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Developed Inclusive Eurocentric and Afrocentric Perspectives to Curb Sexual Violence against Women, Adolescents and Children: Case-Study of Epworth District, in Harare South Province of Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Sexual violence in Epworth District, Zimbabwe is a serious problem which has caused psychological, physical and social effects on survivors. The factors influencing commission of sexual violence in the district ranged from poverty, high rate of unemployment and drugs or substances abuse in the area under study. The purpose of the study was to develop Inclusive Eurocentric and Afrocentric Perspectives to curb sexual violence against women, adolescents and children in Zimbabwe. A mixed research approach was used as the research methodology and pragmatism as the research paradigm. The study established effects of sexual violence on survivors including physical, psychological and social negative effects. The study recommends to government adoption and implementation of Inclusive Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives such as "Bystander" Intervention approach, psychological counselling and care support, Children and Women Retreats. The study further recommends to government the use of African Unhu and Ubuntu concepts to prevent rape.

Keywords

Sexual Violence, Survivor, Marital Rape, Rape, Statutory Rape, Incest, Sodomy

1. Introduction

This study was carried out to develop Inclusive Eurocentric and Afrocentric

Perspectives to curb sexual violence against women, adolescents and children in Epworth District, Zimbabwe. Safe and Secure (2016: 56) define sexual violence as "an act or attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work place". In this inquiry we exposed conceptual, theoretical, practical and methodological gaps in the previous studies related to the current study. We specified the introduction/background, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, methodology, findings conclusions and recommendations.

2. Statement of the Problem

Sexual violence is a serious challenge in Zimbabwe that has remained underreported, yet its effects are detrimental to social development. It is stated that, approximately 49% to 51% survivors of rape and statutory rape become dependent on alcohol, whereas 39% to 61% may use other illicit substances. It is not uncommon for survivors to experience suicidal ideation. In the area under study girls 40% to 60% commit suicide as results of statutory rape and 19% to 81% women may attempt to commit suicide (Zimbabwe Statistics Office, 2016). The government, local communities, international community and civil society organisations have devoted a lot of resources to address forms of sexual violence, yet the cases of rape and statutory rape' continue to increase and underreported. The presence of a progressive legal and policy framework has not helped either, and yet there are many Eurocentric sexual violence strategies claiming to deal with sexual offences in Zimbabwe. Albert (2011) exposes weaknesses of the approach when he states that, teenage couples engage in sexual conduct as part of an intimate relationship. He argues that, this may start to occur before either participant has reached the age of consent, or after one has but the other has not. In jurisdictions, the person who has reached the age of consent would be guilty of the statutory rape provision. This differs from one country to the other. In some jurisdictions such as California, if two minors have sex with each other, they are both guilty of engaging in unlawful sex with the other person. The impact of Eurocentric approaches to address sexual violence is attributed by consider the act itself to be prima facie evidence of guilty, as any consent between partners, even if freely given, does not meet the standard of law, as a person the law has defined as being incapable of giving consent.

- Objectives of the Study

   1) To establish effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study.

   2) To examine psychological effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study.

   3) To ascertain physical and social effects of sexual violence on survivors on the area under study.

   4) To analyze the effectiveness of strategies for reducing effects of sexual vi-

olence in area under study.

5) To make recommendations for implementation of developed Inclusive Eurocentric and Afrocentric Perspectives to reduce sexual violence in Zimbabwe.

● **Research Questions**

1) What are effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study?

2) How effective are strategies for reducing sexual violence in area under study?

3) Which developed Eurocentric and Afrocentric Perspectives that can be implemented to reduce sexual violence in Zimbabwe?

3. Methodology

● *Research paradigm and why pragmatism worked for the study*

This study adopted and employed the pragmatism research paradigm. Maya and Leanne (2019: 45) define pragmatism as "a research approach for interrogating and valuating ideas and beliefs in terms of their practical functioning". For example, in this inquiry pragmatism approach interrogated and evaluated effects of sexual violence on survivors and effectiveness of strategies used to reduce the effects of sexual violence on survivors in area under study (Alasunntau, 1998). In this study pragmatism paradigm is justified because of its methodology which has a lengthy history of being adopted and used successfully in many researches. It dates back to Peirce in the late 19th and early 20th Century and includes the evaluation and spread of pragmatic inquiry through the works of Dewey (Bobbie, 2014).

