel more engaged and connected to the organisation and employees who are referred usually on-board faster, perform better and are less likely to leave prematurely. Bidwell (2011) argues that professionals who are hired from the outside through an executive search firm or an employment agency perform worse than those who are promoted from the inside or come from the outside through employee referrals.

COMPETITIVE SALARIES AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

The study set out to answer the question of how humanitarian organisations in South Sudan acquire talent and competent workforce. The findings revealed that the organisation offers employees lucrative salaries and staff development to promote career growth. The participants indicated that that

humanitarian organisations offer a way out to the struggling youths by providing a salary and upwards mobility. One participant indicated that:

> "The organisation offers a good salary with many allowances in foreign currency to the youths that are mostly struggling to build their careers and the organisation also offers upward mobility to the young talented people and this is a pool factor for the talent."

The study indicated that the acquisition of talent at the IFRC is enabled by the lucrative remunerations offered to the employees or recruits by the organisation and the manpower development training offered by the organisation. One participant indicated that:

> "Most of the young talented employees that come to work for this organisation are mostly interested in the manpower development training and experience as most of the humanitarian jobs need experience for career advancement."

DISCUSSION

The findings from the study revealed many strategies for talent identification used by the IFRC in South Sudan. The findings indicated that employer branding is one of the crucial strategies of talent acquisition used by the IFRC in South Sudan to acquire good and top-tier talent. The study revealed that for talent to be acquired there is a need for the brand to be perceived as the best employer for talent to be acquired. In support of these findings are Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2013) that observe that employer branding aims to attract and retain the best people. Lawler (2011) aligns with the study's findings, emphasizing that an employer brand serves to identify shared employment experiences. This communication is vital for potential recruits and current employees, portraying the organisation as a positive brand that supports career mobility.

The findings indicated that the organisation uses employee referral for the identification and acquisition of the talent as most of the qualified individuals favour migrating to neighbouring countries in search of peace stability and better standards of living. The findings revealed that employees within the organisation identifies local talent and refer the talented potential employees to the organisation and the study showed that most of the employees at the organisation are referral workers referred to the organisation by someone within the organisation. The showed that in South Sudan talent identification is only possible through employee's referrals as the pool of the talent is very slim due to the political volatility of the country most of the young competitive graduates leave the country in search of peace and stability. Concurrent, with these findings is Zhang (2017) who

observed that talent identification through internal employees has become a strategy in the middle-income countries to identify and acquire talent.

The study's findings underscore that the organisation's reputation for collaborating with international humanitarian entities facilitates talent identification and acquisition. Competent individuals apply with the aspiration of securing positions that offer international assignments, serving as an escape from poverty and conflict. The IFRC's partnerships with the European Union and the UN emerge as a pivotal factor in talent identification and acquisition, drawing interest from individuals keen on international work. Kagunyi (2009) supports these findings, highlighting that a positive international organisational reputation significantly influences recruitment practices, providing locals with an avenue to escape poverty and political instability in South Sudan.

The study revealed that the organisation acquires talent through offering lucrative salaries and manpower development courses that offer social mobility to the young and competent talented personnel. Consistent with the findings is Kagunyi (2009) who observes that pay attractiveness plays a pivotal role in humanitarian talent acquisition in low-and-middle-income countries as qualified staff are always looking for a remuneration that can alleviate their poverty. In support of these findings Molefi (2015) who observed that continued training as part of talent development improves job security and lures new talent as it offers hope for upwards social mobility to the young potential employees. Consistent with the findings are Dhanpat *et al.* (2019) that observe that acquisition factors such as predictors of job security associated with training and manpower development being offered by organisations lure employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, it is concluded that talent identification and acquisition plays a crucial role in the successful performance of IFRC. in South Sudan. The organisation employs various strategies to enhance the talent identification and acquisition process such as employer branding, employee value proposition, and employee referral programs. These strategies are anchored on organisational policies. Chief among the organisational policy that acts as a factor for talent acquisition is the ability of the humanitarian organisations to offer manpower development to the potential employees and this presents a ladder towards social mobility for

the young workers to gain experience. Organisational commitment towards employee development was found to be one of the chief talent acquisition anchors in the South Sudanese humanitarian organisations. Organisational reputation as being international was also found as the pool factor for talent acquisition as it gives hope to the talented employees. The reputation of the company gives hope to the employees as they hope to escape the politically volatile situation in South Sudan. The findings indicated that South Sudan has not known peace since independence, and this has been the catalyst for talent identification and acquisition as the youths hope to escape the violence and endless wars through a connection to international humanitarian organisation. There is need for competence-based talent acquisition. There is a need for the increase in the funding of the humanitarian organisations in South Sudan to acquire competent talent. There is a need for more manpower development policies to lure talented graduates. There is a need for provision of accommodation and other provisions to increase the acquisition of talent.

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OF DEALS AND URBAN GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF POMONA WASTE TO ENERGY PROJECT IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE

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Abstract
The article deploys a desktop approach to examine the Pomona Waste to Energy Project in Harare, demonstrating how corruption within urban governments disproportionately affects public service delivery. The principal secondary sources of data used are policy documents, academic literature and newspaper articles. The key problem relates to the presence of unfettered central government interference in local governance through the Minister responsible for Local Government. The article demonstrates that through the project, privatisation and subsequent forms of public-private partnerships (PPPs) have been sanctioned. Based on the study findings, the article concludes that the design of a city-level management system, that includes democratic structures with checks and balances between the executive and legislature and between state agencies and civil society, must be supplemented by broader citizen participation to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the public.

Keywords: corruption, participatory governance, transparency, accountability

INTRODUCTION
The awarding of a waste processing contract by the Harare City Council to a Netherlands-based company, Geogenix BV, has been implicated in allegations of massive corruption. This study identifies several irregularities in the contractual process, including the blatant and obvious flouting of

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procurement procedures, interference with due process, complete disregard for the Constitution's provision for devolution and potential acts of corruption, underhand dealings and abuse of power in flagrant violation of Zimbabwe's criminal laws. With Harare, as a case in point, this article provides a conceptual framework outlining the principles of good governance and public administration and observes that while waste collection and disposal is one of the pillars of a sustainable city's ecosystem, it should be effected in a manner that benefits citizens rather than burden them. As such, an alternative sustainable waste management system that is reasonably cost-effective for residents and taxpayers and meets the capacity of Harare City Council, is proposed. This research focuses on the stakeholder's exclusive right to participate in the functioning of a publicly funded facility within the context of participatory urban governance. For the effective management of an urban area in a devolved system of governance, this article recommends adherence to applicable laws, rules and regulations and the use of participatory methods of governance for the fulfilment of key parameters such as transparency, prudence, subsidiarity and inclusivity. The major concepts in the study are decentralised urban management, devolution and autonomy, while the public choice and the stakeholder participation theories constitute the theoretical framework.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The key concepts in this study are decentralised urban management, devolution and autonomy. The World Bank (2008:1) observes that decentralisation, as is with good governance and sustainable development, presents one of the common languages of international institutions, for example, the World Bank's top officials, where general ideological convergence is that decentralisation is a 'good thing'. Whereas there are various perspectives to decentralisation, it is important to note that in all instances, it encompasses altering the institutional guidelines dividing powers and resources between governmental units. Nyikadzino and Vyas-Doorgapersad (2022) submit that in recent times, the eminence of decentralisation is linked to two fairly connected trends:

- The structural adjustment processes and the common corollary of public sector retrenchment.
- The emphasis on local governance and the argument for participatory development. approaches

DECENTRALISED URBAN GOVERNANCE

Chigwata (2019) views decentralised urban governance as a process of devolving power to urban local government bodies or the processes and practices of transferring powers related to planning, management, resources allocation and/or accountability arrangements from national governments to urban government bodies. Fundamentally, this entails granting more

powers to urban government policy systems to create policies for sustainable urban development. Madhekeni (2020) contends that devolving powers to urban governments enhances the machinery of urban policy-making and hence the speed of policy development and implementation. This is key in promoting the efficiency and competitiveness of urban governments. In the context of global competition, devolving urban governance allows cities to be hubs of industrial and economic activity and attractive destinations for foreign direct investments. Zimbabwe enshrined devolution in the Constitution of 2013. However, the implementation of devolution is threatened by a plethora of factors. These include political parties' incongruence, that is, the presence of different political parties at different levels of government.

Political incongruence, generally involving the ZANUPF-controlled central government and opposition party-controlled local government, has culminated into massive political conflict, including the controversial suspension and dismissal of opposition party mayors by the Minister of Local Government, centralisation of the procurement process that provides the national political elite the power to tender on behalf of local government institutions and the imposition of public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements that sustain the economic interests of the ruling political elite. All this is done purportedly under the guise of promoting effective administration through sustaining the political and economic interests of the ruling political elite. Madzimure (2021) sums up the challenges of decentralised urban governance in Zimbabwe as centralisation of fiscal powers, a centrally controlled urban government policy system and a multiplicity of agencies, often with overlapping functional and geographical jurisdictions.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTONOMY

Closely related to decentralised urban governance is the concept of autonomy. The public choice and stakeholder theories that underpin this study emphasize the autonomy of decentralised urban governments and their right to self-determination (Ahmed *et al.,* 2005). The term "autonomy" is often applied in both theory and practice, but has rarely been carefully defined and applied. Rather, the concept has often been loosely applied and, in certain contexts, related synonymously to the total independence of sub-national governments, reflective of secessionism. As argued by Chigwata (2019), receiving the correct content and meaning of the principle of local autonomy is essential, both from the theoretical and especially from the practical point of view. Thus, its thorough understanding is legitimated by the need to neutralise the monopole of this principle, since local autonomy should not be understood as full local independence. In other words, local

autonomy cannot be regarded as a regime of complete independence, as a separation of local government authorities from central government. Muchadenyika (2017) submits that local autonomy is an indispensable aspect of democratic government. It refers to the degree to which local governments have discretion in carrying out their responsibilities. This does not imply ultimate freedom. Autonomy varies from nation to nation.

Madzimure (2021) views that local autonomy deepens democracy by bringing local governments closer to the people. This enhances opportunities for political participation and hence fosters the foundation of a democratic culture. Leaders elected at the local level appreciate their constituents more than central authorities, and are well-adapted to providing public services needed at the grassroot level. Where things go wrong, physical proximity makes it easier for citizens to hold local officials accountable for their performance. Section 276(1) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides that "a local authority has the right to govern, on its initiative, the local affairs of the people within the area for which it has been established and has all the necessary powers to do so." However, studies have established that the unitary system of Zimbabwe is anchored on a strong centralist ideology that suffocates the autonomy of sub-national institutions (Muchadenyika, 2017; Nyikadzino and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022). In addition, there is lack of comprehensive policy commitment to developing frameworks, safeguards and mechanisms, both structural and non-structural, for enhancing the discretion of decentralised urban governments by limiting jurisdictional overlapping and promoting administrative efficiency among these institutions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
The study is underpinned by the Public Choice school as the principal theory, supported by the Stakeholder Theory, with special emphasis on how these theories relate to public administration in a devolved system of governance. The Public Choice Theory assumes a superlative position in this study because of its utility in providing a comprehensive explanation of how the political and economic forces shape public sector processes. Fundamentally, the relations of power influence the dynamics of service delivery and should be viewed in the context of how key policy-making structures and players interact (Bourne & Walter, 2008). In complementing the Public Choice school, the Stakeholder Theory will be used to identify

stakeholders, their relations and the dynamics of their interactions in the context of delivering services in the public sector domain.

The Stakeholder Theory's assumption that an institution can be considered successful only when it delivers value to most of its stakeholders, is put to test in this study. Arguably, most of the theoretical support for participatory practices in cities and metropolitan areas has come from the Stakeholder Theory of deliberative discursive processes. Several studies have examined various facets of stakeholder management in public administration, notably how it interacts with project management and development (Bussy and Kelly, 2010). The study thus identifies the Public Choice Theory as depicting prevailing circumstances in public administration and bases on the Stakeholder Theory as a channel for fostering good governance, transparency and accountability within local governance systems to provide a clear and much more detailed analysis.

The Public Choice Theory has been discussed in the context of abuse of power for the facilitation of corrupt activities in public administration. The theory explains government decision-making because of the actions of individual, self-interested public policy actors, who make decisions as civil servants or elected officials. Thus, the test of government efficiency in this theory is simply how well the government serves each person's self-interest. While Buchanan (1986) acknowledges that obtaining unanimity always would be impossible and produce paralysis, he points out that legal provisions of a country's constitution are essential to the discussion and argues that legitimacy in government requires only a consensus among the framers of the nation's constitution about the rules under which the government is permitted to operate. This confirms that in all government operations, following due process is imperative to the legitimacy of its actions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Decentralised urban governance in Context: A Study of selected cases
Bobbio (2019) contends that there has been a surge of interest in the interplay between governance, participation and democracy in cities. Constraints and stakeholder theories have been used as a theoretical framework to explore civic engagement and participatory practices in cities. As argued by Cohen and Rogers (1992), participatory urban governance,

which is conceptually rooted in the logic of pluralism and the narrative of deliberative discursive processes, emphasizes inclusiveness, collaboration and consensus-seeking. However, it has been reiterated by many a scholar that participatory urban governance is even more nuanced in societies that have applied a devolved system of governance (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007). Be that as it may, the tangible results of this notion have been largely non-existent due to a lack of implementation.

Currently, public participation is the focus of European democracies. Fundamental to note is that citizen participation is gaining traction in also Asia, with China on the frontline (Ling Li *et al.,* 2018). Elections in a majority of these countries are key platforms provided for citizens to influence governance. National policy, in Cyprus for instance, citizen participation is signified in the European Union Treaty and national level through Town and Country Law (1990-2013). In the United Kingdom, responsibilities are devolved to assemblies of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Among these, is the power to determine ways of making decisions (Fung, 2015). Though not devolved, in England, the policy of government is to give citizens a stronger voice in policy-making and, when necessary, transfer control of government assets to citizen groups. Germany also identifies a high level of civic participation. For three decades, the country developed integrated participatory structures in urban planning. In the United States, planning is divided among cities, counties, school and special districts, regional; authorities and state governments. Decisions emerge after bargaining and compromise between them. These units enjoy autonomy to allow innovation and creative problem-solving. Hence, participation in the US is deep (Nyaranga *et al.*, 2019). Elwood (2004) observes that in Eastern Europe, for instance, power devolution effectuated at the beginning of the transformation process in the early 1990s, did little to advance the ideal of citizenry empowerment. Zientara (2008) observes that as local authorities captured power devolved from the centre, they were particularly reluctant to redistribute it down the ladder, exhibiting a strong tendency to continue to exert a hierarchical influence over local communities.

Lemanski (2017) studied participatory governance in the city of Cape Town under the apartheid system. Specifically, the study sought to explore how participatory governance functions in the context of an extremely unequal city with antecedent structures of racism. Specifically, Lemanski's study highlights how the spatial and temporal landscape of the urban can

obstruct, rather than assist local democracy in pursuing racist extremism. Indeed, the study concluded that apartheid structures of development participation in the city were meant to advance white monopoly as opposed to inclusive development that captured and contextualised the development interests of both whites and blacks.

However, Parnell and Oldfield (2014) argue that the post-apartheid era in South Africa ushered in hope for the future with assumptions that the new institutional democracy at national level would translate into wider involvement and participation of black South Africans in decision-making at the local level for the previously marginalised. Lemanski (2017) submits that indeed, the post-apartheid government of South Africa has instigated a myriad of participatory arrangements. At the municipal level, the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) are a product of a participatory process, where the city and its residents meet to collectively agree on priority areas for the city's five-year budget. In Cape Town, this has resulted in a shared focus on housing, jobs, safety and security. The ward committee scheme at a neighbourhood scale was established in 2000 for providing localised spaces for citizens and the state (via councillors) to communicate issues related to their local area that could be channelled to sub-council and city structures (Dickovick, 2005). However, the major challenge with citizen participation in South Africa, in general, and Cape Town, in particular, is that in a historic context of wide socio-economic and spatial inequality, the implementation of a model of participatory governance that relies on pre-existing spatial and socio-economic structures has entrenched exclusion and institutionalised a two-tier form of unequal citizenship.

Article 1(1) of the Constitution of Kenya of 2010 vests sovereign power in the people of Kenya. The power is exercised either directly by the people via frameworks of public participation or indirectly through democratically elected representatives (Omolo *et al.*, 2016). Added to this, the Constitution also created a decentralised system of governance primarily focused on devolving power, resources and representation to local citizens. In the context of devolution, the County Government Act, the Public Finance Management Act and the Urban Areas and Cities Act entrench public participation in drafting new legislation, determining budget priorities, ensuring that public-sector performance and expenditures are reviewed and submitting grievances. Further, local governments are tasked with ensuring that citizens receive information on public participation, developing structures, mechanisms and guidelines for citizen participation, while providing annual reports on public participation to County Assemblies

(Freeman & Reed, 1983). Citizen participation in the devolved system of government in Kenya has its challenges, including lack of support from the political elite and weak levels of civic education. However, there is a success story in Makueni County, whose citizen participation model is lauded by the World Bank (2016). In the model, citizens identify their development priorities at the grassroots level, with the citizens becoming involved in the prioritisation, planning and setting of final expenditures for the identified projects. In addition, the county allows citizens to be engaged in the full implementation of these projects.

FINDINGS

The findings are presented in five themes, which are: Collusion of power and corruption; absence of a sustainable debt management framework/model; elite capture; an insufficient legal framework for devolution; and weak oversight structures.

COLLUSION OF POWER, PROCUREMENT & CORRUPTION

Central to the Pomona Waste to Energy Project is the manipulation, deception and corruption that translate into abuse of power and side-tracking of procurement regulations. The principles of public finance management, as stated in section 298 of the Constitution, makes public consultation key in governmental decisions, especially those that impose a financial burden on citizens. As shall be seen, the awarding of the contract was conducted without consulting the citizens of Harare despite the contract imposing a financial obligation on them. It is equally trite to note that the contract was, in the utmost sense, concluded between the Minister responsible for Local Government and the company, with Harare City Council only appending its signature. This suffices the resistance from the central government to approve the recommendations of a special committee of the council to cancel the contract.

Fraud, corruption and favour were shown to Geogenix BV on irrational grounds as highlighted by Article 3.1.1 of the Memorandum of Agreement, that states that the Pomona dumpsite shall be handed over to Geogenix BV free of charge and against no payment of any fees, tariffs, or taxes. This study further establishes a violation of the procurement procedure as Geogenix BV was given undue preference to operationalise the waste project at the expense of other entities without going to tender. The joint committee that met on February 23, 2022 and made the recommendation to the council to approve the contract, was not held in compliance with the provisions of the law relating to procurement processes. As noted above, both the constitution and the Urban Councils Act required the council to conduct public consultations and subject the proposed deal to objections to approving the contract. These key processes were deliberately avoided as the

probability of objections was high. Without following these processes, this article submits that the contract is a deficit of legitimacy as due process was not followed and hence a higher proclivity towards allegations of corruption. With the contract creating serious financial obligations for the City of Harare to pay Geogenix BV in foreign currency (US$) for a period of 30 years, there is a huge disparity in the exchange rates of the local currency and the United States Dollar as it is common cause that the City of Harare's waste collection costs are in the local currency (RTGS). There are several individuals in line to benefit from this disparity and gain from such manipulation. It suffices to say that the lack of a proper tender procedure harmed not only other potential players, but also prejudiced the City of Harare a more affordable and effective proposal that might have been taken into consideration.

ABSENCE OF A SUSTAINABLE DEBT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK/MODEL

The Pomona project will plunge the already financially ailing local authority into a major and unsustainable debt, causing the provision of services to completely collapse. In the absence of a framework that set limits and parameters for debt contraction at the level of local authority, there is a danger that the precedence set by the Pomona project will plunge not only Harare City, but a majority, if not all, of local authorities into a debt trap. Two months down the line, Harare is already saddled with a debt of over US$1.5 million. There is a high possibility that in the face of subdued resistance from Harare City councillors, largely for fear of victimisation by the national political elite, the central government may move to impose this model on other local authorities without public consultations and hence plunging them into debt. The transfer of water from councils to the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) is a sufficient basis for justifying this possibility.

The national government initially imposed the water transfer on Harare City Council. When it faced little resistance, the model was moved to other local authorities, resulting in the massive decay of water infrastructure and a decline in delivery capacity. This was due largely to technical incapacities at ZINWA (Madhekeni, 2020; Nyikadzino and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022). The current manner has seen the central government that acted as the underwriter of the project, now assuming the financial obligation, illegally. Illegally in that the Ministry of Local Government or the Ministry of Finance cannot, at law, enter into an agreement that places a fiscal obligation on Zimbabwe with a foreign entity without the approval of Parliament, as argued by section 327(3) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe:

> "(3) An agreement which is not an international treaty but which— (a) has been concluded or executed by the President or under the President's authority with one or more foreign organisations or entities; and (b) imposes fiscal obligations on Zimbabwe; does not bind Zimbabwe until it has been approved by Parliament."

The company in question, Geoginix BV is a foreign entity. The agreement with the said foreign entity places a fiscal obligation on Zimbabwe. The missing link is parliamentary approval.

ELITE CAPTURE AND POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

The Harare City Council's corridors are inhabited by oligarchy and mafia-like structures despite the council's illusion of independence from national executive governance. While it is trite that a typical urban infrastructure project, financed by the taxpayer, should be open to public scrutiny and, therefore, give residents a greater say in how facilities financed by their money are run, it is not the case with the Harare City Council under the Pomona project. The case study demonstrates that the narrowly defined interests of a small elite constituency continue to prevail over the interests of the wider public. Political strings have been established in the deficient procurement procedures surrounding the Pomona Waste to Energy project. There appears too much discretionary power among public officials and the involvement of the elite connected to the ruling party. For instance, Geogenix BV is fronted by businessman Delish Nguwaya, the same character implicated in the Draxgate scandal involving Covid-19 PPE procurement fraud worth US$60 million, as argued by the *New Zimbabwe* (2021). The political power structure has been built in such a way that favours and protects the elite at the expense of the masses as the deal is in bad faith and is not in the public interest.