● *Epistemological pragmatism*

This study used epistemology pragmatism research approach. According to Maya and Leanne (2019) pragmatism approach is premised on the idea that research should avoid getting mired in metaphysical debates, about the nature of truth and reality and focus instead on concrete, real world. For example, in this case concrete reality on psychological, physical and social effects of sexual violence on survivors in Epworth District, Zimbabwe (Boddy, 2015). The epistemological paradigm enables researchers to know the truth and reality for instance, in this study to know the truth and reality on effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study. It also enables the researcher to ascertain psychological, physical and social effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study. Through use of epistemology pragmatism the researcher established the extent at which strategies reduce negative effects of sexual violence on women and children in the area under study (Barrows, 2013). The researcher by employing epistemology pragmatism had insights on sexual violence survivors' psychological counseling and the recovery processes accessed in the area under study. The researcher furthermore, through adopting and employing the epistemology pragmatism as this inquiry methodologically and the implications were that the researcher generated new knowledge on how to deal with complex effects of sexual violence (Alfred & Waddell, 2015).

● *Justification use of pragmatism paradigm*

Sociologists employ pragmatism paradigms to study different types of studies in the contemporary society. In this inquiry, the researcher employed pragmatism research paradigm to establish effects of sexual violence on survivors, analyses the effectiveness of strategies for reducing incidents of sexual violence and proffered recommendations for further strategies in reduction of sexual violence in the area under study. The pragmatism paradigm is justified through its use the researcher established forms of sexual violence such as marital rape, rape, statutory rape, incest and sodomy and their effects on survivors in the area under study. Maya and Leanne (2019) state that, pragmatic approach with its epistemological focuses on the inquiry process and practicality more useful than research philosophies that lay a sole emphasis on obstruction or philosophical theory generation of data. For example, viewing participants' ideas and beliefs as tools for sexual violence problem solving and actions for the research participants as active participators rather than as passive descriptors' of the sexual violence as it exists in society (Maya & Leanne, 2019).

4. Results/Findings of the Study

● **Effects of sexual violence on survivors in Epworth District, Zimbabwe (Figure 1)**

1) Physical effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study

The findings revealed that respondents in the area under study strongly agreed that forms of sexual violence such as rape has negative effects on survivors. One expert in the medical professional revealed that 40% of rape and statutory rape survivors in the areas under study suffered from negative *physical effects* which are severe especially for children whose bodies are weaker, smaller and less well-developed for sexual intercourse. The medical expert further indicated that rape resulted in death of children, adolescent (boys and girls) even women. He went on to state that survivors are infected with sexual transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS, and women suffered from cervical cancer.
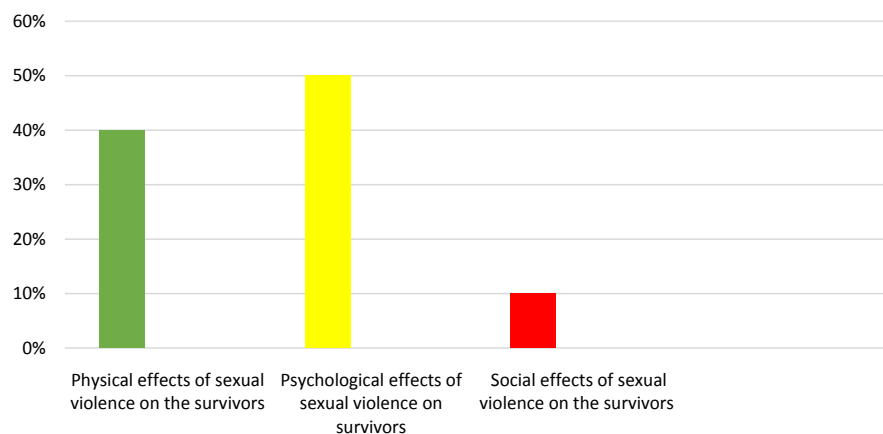

Figure 1. Response rate to negative effects of sexual violence on survivors in areas under study. Source (Field work).