INADEQUATE LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON DEVOLUTION

It is imperative to note that the Pomona deal itself is both substantively and procedurally wrong at law. The merits of the contract are in bad faith and a meeting to sign the agreement was improperly convened, constituted and conducted. The major weaknesses lie in the inadequacy of local government laws that give the Minister of Local Government powers to rescind a decision by a council. Particularly, the absence of an enabling piece of legislation for the effective implementation of devolution has facilitated the abuse of power by the executive and its unrestricted involvement in local governance matters. The current laws in operation and actions are not in sync with the current Constitution. As argued by section 5 of the Constitution, local authorities are recognised as one of the three tiers of government and, hence, are semi-autonomous bodies responsible for creating their own policies, while accountable to the citizens. Whereas vertically, they are also accountable to the central government, this should not be misconstrued as justification for interference in local government policy processes by the former.

While the three tiers should have a cooperative working relationship, the Pomona case indicates that this is not what is happening in this arrangement as the executive is seen to be imposing the deal on the local authority and the public. Reflected is a selective interpretation approach to devolution as the central government has shown great interest in dictating how the devolution funds should be spent. The government has undertaken to support the City of Harare through devolution funds to meet its financial obligations under the Pomona deal. This is in blatant violation of the principle of devolution as provided for by section 264 (2) (a) of the Constitution which sets out the objectives of the devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities to provincial and metropolitan councils and local authorities as: "… to give powers of local governance to the people and enhance their participation in the exercise of the powers of the State and in making decisions affecting them." The Minister, therefore, cannot dictate how the funds for devolution are going to be used by the City of Harare, as this undermines the principle of devolution. The Urban Councils Act defines a council as a policy-making body legally endowed with the power to make policies within their areas of jurisdiction. Other pieces of legislation, such as the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act and the Corporate Governance Act, also recognise the status of the council both as a policy entity and, hence, a body corporate.

Against the true spirit of devolution, it follows that the Pomona saga reveals a local governance managerial "dictatorship" style that relies on a single source of authority and power within the executive and not the citizens who are the residents and taxpayers. The Pomona saga ultimately shows the levels of interference by the central government in the running of local authorities. The deal has shown the extent to which the government has been intentionally manipulating a vague and half-baked legal framework on devolution, delegating power and authority with one hand and taking back the same with the other.

WEAK OVERSIGHT STRUCTURES

As reported by *Newsday* (2022), Harare City councillors (dominated largely by the opposition Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) had recommended the cancellation of the Pomona deal. Through a special council meeting, the Jacob Mafume-led council voted for the suspension of the 30-year waste management deal between Geogenix BV fronted by businessman, Delish Nguwaya and the local authority. This is despite Local Government Minister July Moyo's statement that the Pomona deal cannot be reversed. Moyo alleges that all the recommendations from this process went to Cabinet, the highest executive authority, for approval and a lower organ cannot violate the principle of subsidiarity. The Minister has since given Harare City

Council a directive through an immediate ministerial dictate (issued on 7 July 2022) to rescind its resolutions made on 2 June 2022 in that the City Council: (1) appointed a special committee in terms of section 100 of the Urban Councils Act, to investigate Pomona Waste to Energy Project; (2) suspended the contract between the City of Harare and Geogenix B.V.

The Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, therefore, continues to undermine devolved efforts by councils to safeguard public resources and deploy them in the public's informed best interests. This, undoubtedly, puts into question the ability of elected councillors to play an oversight role over a deal that places such onerous financial obligations on the City of Harare, that will, ultimately, be paid for by ratepayers. In such circumstances and under such conditions, accountability becomes a paper tiger without real effectiveness on the ground; thus, posing public accountability as impotent. The weaknesses of the council are apparent where its policy-making structures are subdued by the national government elite seeking to advance their political and economic interests. Whereas it has earlier been established that the council owes its existence to both the constitution and the Urban Councils Act, it, therefore, follows that the interference by the Minister responsible for Local Government lacks a legal basis.

On the 11 January, the High Court delivered a judgment that, if confirmed by the Constitutional Court, will go some way to preventing undue interference by the central government in decisions of local authorities. The judgment was delivered by Judge Munangati-Manongwa in the case of *Combined Harare Residents Association & Others v Minister of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing* HH-07-23. The judgement set aside a section of the Urban Councils Act that the Local Government Minister has powers to interfere with and control local authorities. The same judgement also set aside section 314 (2) of the Urban Councils Act Cap 29:15, which was used by the minister to issue controversial directives to local authorities. The Constitutional Court is likely to confirm the judgment because its correctness is beyond argument. The minister's arbitrary power to override decisions of a local authority is so contrary to the concept of devolution envisaged by the Constitution that it is difficult to see the Constitutional Court coming to a different conclusion from that reached by the learned High Court judge. The Constitutional Court may, however, take some time to confirm the judgment, so we need to look at what legal effect the judgment has now, before it is confirmed by the Constitutional Court and what effect it will have after confirmation.

DISCUSSION

This article poses important questions about how partisan politics in the development discourse intersect with local governance structures and urban service delivery. The results from contemporary literature and the study case indicate that the politicisation of urban governance adversely affects development, particularly the provision of effective and efficient service delivery at the lowest possible cost. The Pomona Waste to Energy deal under review highlights the manifestation of challenges that come along with the power wrangle between politics and development, as central government paddles efforts to undermine the political, administrative and fiscal autonomy of local authorities. While there are political, administrative and fiscal elements of devolution, the concept itself goes not only beyond the transfer of responsibility but also authority over decision-making and accountability to autonomous and legally constituted sub-national governments. The Pomona deal acquired national status regardless of the Pomona dumpsite being a public-funded municipality facility under Harare City Council.

In the context of political parties' incongruence as aforementioned and with the predominantly CCC opposition stronghold within the Harare City Council, central government, through the Minister of Local Government and Public Works, has taken the uproar against the deal as targeted. The minister's involvement has been characterised by strong partisan overtones to defend the deal and protect Geogenix BV. Noting that the meeting of the council to approve the deal was held, at the special instance, at the request of the Minister responsible for Local Government, this is believed to have exerted much pressure, duress and undue influence on councillors to make a grossly unreasonable decision. Such undue influence to facilitate corrupt activities by the elite few and undermine both the law and accountability mechanisms, only amounts to gross abuse of power and complete disregard for the rule of law. It negatively impacts urban governance, while burdening the public. Given the humongous financial liability that will be incurred by the City of Harare for many years and has the potential of affecting service delivery, residents, ratepayers and other interested parties ought to be consulted on this, in line with good governance practices, transparency, accountability principles as enshrined in the Constitution.

CONCLUSION

The article examined the evolving power dynamics of urban governance using the case of Harare City. The analysis has established the following demonstrated facts. A significantly high level of central government influence in the affairs of local authorities, to the extent of interfering with local procurement processes as the case with Pomona waste to energy project; elite capture and political interference are at the centre of urban

governance in Zimbabwe; central government retains influence over local authorities through centralised financial management control using the carrot and stick approach; and Political actors in both central government and local government establishment are desirous of retaining power and control at whatever cost, relegating residents' welfare and interests to the periphery of urban governance priorities. The collusion of power, politics and corruption creates huge impediment to the sustainable development agenda of urban jurisdictions.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- ### Set up a Special Investigations Committee
The Harare City Council must set up a special committee in terms of section 100 of the Urban Councils Act and investigate the Pomona agreement for submission to the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC). The deal is wrapped in corruption and abuse of power. Therefore, all individuals/entities implicated should be investigated and brought to justice.

- ### Engage ZACC to investigate.
A thorough investigation by the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) considering the circumstances around the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement, paying particular attention to the exploitative nature of the "deal" and its implications on council revenue and financial standing. The principles of public financial management outlined in section 298 of the Constitution must be given due consideration.

- ### Expedition on the enabling law on devolution
There is great need for the speedy and holistic implementation of devolution as provided for by section 264 of the Constitution and the alignment of local government laws to Chapter 14 of the Constitution. The promulgation of an enabling act on devolution will assist in providing a legal basis for the elaborate relationship between central government and local government. The government must respect and adhere to the provisions of section 5 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe that recognises local government as a tier of government.

- ### City-level management system that upholds participatory governance
Harare City Council must suspend the deal altogether to review it and lead public consultations with Harare residents and other key stakeholders. According to section 264 (2) (d) of the Constitution, one of the objectives of devolution is to recognise the right of communities to manage their affairs

and to further their development. As aforementioned, the legislation requires the City of Harare to consult key stakeholders, particularly ratepayers and residents on a material decision affecting them. The design of a city-level management system that includes democratic structures with checks and balances between the executive and legislature and between state agencies and civil society, must be supplemented by broader citizen participation to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the public. Local governance systems ought to operate in reflection of the public's imminent needs and at the lowest possible cost.

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POLITICAL CONTESTATIONS AS PART OF THE HUMAN SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEBATE: A CASE STUDY OF BUHERA SOUTH, ZIMBABWE

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Abstract

This article focuses on the concept of human security and political contestations in Zimbabwe. It analyses how political electioneering and political violence affected development in Zimbabwe since 1980. While the war of liberation was fought to end discrimination in all its forms, the coming of black majority rule did not immediately bring the desired results of freedom and equality. Rather, it brought new forms of violence as the victors usurped institutions to the detriment of the democratic ideals fought for. While the new system led to negative peace, it was detrimental to positive peace that aims at building sustainability to the development discourse. This study is a qualitative study drawing data from desktop research, interviews and focus group discussions. The central argument is that violence has been a major affront to human security, thereby affecting development. The study deploys the human security theory to unmask political violence and development processes. It leans towards the pursuit of human security to achieve development and as an approach to conflict resolution and peace-building. This can help Zimbabwe to achieve its human development goals. The article recommends that governments and political parties must strive to achieve peace, human security and development.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of human security has gained increasing attention in recent years as a framework for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges facing communities around the world. This includes the pursuit of sustainable development that aims to promote economic growth, social well-being and environmental sustainability in a way that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. However, the achievement of human security and sustainable development is often undermined by political contestations that often create tension and conflict among supporters of rival political parties and weaken efforts to promote inclusive and equitable development. Through the lens of non-violent means, this study focused on the case of Zimbabwe, a country that has faced significant political contestations in recent years. The study identified the key drivers of political contestations in Zimbabwe and examined how these drivers affected efforts to promote human security and sustainable development in the country. By shedding light on the complex interplay between politics, security and development, this study contributed to a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with promoting human security and sustainable development in contexts of political contestation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The use of the human security lens as the theoretical framework for this study was motivated by several factors. Firstly, the concept of human security emphasizes the importance of protecting individuals from all forms of violence and insecurity, not only physical violence but also economic, social and political insecurity (Adebayo and Ogunyemi, 2020; MEENA, 2022). The use of human security lens helped this study to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of violent political contestations and prospects of non-violence on various dimensions of human security, including economic, social and political security. Secondly, the human security lens is particularly relevant to Zimbabwe, a country that has experienced significant political turmoil and social unrest in recent years. It also helped to shed light on the root causes of these problems, resulting in the identification of strategies for promoting peace, stability and sustainable development in the country. Thirdly, the human security lens is a useful

framework for analysing the relationship between political contestations and sustainable development. Sustainable development requires not only economic growth, but also social and environmental sustainability (UNDP, 1994;; Adebayo and Ogunyemi, 2020; Granoff, 2022). By using the human security lens to analyse the impact of political contestations on sustainable development, the researchers gained a better understanding of how political instability and social unrest can undermine sustainable development efforts.

The UN General Assembly 66th Session of 25 October 2022 provided the link between human security and development. The report concludes that:

> human security recognises the interlinkages between peace, development and human rights and equally considers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; thus human security forms part of the family of human concepts (including human rights, human needs, human development" (UN General Assembly, 66th Session "Follow-up to paragraph 143 on human security of the 2005 World Summit Outcome" A/RES/66/290, 25 October 2012).

Given that ZANU-PF, as the sitting government, prioritises regime preservation at all costs at the expense of human security, the use of the human security lens in this study was helpful in highlighting the political violence that hindered sustainable development in Buhera South Constituency, in particular, and Zimbabwe, in general.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of human security came into prominence after 1994 following the commissioning of a study by the United Nations (UN) on the new dimensions of security. Essentially, it marked a change from the traditional state-centric security to encompass seven human-centric security components: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security; personal security, community security and political security (UN, 1994: 24-25). Human security is about protecting the vital core of humanity to enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment. It means protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from severe and widespread threats and situations. Human security means building on people's strengths and aspirations and "creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity" (CHS, 2003: 4). "Human security complements state security, strengthens human development and enhances human rights" (CHS, 2003: 2).

The concept of human security is focused on enhancing people's capability to improve their lives and is developmental in orientation. The practice of violence in politics is contrary to the basic concepts of development as it threatens the livelihood of people and what the government should seek to protect. Violence is anti-development. Human security aims to be holistic and recognises that qualitative improvement to lives must be constructed around not only the notion of people as economic producers and consumers, but also as cultural producers and consumers (Abatudu, 2001). Violence creates human insecurity, as it is rooted in existing structures of power that determine who enjoys security and who does not (Thomas, 2001). Development contributes to human security by addressing the long-term structural causes of conflict and strengthening the capability of societies to deal with conflict peacefully (Lodgaard cited in Chillers, 2004: 18). Human security includes an obligation on the state to provide an environment that promotes equality and individual participation through democracy, adherence to human rights and civil society participation (*ibid.*).

Human security is value-centric, focusing on the security, stability and sustainability of development. It involves protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in daily life and requires both protection and empowerment (Adebayo and Ogunyemi, 2020; MEENA, 2022; Oksamytna, 2022). The concept has been criticised but has opened up new frontiers for development by focusing on the security of the individual, rather than the state. Human security is about the survival, daily life and dignity of human beings and it highlights the intricate relationship between individuals and development in communities (Johnmary, Ojakorotu and Bribena, 2021; MEENA, 2022). The duty of the state is to facilitate development and where violence is pervasive, development is affected, leading to multiple deprivations for the citizenry (UNDP, 1994). In the Zimbabwean context, the notion of violence in politics affected the core values of development. Through violence, the people in Buhera South, a district in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe, suffered from life deprivations. As noted by the then United Nations Secretary General, Koffi Annan,

> Africa must reject the ways of the past and commit itself to building a future of democratic governance subject to the rule of law. Such a future is only achievable on the condition that we end Africa's conflicts, without that no amount of aid or trade, assistance or advice, will make the difference (Annan, 2001).

The history of political contestations in Zimbabwe dates back to the Shona passive resistance against colonialism in the 1890s, but a violent response occurred in 1896. Zimbabwean nationalists formed political parties demanding majority rule, but they were banned by the Rhodesian government. The formation of the Southern Rhodesia Trade Union Congress (SRTUC) and the African National Congress (ANC) laid the basis for revolts against discriminatory laws and contributed to the development of African nationalism in Zimbabwe. The formation of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in 1960 signalled a drift towards militarism that culminated in the formation of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in 1963. The ensuing protracted war lasted nearly 14 years, ending in 1979 with the Lancaster House Agreement. The agreement charted the course for the transition from white minority rule to black majority rule in Zimbabwe, with the first elections held in 1980. The newly elected Prime Minister, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, announced the policy of reconciliation soon after taking office.

> "We are called to be constructive, progressive and forever forward-looking, or we cannot afford to be men of yesterday, backward looking, retrogressive and destructive…. If yesterday you hated me, today you cannot avoid the love that binds you to me and me to you… The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten…" (De Waal, 1990: 48-9).

In the name and spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness, all the grievances of the past were supposed to be forgotten.

While reconciliation was pronounced as a hallmark of statesmanship, there were divisive undercurrents in the nascent but fractured unity government. As articulated by Masunungure (2009), "Zimbabwe, as a state, came into being in 1980 but Zimbabwe, as a nation, did not." There was outright and unapologetic building of the state as a ZANU-PF and Shona-dominated political formation, where other political actors like PF-ZAPU that drew most of its support from Matabeleland and Midlands regions, had no dignified space and the Ndebele were an inconvenience that had to be dealt with. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 12) argues that:

> from the very day of achievement of independence, the triumphant Shona-dominated ZANU-PF leadership displayed a unique desire to build a party-nation and a party-state that excluded other political formations, crafted around and backed by ZANU-PFs war-time military wing (ZANLA) and Shona historical experiences."

The Matabeleland crisis that hit the post-colonial nation-building project was sparked off by ethnicity and the integration of military forces. The crisis

began in the ranks of the military and it involved open exchange of fire between the triumphant Shona-dominant Zimbabwe National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and the Ndebele-dominated Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) in Connemara (Gweru) and Entumbane (Bulawayo). This set-in motion a reign of state terror in the Matabeleland and Midlands regions in the period 1982 to 1987. As noted by Ndlovu-Gatsheni, the violence was somehow an inevitable consequence of the way nationalism had evolved and how the nationalist armies had been formed. This is how he puts it:

> to some extent, we accept the notion of the inevitability of a violent post-colonial civil war pitting the former liberation movements and their former armies against each other. But there is need to posit that the inevitability of violence was underwritten by incompatibilities of Ndebele and Shona particularities. The violence was in a way symptomatic of the failure of a smooth blending of major ethnicities into a new national identity called Zimbabwe. The net effect of this was that violence was the only invitation card by that the Ndebele were invited into a Shona-imagined nation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009: 14).

In this analysis, Ndlovu-Gatsheni shows the shaky ground on which the nation state was born in 1980. While independence produced tribalised nationalism, the unfolding years later proved that tribalism was not the only inherent problem in post-independence Zimbabwe politics and power dynamics. In 1982, the Ndebele became victims of political violence *(Gukurahundi)*, but after 1990 ZANU-PF violence became national and victims transcended tribal lines. In short, the *Gukurahundi* period became "necessary for the purification of the rest of the nation from the undesirable elements" (*ibid.*). In essence, the way the Ndebele were treated was an attempt at ethnic cleansing. A Commander of the 5th Brigade named Jesus summed it up by saying:

> You are going to eat eggs, after eggs hens, after hens, goats, after goats, cattle. Then you shall eat cats, dogs and donkeys. Then you are going to eat your children. After that you shall eat your wives. Then the men will remain and because dissidents have guns, they will kill the men and only dissidents will remain. That's when we will find the dissidents (CCJP, 1997: 96).

The conduct of the military during *Gukurahundi* served as a direct warning to future opponents of the regime. This betrayed the regime's lack of hesitancy in eliminating opponents.

Gukurahundi ended after the signing of the Unity Accord on 22 December 1987 between Prime Minister Mugabe and the ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo. In the words of Sisulu (2008: 494), "the Unity Accord completed what the *Gukurahundi* had failed to do". It has been observed that "the Unity Accord

was a surrender deal by Nkomo to ZANU-PF hegemony, accepting to play a second fiddle as Senior Minister and later Vice President under Robert Mugabe" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009: 30). Constitutional Amendment Act (No.7) of 1987 created an executive presidency, with Mugabe assuming the post of Executive President, and Nkomo becoming one of two national Vice Presidents. Pursuant to that was the need by ZANU-PF to create a one-party state that was vehemently opposed by one of their own, Secretary-General Edgar Tekere, culminating in the formation of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) that contested in the 1990 elections. Mugabe had hoped to consolidate power in the aftermath of the Unity Accord through the creation of a one-party state.

After 1990, economic conditions in Zimbabwe began to deteriorate such that the government was running budget deficits. Mugabe had to go to the International Monetary Font (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to seek budgetary support. The adopted Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) created social and economic problems that gave rise to opposition to Mugabe`s regime. These measures had serious implications for the welfare of ordinary Zimbabweans. ESAP led to sudden shrinkage of public service jobs as the government was advised to privatise state-owned enterprises. It further caused a continuous decline in workers' income through devaluation of the currency. Company closures and employee layoffs became regular occurrences following the liberalisation of the economy. Hospital fees and tuition fees skyrocketed beyond the reach of ordinary citizens. Student demonstrations and industrial actions became the order of the day. All these occurrences became the catalyst for the mushrooming of strong opposition politics in the country.

The call for better wages and working conditions from workers became even more strident. The 1996 public sector strike brought the country to a standstill as nurses, doctors, public service workers and teachers withdrew their services. Confronted with such a situation, the Zimbabwean government responded by waging an undeclared war against its people (Dzimiri *et al.,* 2014: 231). The ZANU-PF government assumed that its power was being challenged and, as result, it unleashed military violence on its citizens. The state security forces used brutal force on protesters, souring relations between the military and the civilian populace. This discontentment culminated in the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999. The MDC quickly became a powerful

opposition political party against the ruling ZANU-PF. Its support base grew among university students, the working class and urban dwellers who acutely felt the pain of the deteriorating economic situation. To maintain its stranglehold on power, the ZANU-PF government used repressive state apparatus against the opposition.

While violence has been an endemic aspect of ZANU-PF's rule since independence, things took a drastic turn after the formation of the MDC. Buhera South constituency witnessed an unprecedented wave of violence after the formation of the MDC. The MDC recorded increased violence during the 2000 parliamentary elections in which a ZANU-PF member, Kumbirai Kangai, narrowly defeated the MDC candidate. Political violence in Buhera was first recorded on 15 April 2000, when MDC supporters, Tichaona Chiminya and Talent Mabika, were petrol-bombed by ZANU-PF supporters after a meeting in Murambinda (BBC, April 2000). This incident flared up violence in Buhera South as the ZANU-PF leadership intensified its targeting of opponents, resulting in politically motivated deaths, displacements and violence in the constituency since then. The 2008 elections, in which Joseph Chinotimba of ZANU-PF lost to Naison Nemadziya of the MDC, was a continuation of political violence in the constituency.