Four (4) of the respondents indicated that rape as a form of sexual violence in the areas under study has resulted in serious physical injuries on survivors which required long-term and complex medical care. The respondents further indicated that the physical injuries were fascicular, to the reproductive system, and caused gastrointestinal problems and came with high risks of mental problem, infant mortality and low birth weight of babies. The respondents also indicated that boys who are sodomized suffer from damage to the anus as well as get infected with STDs and this leads to other physical symptoms related to trauma from the experience. The World Health Organization (WHO) Report (2020) agreed with the respondents that rape survivors suffer from eating, or sleeping disorder, headaches and migraine, chronic fatigue, and immune disorder. Therefore, rape and statutory rape affect both children, adolescent boys and girls and women in the areas under study.

2) Psychological effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study

Three experts in counselling strongly agreed that 50% of gender-based violence survivors suffered from psychological effects of rape, marital rape, statutory rape, incest and sodomy in the areas under study. The respondents indicated that psychological effects of these forms of sexual violence include long multi-layered consequences including: depression, abrupt mood swings, mental blankness or spaced feelings, addictive behaviour, addiction to dangerous drugs, developed avoidance behaviour, hyper vigilance, reduced ability to deal with stress, amnesia and forgetfulness, and an inability to love and nurture or bond with the family members and the local communities. A study conducted by United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2018) revealed that raped children, adolescent boys and girls, and women suffer from mental health diseases. The study further reveals that the effects of rape are overlapping and, if left untreated, could strongly impede child development. United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2018) agreed that exposure of children to rape harms their development of the brain, and impairs cognitive and sensory growth. The study by United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2018) further revealed that the children's brain becomes hard-wired for later physical and emotional functioning of intergenerational violence (United Nations International Children Education Fund, 2018).

3) Social effects of sexual violence on survivors in the area under study

One expert in social work indicated that 10% of rape survivors in areas under study suffered from various social effects. The respondent strongly agreed that negative social effects of sexual violence were mainly centred on widespread stigma and discrimination of the victims by their family members and local communities. The respondents indicated that this has severe and lifelong effects which include restricted access to education for the affected boys and girls; dramatic effects on future livelihoods; and reduced ability to support themselves and their families in future. The expert further indicated that rape forced survivors into prostitution, drug abuse, smuggling and other illegal activities, something which was suggested in the areas under study (Figure 2).
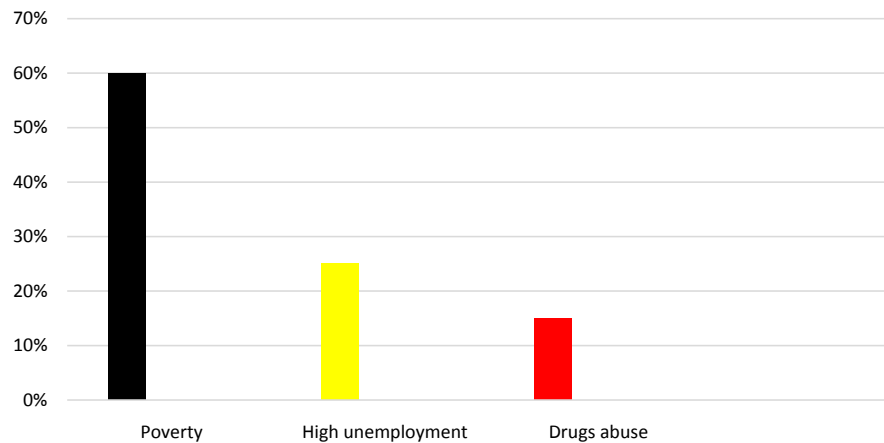
Figure 2. Factors influencing teenage (boys & girls) sexual abuse in areas under study. Source (Field work).

- **Factors influence teenage (boys and girls) sexual abuse in Epworth District**

Six (6) of the respondents in the areas under study strongly agreed that female sexual abuse have effects on the girl child' educational attainment. The researcher noted that this was quite profound and as the results from the areas show. For teenage sexually abused versus not sexually abused, 45% of teenagers dropped out of school due to rape, 30% of teenagers had educational level below secondary, and 15% dropped out of school as result of unwanted pregnancy in area under study.