While the violence produced wins for ZANU-PF, such victory cost human lives and negatively affected prospects of sustainable development in Buhera South. The MDC promoted non-violent resistance. Non-violent political contestations have been shown to be effective in promoting human security and sustainable development, as they offer a peaceful alternative to violent conflict and can help to address the underlying causes of social and political unrest (Zunes, 2010). Firstly, non-violent political contestations promote human security by reducing the risk of violence and conflict. This creates a stable environment that allows for sustainable development to take place. Non-violent actions, such as peaceful protests, boycotts and civil disobedience, can also draw attention to social and political issues, leading to positive changes in policy and government practices that promote human security (Martin, 2018). Secondly, non-violent political contestations promote sustainable development by promoting inclusive and participatory decision-making processes. Non-violent movements often involve a diverse range of individuals and groups, including marginalised communities, who are able to participate in the decision-making process and have their voices heard (Chung, 2006). This leads to more equitable and sustainable

development outcomes that benefit all members of society. Thirdly, non-violent political contestations can lead to the development of stronger civil society institutions. When individuals and groups come together to advocate change through non-violent means, they often form networks and organisations that work to promote human security and sustainable development over the long term (Stephen. and Chenoweth., 2013).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted under the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist paradigm is a philosophical approach to research that aims to understand the subjective experiences and meanings that people attach to their social world (Gray, 2014; Alsaigh and Coyne, 2021). It recognises that people's actions and behaviour are influenced by their cultural, social and historical contexts and that these factors must be considered to understand human phenomena. The study used a qualitative research approach and a case study research design to provide an in-depth analysis of the studied phenomenon. Qualitative research approaches involve interpretive and naturalistic approach to the subject matter and attempt to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (van Fusch, Fusch and Ness, 2018; Manen and van Manen, 2021). The case study methodology enabled the researchers to gain a rich understanding of the complex relationship between political contestations, human security and sustainable development in Buhera South Constituency of Zimbabwe.

The research used various data collection methods, including interviews, focus group discussions, observations and document analyses. Interviews were conducted with key informants, including politicians, civil society activists and members of the public. Focus group discussions were held with community members to gain their perspectives on the impact of political contestations on human security and sustainable development. Observations were made of political events and activities and documents such as policy papers and reports were analysed to provide context and background information.

The adopted methodology was influenced by the theoretical framework and research practice, assumptions about the nature of knowledge and reality, value systems and ethical principles. The research practice was guided by ethical principles, including informed consent and confidentiality. Data were analysed using thematic data analysis procedures which produced

important insights into the role of non-violent political contestations in promoting human security and sustainable development in Zimbabwe. The findings can inform policy and decision-making processes in the country and beyond.

RESULTS

Zimbabwe has a history marked by violence since colonialism in 1890. From 1890 through to 1979, successive white minority governments used violent and exploitative means to enforce their rule during colonialism, leading to violent responses from the local people such as the Shona and the Ndebele, as they fought to liberate themselves from the numerous injustices they suffered under colonial misrule. Zimbabwe achieved independence in 1980 after an armed struggle named the *Second Chimurenga* that lasted from 1966 through to 1979. However, violence continued to be a part of the newly independent Zimbabwe. The policy of reconciliation under Prime Minister Robert Mugabe in 1980 did not effectively achieve human security, as it was used mainly to appease white capital.

The years after independence marked a continuation of violence, beginning in 1982, the *Gukurahundi* military campaign in Matabeleland, the 1990 electoral violence, perpetrated mostly against (ZUM) members, their sympathisers, caught-between citizens, trade unionists and other opposition supporters. The *Gukurahundi* in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces was a war targeting mainly PF-ZAPU and its supporters. Mugabe accused Nkomo and PF-ZAPU leaders of harbouring dissidents and threatening to take over power. However, the hunt for dissidents led to indiscriminate killings of the mainly Ndebele ethnic population. In his entire rule, Mugabe was a prisoner of his declaration in 1976 that 'The gun that produces the vote should remain its security officer, its guarantor. The people's votes and…guns are always inseparable twins' (Mugabe, 1981: 100).

The formation of the MDC in 1999 rekindled the Mugabe ideology of violence as he unleashed the state security apparatus, the ZANU-PF Youth militia and the war veterans, on members of the MDC. While the MDC could not be exonerated from election-motivated violence, the party had no apparatus to face state-supported violence, hence the opposition party oftentimes resorted to non-violent resistance to counter statecraft engineered violence. However, the clash of violence and non-violence produced violent conflict in many parts of Zimbabwe. Thus, during Robert Mugabe's rule in

Zimbabwe, political contestations led to a range of negative outcomes that had significant impacts on the country's development and human security. Some of the key negative outcomes include political violence and human rights abuses, economic decline and poverty, social fragmentation and polarisation and brain drain and loss of human capital.

Political contestations in Zimbabwe often led to violence and human rights abuses perpetrated by state security forces and ZANU-PF party supporters. Political violence and human rights abuses emanating from political contestations resulted in extrajudicial killings, torture and arbitrary arrests and detentions that contributed to a climate of fear and insecurity among citizens. Political contestations also contributed to Zimbabwe's economic decline, as Mugabe's government pursued policies that undermined investor confidence and led to hyperinflation and shortages of basic goods and services. This, in turn, contributed to high levels of poverty and unemployment that disproportionately affected marginalised communities and the generality of Zimbabweans. Furthermore, political contestations also contributed to the fragmentation and polarisation of Zimbabwean society, as different political groups became increasingly divided along political and ethnic lines. This led to a breakdown in social cohesion and trust, undermining efforts to promote inclusive and equitable development. Political contestations also contributed to a brain drain in Zimbabwe, as many educated and skilled professionals left the country in search of better opportunities and political stability. This loss of human capital negatively impacted the country's development and undermined efforts to build a skilled and educated workforce. This study argues that negative outcomes produced by violent political contestations can be addressed if political parties conduct their political campaigns in a non-violent manner, guided by the need to promote human security.

The following shows how political violence has undermined human security and prospects for sustainable development in Buhera South Constituency:

Political violence in Buhera critically affected the livelihoods of the district, especially the material aspect of human security, owing to deprivation, destruction and displacement of people. Since 2000, the Zimbabwean government ran different economic support initiatives throughout the country. The land reform programme, various farmer support schemes in the country such as farm implements scheme through the Farm

Mechanisation Scheme, were some of the government initiatives. These government-aided schemes were often highjacked for political ends. While these were government-funded schemes, the new unwritten policy was that the implementation of government initiatives was to be done through traditional chiefs, supervised by ZANU-PF councillors and the local Member of Parliament (MP). From 2000 to 2008, Buhera District had two constituencies whose MPs were ZANU-PF members, notably Kumbirai Kangai in Buhera South and Kenneth Manyonda in Buhera North.

Suspected MDC sympathisers in the civil service were often haunted out of office. Chokuda, a Headmaster at Murove Primary School in Buhera South, was killed during the 2002 elections. At the height of the economic decline, most teachers left their jobs for Chiadzwa diamond fields. MDC youths went to Chiadzwa, set their bases there, and hounded ZANU-PF youths out of the fields. Where NGOs wanted to give farming aid, ZANU-PF attempted to use its structures to deny members of the opposition. This seemed to be a common trend in Buhera South as the ruling party got political mileage from donated foodstuff. The major donor agencies in Buhera South were Christian Care, World Vision and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). The ZANU-PF leadership made sure that they were involved in at least one of the stages of either offloading or compiling names or maintaining order.

One critical aspect of the period under review was the lack of personal and community security. Many people in Buhera South were not secure as they were subjected to constant threats. The worst aspect was that all avenues for recourse were closed to the public. The judiciary and police became appendages of ZANU-PF. The MDC suffered the fate, a pattern that once they got arrested for flimsy reasons, they then were denied bail at the courts. Instead of providing personal and community security, the police brutalised people for attending MDC rallies, while the courts denied bail anyone accused of being MDC. In one instance, a human right non-governmental organisation (NGO), Forum, reported that:

> Buhera South 20 March 2008. Anti-riot police reportedly assaulted MDC supporters who were attending a rally in Birchenough Bridge. The rally was being held close to where a ZANU-PF rally was also being held. The police were apparently called in by the ZANU-PF supporters on allegations that they were being provoked by the MDC supporters. There was a stampede of MDC supporters fleeing from the police, resulting in injuries. A male victim reports that he was beaten three times on the right hand and also lost his glasses during the chaos (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO, March 2008: 12).

This report is one of many cases of personal and community insecurity in Buhera South. There was a systematic profiling of citizens and communities in political terms. Those classified as MDC bore the brunt of violence and deprivation.

Since the formation of the MDC, various legal instruments came into place to forestall democratic participation. Legislation became a means to stop and subvert democratic participation. As argued by Klingibel (2006: 1):

> security has fundamentally evolved in the international debate from a concept that focused on the stability of the state to a protective approach related to the individual… For the conceptual debates "human security" has become a key term. A constituent element of the concept of human security is the protection of people or individuals.

ZANU-PF, through the control of the legislature, hid behind the need to protect human security to enact such laws. Chief laws used post-2000 were the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (2002) (AIPA). Through AIPPA, newspapers and pirate radio stations were shut. It became a criminal offence in Buhera South to be seen moving around with independent newspapers or listening to the Voice of America's Studio 7 radio station. One notable feature of POSA was that it authorised police brutality. Section 29, subsection 2 of POSA, gave the police or those assisting them the right to kill. It stated that:

> the police may use all necessary force to disperse an unlawful meeting in terms of other sections, and if a person is killed by the police – or any other person assisting them during dispersal - this killing shall be considered lawful (The Solidarity Peace Trust, 2004: 11).

Political security, an essential element of human security, was compromised during the period. As articulated by Mhanda (2005), "political power became the dominant social good and those in control of it have a control of a whole range of other goods in society". At local level, the district, ward and cell leadership clearly understood this philosophy. The benefits to them included the corrupt allocation of stands at Murambinda Growth Point, Mutiusinazita Shopping Centre and Muzokomba Shopping Centre. They also shared government-provided aid such as maize and maize seeds. During the farm mechanisation programme, they took farming implements, such as ploughs, scotch carts, hoes and even generators for personal use. Political power became a tool for corruption that ZANU-PF and its supporters exhibted with impunity. They felt any loss of power would result in loss of privileges to them. They worked hand in glove with the national and

provincial leadership to suppress political rights. The judiciary, executive, legislature, electoral commission, security services, media and other independent commissions were under Mugabe's armpits for the sole purpose of advancing his political interests. Sachikonye, (2003: 99) observed that "ZANU-PF…uses coercive instruments of the state to expedite its own purposes of monopolising power while denying political rights and opportunities to other groups to compete for that power".

One notable feature of the period under study is that Buhera South MDC members became victims of coordinated extortion orchestrated by members of the ZANU-PF Youth League and war veterans. Often, MDC supporters were forced to pay 'fines' at rallies in the form of livestock to base commanders. Many claimed that they lost goats, sheep and, to some extent, cattle as payment to the leaders for their alleged support for the MDC. Some of the livestock thus acquired were slaughtered at rallies or bases to feed the leadership. One elderly MDC supporter claimed that he lost four goats as punishment for his sons' support for the MDC. He claimed that he paid out of fear of further harm from the 'commanders' (Interview with Participant 23 13/02/22). This was not an isolated case but, rather, one of the many cases that went unreported to the police. In fact, most claim that it was of no use to report matters to the police as the police were fearful of retribution from political leaders. Most youths were promised land in return for supporting ZANU-PF. In Wards 28 and 26, many reported that youths invaded their lands with the help of ZANU-PF cell leaders. However, this failed to materialise as the village heads resisted these moves since communal lands were under their jurisdiction.

DISCUSSION
Political violence is a major impediment to both human security and sustainable development. The negative impacts of violence on development are evident in Buhera South, where violence resulting from political contestations has hampered the area's progress. Development is a complex process that involves achieving more prosperous and equitable standards of living for societies and states. However, political violence undermines this process by creating an environment of fear and insecurity that, in turn, hinders economic growth, social stability and political progress. Traditionally, development experts have neglected the link between human security and sustainable development. However, this study found overwhelming evidence showing that there is a growing convergence

between these two concepts, especially in Buhera South, an area that is characterised by violence caused by political contestations. Human insecurity and development are closely intertwined and without addressing the former, the latter cannot be achieved. As the International Peace Security Report (2004: 3) notes, security and development actors are increasingly recognising that the challenges facing conflict-ridden countries must be addressed in a holistic and integrated manner to achieve sustainable peace and long-term prosperity. This underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing conflict and violence, one that prioritises human security and takes a long-term perspective on development. Only by addressing the root causes of violence and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, can we hope to achieve sustainable development and a more prosperous and equitable world for all.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study emphasizes the importance of human security and sustainable development in the context of political contestations. Political violence hinders the development of areas and creates an environment of fear and insecurity that undermines economic growth, social stability and political progress (Zunes, 2010; Martin, 2018). The traditional approach to development neglected the link between human security and sustainable development, but recent research (Adebayo and Ogunyemi, 2020; Granoff, 2022) show that these two concepts are closely intertwined. Therefore, it is essential to address the root causes of violence and prioritise human security to achieve sustainable development and a more prosperous and equitable world for all.

Given the negative outcomes produced by violent political contestations that characterised Zimbabwe's political landscape, this study argued that prioritisation of human security is vital for promoting sustainable development in the face of political contestations for several reasons. First, non-violent political approaches promote inclusive development. Political contestations employing violent means often lead to the marginalisation of certain groups within society, impeding efforts to promote inclusive and equitable development. Thus, prioritising human security ensures that the needs and rights of all individuals, particularly those who are politically and socially marginalised or at risk, are considered in development planning and implementation. Second, human security enhances social stability. Violent political contestations lead to social instability and conflict that undermine

development efforts. Therefore, prioritising human security can help to address the underlying causes of conflict and promote social stability, creating an enabling environment for sustainable development. Third, non-violent political approaches tend to produce improved governance systems.

While violent political contestations often arise out of governance failures and the lack of democratic accountability, prioritising human security helps to strengthen democratic institutions, improve governance and promote the rule of law which are all essential for sustainable development. Fourth, human rights can be enjoyed under peaceful and stable political environments. Thus, prioritising human security helps to protect and promote human rights essential for sustainable development. By ensuring that individuals are safe, healthy and have access to basic services and opportunities, human security helps to advance human rights and promotes the development of inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies. It is apparent that prioritising human security is essential for promoting sustainable development in the face of political contestations. By addressing the underlying causes of conflict and promoting social stability, inclusive development, good governance and human rights, human security creates an enabling environment for sustainable development that benefits all members of society, across the political divide.

In terms of recommendations,

- political parties should conduct their election campaigns in a non-violent manner.
- government should strengthen institutions such as the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, Gender Commission and security institutions to ensure that political parties uphold principles of non-violence.
- human security should be prioritised to ensure sustainable development.
- the Southern African Development Community (SADC) must ensure that the SADC Guidelines on Elections are adhered to so that politics does not affect human security.
- in cases of tense political contestations, dialogue should be used to ensure there is no violence and human security breaches.

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CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE IN ZIMBABWE: LESSONS FROM WORLD VISION ZIMBABWE PROGRAMMING

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Abstract

Climate change has become a public concern with governments and global governing organisations such as the United Nations setting goals aimed at reducing its adverse impacts on public and poor smallholder farmers in developing countries. The article aims to provide an overview of climate-smart agriculture in Zimbabwe. Climate change has disrupted livelihoods in the country as the economy has always been agrarian-backed. In this article, we set out to understand the lessons relating to ways of reducing the adverse impacts wrought out by climate change drawn from World Vision Programming since 2000. It makes the argument that lack of technology and institutional support has been the main hindrance to the adoption of climate-smart agriculture. Moreover, the article makes the argument that climate-smart agriculture suffered a stillbirth in Zimbabwe due to lack of information dissemination to farmers and targeted beneficiaries. The study utilised a qualitative research methodology with a bias towards a case study research design. The study discovered that climate-smart agriculture has had an impact on the agricultural sector with the use of irrigation systems and the adoption of cash crop farming in Zimbabwe.

Keywords: livelihoods, agrarian, technology, institutionalism, system, foreign systems

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INTRODUCTION

Climate change impacts on agriculture productivity point to a clear consensus that Sub-Saharan Africa will experience severe consequences of climate change soon (FAO *et al.*, 2020, IPCC, 2021). Heat and drought increase variability of precipitation and rising temperatures will strain water resources, reduce crop productivity and increase the incidence of pests and diseases, with serious impacts on agriculture throughout the continent, especially in dryland regions (Bongole *et al.*, 2020). Crop productivity may decrease if the climate change trajectory continues, though anticipated declines vary among crops with expected mean yields reduction estimated to be high on maize, unlike on small grains (Jagermeyr *et al.*, 2021). Food insecurity and malnourishment are the biggest challenges of the modern world with the highest hunger and undernutrition levels observed in South Asia and Africa (Kaur & Kaur, 2016).

Sub-Saharan Africa needs to increase food production to meet the demand and predicted dietary changes (Tilman and Clark, 2014), accompanied by reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Kurgat *et al.*, 2020). Agricultural practices and associated land use changes account for one-third of GHG emissions in Africa (IPCC, 2014). There is significant political will to increase agricultural productivity under climate change while reducing the impact on the environment (*ibid.*). Agriculture is the most important sector for many developing countries and is expected to produce global food for a population that is expected to reach 9.1 billion by 2050 (Branca *et al.*, 2011). To secure and maintain food security, agricultural systems need to be transformed to increase the productive capacity and stability of smallholder agricultural production (*ibid.*).

Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is a viable alternative to addressing the adverse effects of climate change and increase crop productivity while reducing GHG emissions (Djufry *et al.*, 2022) and this has been in line with the Paris Agreement (Richards *et al.*, 2016). Climate-smart agriculture, as a concept and practical approach, aims to address the intertwined challenges of food security and climate change (Lipper *et al.*, 2014). It has three objectives, which are sustainably increasing agricultural productivity to support an equitable increase in farm income, food security and development; adapt and build the resilience of food systems to climate change; and where possible, reducing GHG emissions from agriculture (Kurgat *et al.*, 2020). Technology can be considered climate-smart, based on its impact on these outcomes and agricultural interventions that meet climate-smart goals (FAO, 2013). Interventions ranging from climate information services to field management, have the potential to achieve these goals (Chhetri *et al.*, 2017). Climate-smart agriculture has been included in development declarations that set continental plans and targets such as the African Union Malabo Declaration (Jones *et al.*, 2023).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework grounding this study is the climate-smart agriculture framework. This framework has three pillars which have a view to increasing food productivity and adaptation to climate-induced impacts and reducing GHG emissions (Chhetri *et al.*, 2017). The realities of climate variability and change call for drastic action by farmers to combat potential detrimental impacts on food security, the environment and resilience sustainability and livelihoods (Chitakira and Ngcobo, 2021). Potential and sustainable action includes adaptation strategies that enable farmers to cope with socioeconomic, environmental and agricultural production challenges such as implementing climate-smart agriculture (*ibid.*). The concept of climate-smart agriculture emerged around 2000, motivated by the need to develop solutions for integrated goals of increasing agricultural productivity and yields, reducing GHG emissions from the agricultural sector and enhancing the resilience and adaptation of farmers and agricultural systems (Andrieu *et al.*, 2017).

Climate-smart agriculture strategies and technology are gaining purchase globally and are seen as a way of addressing climate change and improving agro-based economic growth (World Bank, 2014). Climate-smart agriculture is a broad term that encompasses climate resilience agriculture and it comprises practices and technologies useful for the adaptation to climate change by farmers and helps to increase productivity, while simultaneously reducing GHG emissions (Viswanathan *et al.*, 2020; Chitakira and Ngcobo, 2021). It assists governments in achieving national food security and reducing poverty (Barnard *et al.*, 2015) through increased productivity and reduced climate change on the smallholder farmers.

Literature Review

Climate change adversely affects agricultural productivity and output, the backbone of the economies of most developing countries and much of the food consumed globally are direct products of agriculture. Climate-smart agriculture emerged as a solution to the global food crisis and insecurities induced by climate change. The biggest global challenges are food insecurity and malnourishment. With global hunger currently at a moderate level, the highest hunger and undernutrition levels were observed in South Asia and Africa (Kaur *et al.*, 2023). India is facing serious levels of hunger as the most serious consequence of climate change on food security is malnutrition causing poor growth in children (*ibid.*). The high economic growth achieved by India has not had an impact on food security as the masses continue to languish in hunger and starvation (Saxena, 2018).

Several developing countries' economies are agro-based and agricultural production systems are expected to produce food for the exponentially

growing global population that is expected to be 9.1 billion people by 2050 (Branca *et al.*, 2011). In a bid to secure food security, agricultural systems need to be transformed to increase the productive capacity and stability of smallholder agricultural production to avoid the trapping of the poor rural families in poverty (*ibid.*). Most developing countries have developed economically, showing an aberration in the balance between economic growth and food security owing to an imbalanced GDP that has much wealth concentrated in the hands of a few individuals.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) introduced the concept of climate-smart agriculture (Lopez *et al.*, 2020). Climate-smart agriculture is based on three pillars which are aimed at building resilience through reducing GHG emission, improving adaptation using technology in agriculture and the reduction of household poverty through improved food security. CSA is an approach to transform and re-orient agricultural development in climate-vulnerable environments (Ramirez *et al.*, 2015). The practices and technologies merged in climate-smart agriculture are reasonably effective in achieving high productivity for ensuring food security, climate change adaptation and GHG emission reduction with the cost-effective generation of additional benefits (Dinesh *et al.*, 2015).

CSA has huge potential for carbon sequestration, although the extent varies depending on the types of intercropping and specific farming practices (Raj *et al.*, 2018). The components of climate-smart agriculture comprise smart technologies of weather, carbon, water, nutrient, knowledge and energy management (Kaur *et al.*, 2023). The global climate-smart agricultural practices aim to improve sustainability through the increase of agricultural productivity and incomes, building adaptation and resilience to climate change in poor smallholder areas and reducing or eliminating the emission of greenhouse gases. Countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa need to increase food production to meet the demand and predicted dietary changes (Tilman and Clark 2014). Under an increasingly inhospitable climate, this increase in food production must be achieved alongside the reductions in GHG emissions (van Ittersum *et al.*, 2016, IPCC, 2014). Current GHG emissions in Africa (Kurgat *et al.*, 2020). There is a strong political will to increase agricultural productivity under climate change while reducing its impacts on the environment (*ibid.*).

CSA in Africa is an approach that aim at developing agriculture with an interest in addressing the intertwined challenges of food security and climate change (Lipper *et al.* 2014). It has been implemented in the region of Sub-Saharan Africa with many farm-based management practices and technologies being implemented to deliver two or three of the climate-smart agriculture benefits (Reppin *et al.*, 2019). In Kenya, Reppin *et al.* (*ibid.*)

found that agroforestry system tree provides firewood for household consumption and timber for income generation and carbon sequestration.

The strategies for achieving sustainability of agricultural systems and food security in smallholder farming areas have greatly depended on several programmes advanced by organisations. The programming of climate-smart agriculture has emerged as one of the strategies that are implemented to mitigate the impacts of adverse climatic conditions.

Weather-smart technologies are used to reduce the impacts of adverse climatic conditions in developed countries, while reducing climate change-causing agents, such as GHG emissions. Climate-smart housing for livestock, weather-based crop advisory and crop insurance have been used in developing countries like India (Dheebakaran *et al.,* 2020). Such advisory services are quite beneficial to farmers as they provide timely weather information and suggest suitable agronomic advice (Manjusha *et al.,* 2019).

Advisory services help farmers avoid risks associated with adverse climate change (Dheebakaran *et al.,* 2020). Knowledge-smart technologies such as contingent crop planning, if properly used, improves crop planning which would, in turn, improve crop varieties and seed. Fodder banks are being used as knowledge-smart technologies (Lu *et al.,* 2021). Contingent crop planning is the cultivation of a crop suited to a region, sown despite the normally sown crop failure because of aberrant weather conditions (Reddy *et al.,* 2017). There has been climate-smart pest management programming in the developed world, an approach that targets reduction of pest-related yield losses, enhancing eco system services and strengthening agricultural resilience to climate change (Heeb *et al.,* 2019). The implementation and programming of climate-smart agriculture have been found in Zimbabwe and Tanzania through the diversification of crops to improve crop productivity and food security, household income and dietary diversity (Makate *et al.,* 2019; Kurgat *et al.,* 2020; Kimaro *et al.,* 2023). CSA through the programming of crop diversity increases resilience and biodiversity on farms, improves soil fertility and controls pests and diseases (Lin, 2011). Conservation agriculture and agroforestry improved maize production, increased resilience and adaptation to climate change and offered mitigation benefits in Tanzania.

In Ethiopia, climate-smart agriculture technologies improved farm-level production by 22% over non-adopters because of reduced climate-related risks (Asrat and Simane, 2017). CSA, therefore, improves food security and the availability of food at a reduced level of climate change. Despite the potential benefits adoption of climate-smart agriculture, relevant

technologies are generally low in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kurgat *et al.,* 2020). The adoption of maize-legume rotation in Tanzania, minimum tillage in Malawi and soil conservation ridges and soil bounds in both Kenya and Tanzania, are below 10% (Tesfaye *et al.,* 2017). Ogundeji *et al,* (2023) observe that in the Congo Basin, climate-smart agriculture has been programmed to work in liaison with rural development to reduce deforestation, stabilising the agriculture industry, improving land use planning, feasible management systems for the region's natural forest and reducing poverty and forest degradation.

The very first soil and agricultural carbon finance initiative in Africa benefitting smallholder farmers and rural society is the Kenya Agricultural Carbon Initiative, in western Kenya (Ogundeji *et al.,* 2023). The initiative deals with issues such as increasing land pressure, unstable livelihoods and the relative inefficiency of smallholder agricultural production all of which is made worse by the adverse effects of changing climate and the rising global food demand, unsuitable farming methods and significant greenhouse gas emissions (Nyber *et al.,* 2020). Farmers in Zimbabwe are becoming more interested in conservation agriculture, with indicators of output increases of 50 and 200% (Simelton *et al.,* 2021).

METHODOLOGY
This article utilised qualitative methodology with a bias towards the case study design in analysing climate-smart agriculture programming in Zimbabwe. The case study research design gives rich and detailed data to build a clear picture of the research context and the research problem (Mutamba and Mugoya, 2014). The article used thematic data analysis to analyse the emerging themes within the study. Secondary data from various regions of Zimbabwe were used to craft the discourse on the climate-smart agriculture programmes.

RESULTS: LESSONS FROM WORLD VISION PROGRAMMING IN ZIMBABWE
Africa and Zimbabwe, in general, are most vulnerable to climate change due to widespread poverty and limited coping capacity and highly variable climate (Madzwamuse, 2010). Climate change has affected the farming landscape in Zimbabwe with most of the regions that once had enough rainfall going down to the semi-arid position due to the variability of rainfall. Most smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe are now specialising in small grains that are drought-resistant (Mugandani, *et al.,* 2012). Keeping

small livestock has increased in Zimbabwe due to climate variability, forcing farmers to abandon cattle-rearing as most of the areas are becoming arid (Makate, *et al.,* 2018). The impacts of climate change are affecting smallholder farmers who cannot adopt technology and other farming methods. The government and other stakeholders have brought programmes to help the agricultural landscape and provide a safety net for poor households from the adverse impacts of climate change. Zimbabwe particularly is vulnerable as it heavily depends on rain-fed agriculture and climate-sensitive resources (Chagutah, 2010). Extreme temperatures have led to dry spells with water stress, droughts and poverty, leading to farmers opting for wage work on farms.

Climate-smart Agriculture (is a good initiative, but some barriers hinder its strategies in ensuring environmental stewardship. A greater proportion (67%) of the respondents participated in conservation agriculture. With significant support from extension workers, the WV Livelihoods Technical Programming (TP) focused on encouraging the adoption of simple climate-smart agricultural practices inclusive of Conservation Agriculture (CA), drip irrigation and solar-powered irrigation. These practices assisted farmers to take better care of the land, improve soil fertility and water-holding capacity and make the land more resilient to drought. Drought-resistant, nutritious, early maturing and high-yielding crop varieties were promoted to maximise production in contexts characterised by high temperatures and reduced erratic rainfall. Several studies have assessed the impact of CSA and found both direct results (improved crop and livestock productivity and reduced total variable costs) and indirect results (improved food security through the increased availability of staple crops at the household level and in markets, per capita consumption and increased household income (Fentie and Beyene, 2019; Sani, 2019). A study by Ogada *et al.* (2020) found that the adoption of CSA, such as multiple stress-tolerant crops, improved household income by 83%. This, in turn, improved household asset accumulation.

Water points were established in most villages. The WASH TP by WV enabled improvement in access to water mainly through the rehabilitation of water points, drilling of boreholes, the establishment of solar piped water schemes and installation of taps in communities, schools and health institutions. Installation of water points in the villages helped to reduce the distance that community members had to travel to access water. The use of solar-powered drip irrigation infrastructure allowed for improved water

efficiency and efficacy. The TP also provided water to communities to facilitate the sustenance of crop and livestock production. Sixteen (16) water systems (irrigation schemes and solar-powered boreholes) were rehabilitated or established in support of crop and livestock production. These interventions resulted in 2 576 smallholder farmers gaining access to water for crop and livestock production. as a result, 1 434 households (households) reported increased crop yields and 951 reported increased livestock production. establishments of irrigation gardens were reported to have enabled most smallholder farmers to plant a variety of food crops for consumption and selling. The introduction of solar-powered water systems around irrigation schemes overall was reported to have made year-round cropping possible with farmers able to cultivate different crop varieties for sale throughout the year.

It was found that 88.4% of households contribute to the maintenance of water sources and several community members were trained to carry out basic repairs to the water points, but this did not seem to be sufficient enough to halt water service disruptions significantly. *Umuntu lomuntu lipholisa leproject* meaning it is everyone's responsibility to ensure the security of all community projects. Trespassers are reported to local authorities. They report to the police and irrigation committee. They have a constitution that was approved by local leaders to guide them towards sustainability and continuity.

The application of climate-resilient agricultural practices, including improved post-harvest management practices, resulted in 32 904 households reporting increased crop production, while 31 774 households reported increased small livestock production. Nutritional gardens and post-harvest techniques improved food availability in the community. Interventions also helped to reduce post-harvest losses, particularly among small-holder farmers.

Acquisition of machines like ploughs, racks, mechanised boreholes, drip irrigation and solar-powered irrigation farming systems, *inter alia*, enhanced food security as production increased. There was access to irrigation systems, reducing reliance on rain-fed agriculture and technical support to strengthen the acquisition of inputs and production management. TP focused on improving livestock and crop production to achieve food security through increased production by enhancing agricultural

mechanisation support and product training. The establishment of mechanised boreholes significantly improved access to water for crop production, livestock production and even household use. A total of 513 community members trained in business or entrepreneurial skills. Following training and other support in the form of productive assets, 951 households reported increased livestock (fish, small livestock, cattle) production. A total of 1 434 households also reported increased crop yields because of WV project interventions in FY19 (Financial Year 19. The TP also provided water to communities to facilitate the sustenance of crop and livestock production. The majority of households (85%) were using at least one sustainable agriculture and natural resource management (Technical Programme Evaluation Report Zimbabwe, June 2021). One hundred and eighteen (118) households practiced agroforestry, conservation agriculture, integrated pest management and other methods following related training by World Vision Zimbabwe. These programmes helped to increase environmental protection and income as carbon sinks increased and pests reduced.

In Chihota, poultry projects were said to have contributed to abundant meat and eggs for households for sale and consumption, strongly contributing to children's nutrition. Manure from the poultry also boosted vegetable production and sales. Most smallholder farmers pointed out how the general improvement in agricultural production, especially through the selling of farm produce within irrigation gardens and livestock breeding, had enabled most of them to have disposable income to purchase other diversified foods that they previously had no access to. This emerged through the main thriving value chains, especially poultry and fish products.

The production of small grain crops such as sorghum, pearl millet and finger millet, offers a feasible climate change adaptation model for smallholder farmers, particularly in Africa. A study by Wossen *et al.* (2017) found that the adoption of drought-tolerant maize varieties increased maize yields by 13.3% and reduced the downside risk exposure by 81%. Mulching is covering the soil surface with organic or inorganic material to improve soil structure, conserving soil moisture condition and soil temperature and reducing nutrient loss, salinity and erosion problems. Mulching is important as an organic fertilizer, soil regulator, water, nutrient and residue manager and improver of crop yield and productivity. Due to WV interventions, farmers are enhancing farming with techniques like mulching, composting

and tower gardening. Mulching is one of the existing sustainable agricultural practices in Zimbabwe (Huyer and Nyasimi, 2017).

Crop rotation is the process of producing a variety of crops in the same place over the course of several growing seasons. The study discovered that rotating cowpeas and soybeans with maize considerably boosted net returns (up to US$312 to $767 per hectare, compared to only US$64 to $516 under conventional practices), yields and returns on investment (ROI).

Reducing soil disturbance by cultivating land using mechanical techniques and not ploughing, is known as minimum tillage or reduced tillage (Bodner *et al.*, 2015; Hallama, 2019). Soil and water management CSA practices safeguard the soil through low tillage, reduce water losses from runoff and enhance water infiltration (mulching), reduce evaporation and enhance soil fertility (intercropping, rotation and manure use). The use of enhanced crop types, such as drought-tolerant maize, orange maize and improved legumes, complements these.

FARMERS' KNOWLEDGE~ BARRIERS CAN BE LINKED TO FARMERS' KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge means the power to improve environmental stewardship. In Mudzi, women have historically been excluded and marginalised from mainstream developmental projects due to patriarchy. However, through the World Vision Zimbabwe S4T Programme, both men and women were trained to save money together in a secure, practical and flexible manner, thereby increasing HH financial resilience. There was a general increase in agricultural knowledge, practice and capacity among most smallholder farmers which contributed to a significant shift from seasonal to all-year-round production and introduction of diversified agricultural options. Some communities in Bolamba used to have small individual gardens that they watered using the bucket system which resulted in low yields.

Interventions by World Vision Zimbabwe (WVZ) targeted youths in schools to increase access, learning and life skills for 400 000 children to address the decline in education access and literacy levels among them. These interventions included Learning Roots, Unlock Literacy, Youth Ready, Citizen Voice and Action. Other interventions were implemented through various funding streams such as the IGATE-T, Learning for Life, Profuturo, Higherlife Foundation and Nechishala Secondary Child Protection Support (Technical Programme Evaluation Report Zimbabwe □ June 2021). This blending of programmes combines direct education interventions using

teacher training, technology and learning materials provided and improving and empowering girls for protection and participation in education.

In Financial Year (FY) 18 alone, over 200 teachers were trained in unlocking literacy, of which 152 were found to be utilising the skills gained from the training and 1 267 children were supported through reading camps. Children not in the formal system were supported through out-of-school learning initiatives. During the course of this support to out-of-school children, many opted to re-enrol in the formal system. Six classroom blocks were constructed or rehabilitated and furniture was provided – particularly to support ECD – thereby benefiting 2 500 children across all the Areas of Programming (APs).

The proportion of children enrolled and attending school increased from 78% in FY18 to 87.5% in FY19, while that of children who can read with comprehension increased from 38.6% in FY18 to 44.4% in FY19. However, there was a decline in the proportion of parents and caregivers who promoted learning for children 3-5 years, from 86.4% in FY18 to 42% in FY19 and in adolescents who rank themselves as thriving on the ladder of life, from 56.6% in FY18 to 46.4% in FY19.

The agriculture situation in 2020 (before programme implementation) was characterised by low yields because of climate change-induced droughts, which was exacerbated by poor farmer performance because of knowledge gaps, a lack of cooperation and coordination amongst farmers resulting in limited agricultural output, which contributed to the prevalence of malnutrition within most areas. Most smallholder farmers improved farming performance overall due to the cross-pollination of ideas brought about by working as cooperatives as well as external support and visits from different organisations and advancements in technology.

Gaps in World Vision's work

Although production increased, yield did not reach its full potential due to low rainfall patterns and a lack of fertilizers and other critical inputs. Women and young people had less access to financial services than males. The unequal treatment, financial exclusion and lack of access to banking services, disproportionately harm women, particularly in rural areas. The sharing of information with district stakeholders was particularly prominent at the beginning of projects. District officials like district Environmental Health Officers were ignored during the implementation of borehole projects and when projects were completed, they were no longer provided with reports in some areas. The officers were consulted only when problems emerged in the community. Not addressing economic challenges resulting in

high inflation and price fluctuations were mentioned as one of the major impediments to the productivity of smallholder groups. This was worsened by the economic instability caused at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most youths, young women and people with disabilities were reached through livelihoods interventions as some were also part of producer groups. However, vulnerable groups were said to have lacked representation in the disaster preparedness committee, especially children and people living with disabilities.

Despite the strong exhibition of local ownership and partnering, the longer-term sustainability of achievements in agricultural productivity still had potential challenges, especially considering the recurrent droughts and the volatile economic environment that strongly affected agro-based enterprises and the changes in the monitory policies.

In light of the WV programming, it is recommended that:

- the paravet training includes strategically located dip tank assistants. Priority should also be given to local dip tank attendants since they are already part of the disease surveillance and investigation team government payroll. Professional Development Hours (PDHs) training should also focus on the in-laws and more men to reduce cultural barriers that affect exclusive breastfeeding (EBF)..
- despite the worsening food insecurity and livelihood instability experienced, nutrition gardens were repeatedly highlighted as a beneficial intervention to increase access to nutritious foods for young children and vulnerable people as well as a source of income. To improve the gains of the nutrition gardens, it is recommended that water points be established to allow for irrigation of the gardens. Training to improve sales of products from the garden is also recommended.
- to ensure year-round access to improved water facilities, there is a need for minimal disruptions to improved water supplies.

OTHER GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The Department for International Development (DIFID)-funded ENTERPRIZE project and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) Food Security emergency projects complemented the food distributions and AP livelihoods interventions resulting in a total of 38 586 Households applying at least one natural resource management and Climate-smart agricultural

practice. According to the 2018 Annual TP Report, the application of climate-resilient agricultural practices, including improved post-harvest management practices, resulted in 32 904 and 31 774 Households reporting increased crop production and small livestock production, respectively. When juxtaposed to FY18, WV interventions improved the proportion of households with at least one adult earning a regular income from 27% to 35.8%. A quarter (25%) indicated an increase in HH income due to WVZ interventions and the majority mentioned the source as the sale or exchange of their farm crop and livestock or from skilled trade and/or small business enterprises.

Market linkages were limited in FY19 due to a poor performing economy. However, partnerships with the private sector and technical government institutions, inclusive of the Harare Institute of Technology (HIT), the Department of Irrigation and Mechanisation, the Department of Agricultural Extension Services, the Grasslands Research Station, Irvine's Chickens and the Pig Industry Board, were maintained to increase agricultural production for targeted Households.

The partnership between WV and key government stakeholders is strong and the capacity of local partners was strengthened. Sustainability improved through partnering and the partnership between the RMNCH TP and the district is good with most officials satisfied with the level of partnership and engagement. Technical support was improved through collaboration with Agritex and the government's Veterinary Department.

During implementation, WVZ engaged government stakeholders, market and community actors to increase family access to income. These improved families' economic well-being by facilitating income-generating activities for smallholder farmers to increase their production. The inclusion of key government staff, particularly from the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Water and Rural Resettlement in the design, monitoring and evaluation of TP interventions was deliberate to enhance public institutions' acceptance of programme interventions for continuity following the exit of WV in the targeted operational areas.

APs collaborated with extension staff from the parent Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Water and Rural Resettlement during the design and implementation of livelihoods interventions. APs also collaborated with

private organisations such as Irvine's Chickens and Novatek who continue to offer technical support to poultry producer groups; the Pig Industry Board in support of piggery projects as well as National Organic Produce which provided Boschveld's chickens and feed to producer groups involved in free-range chicken production. The Zimbabwe Women's Microfinance Bank, Steward Bank, Quest and Virl Micro Finance were involved to facilitate smallholder farmers in APs to access affordable credit for their farming and IGAs. Other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were engaged in the development of strategic partnerships in response to requests for proposals from donors. Research institutions like the Grasslands Research Station, were reported to have been engaged at national level offer technical support in crop and livestock production to smallholder farmers in APs.

DISCUSSION

Governments and international governing bodies like the United Nations have set targets to reduce the adverse effects of climate change on the general population and impoverished smallholder farmers in developing nations. A critical overview of Zimbabwe's climate-smart agriculture was proffered by the study. The study reflects an acute awareness of the lessons drawn from World Vision programming since 2000. It is obvious from climate change's effects on agricultural productivity that Sub-Saharan Africa will soon experience the effects of climate change. If climate change continues on its current trajectory, crop productivity may diminish, albeit anticipated declines differ by crop, with maize expected to see higher mean yield reductions than small grains. Agriculture systems must be revamped to boost the productive capacity and stability of smallholder agricultural production to achieve and maintain food security. The practical solution to combat climate change and boost crop output, while lowering greenhouse gas emissions is CSA. A strategy for agricultural development known as "climate-smart agriculture" seeks to solve the interrelated problems of food security and climate change.

CSA has been incorporated into development declarations establishing continental goals and strategies, such as the Malabo Declaration of the African Union. CSA is a method and conception encompassing climate-resilient agriculture and includes techniques and tools that help farmers adapt to climate change, while also boosting productivity and cutting GHG emissions. The idea was first suggested by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The FAO introduced the idea of CSA which is based on

three pillars: building resilience by reducing GHG emissions, improving adaptation by using technology in agriculture and lowering household poverty by increasing food security. CSA includes smart technologies for managing the weather, carbon, water, nutrients, knowledge and energy. The goal of CSA in Africa is to advance agriculture, while tackling the twin problems of food security and climate change. It has been noted that using climate-wise agriculture practices through the programming of crop diversity, increases resilience and farm biodiversity enhances soil fertility and manages pests and diseases. Therefore, CSA can result in increased food security and food availability at a lower level of climate change. Soil conservation ridges, low tillage and maize-legume rotation is used in Tanzania.

To address the emerging challenges and harness a few benefits of climate change in Zimbabwean agriculture, there is need to be climate-smart, which is defined as an integrated approach for developing technical policy and investment conditions to achieve sustainable agricultural development for food security under climate change (FAO, 2013). Technologies and policy options for CSA include weather forecasting agro-advisory, geo-ICT delivery, eco-regional crop planning, crop water increased efficiency in micro-irrigation drainage and approaches like direct-seeded rice, nutrition management and stress-tolerant livestock breeds (Archak and Pathak, 2022). Novel genetic resources would infuse excellent adoption benefits, productivity, gain income, along with ease of implementation and sustainability to smallholder farmers (Agrawal *et al.,* 2021).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTION
Conservation agriculture is gaining currency among Zimbabwean farmers, as evidenced by indicators of output gains of between 50% and 200%. In the Sub-Saharan African region, there is still a dearth of programming for climate-smart agriculture and the majority of technologies encounter resistance from farmers who are reluctant to recognise and accept the negative effects of climate change. Due to inadequate information, sharing with farmers and the intended beneficiaries, CSA experienced a stillbirth in Zimbabwe.   There is a strong political desire to boost agricultural output in the face of climate change while minimising environmental damage.   In many nations throughout the world, CSA tactics and technologies are being used to address climate change challenges, boost economies and expand the agricultural sector. The worldwide food crisis and food insecurity brought

on by climate change have been addressed via CSA. Since CSA has resulted in a positive development for farmers, educated farmers should be a priority for development practitioners because of their better capacity for adoption. To increase acceptance, information, education and communication (IEC) products tailored for ignorant farmers, should be pursued. Government should offer incentives to agro-dealers so they will make investments in rural agricultural companies that sell inputs. Although taxes increase government revenue, the government should lower the taxes for rural agro-dealers to facilitate easier access to inputs by bringing suppliers and distributors closer to farmers' homes. The government should also avail financial service providers with incentives to offer agro-dealers affordable finance products so they can stock the necessary commodities in sufficient quantities.

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