Figure 3 shows effects of sexual abuse on teenage girls in area under study. The findings above in Figure 3 indicate that, teenagers 45% dropped out of school after either sexually abused by a teacher or community members, 30% were not attending school as their parents could not afford to pay school fees and 13% were impregnated by local males.

The researcher discovered that for age groups between 15 and 19, (60%) of both adolescent boys and girls together with those living with disabilities were experience vicious cycle poverty (Figure 4). The researcher noted that poverty was the major factor which influenced the high rate of sexual violence in the site. These figures were indexed to age as well, with 16% of 30- to 34-year-old and 15% of those aged between 45 to 49 years experiencing absolute poverty while those better off, some 70% of most families, had one meal per day and depended on less than USD$1.00 per day. These people relied on food hand-outs from well-wishers such as NGOs and Social Welfare programmes. The researcher noted that poverty has also contributed to prostitution of young girls aged 15 to 29 in the site and are infected with sexual transmitted diseases and HIV and AIDS. The researcher further noted that, around 20 to 40 both females and males are experiencing economic hardship in the country. The number of those who were experiencing deprivation trap of poverty increased to 51% among those aged 30 to 54 years old. Women constituted 9% of all those aged 15 and
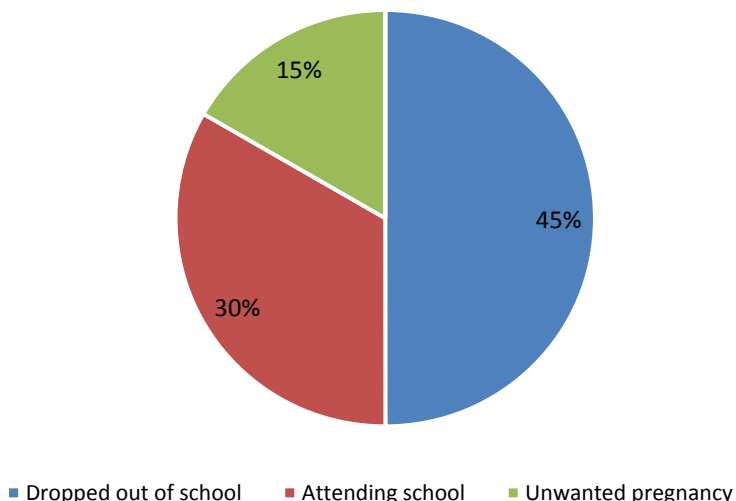
Figure 3. Effects of sexual abuse on teenage in area under study. Source (Field Work).
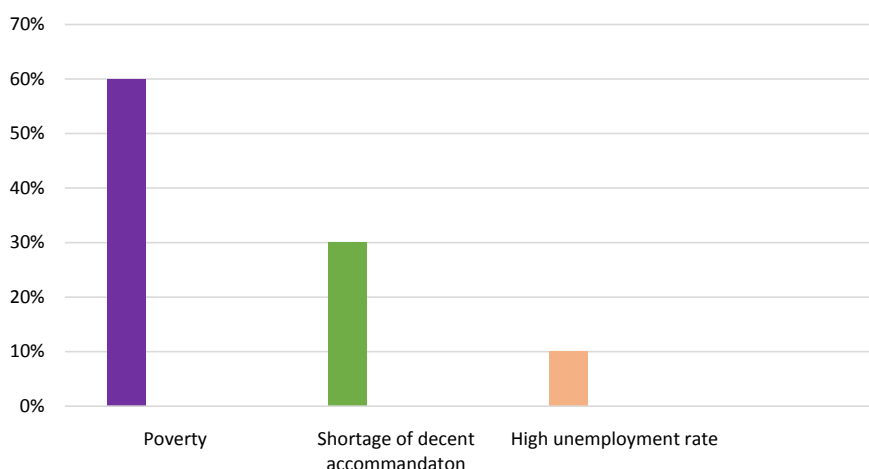

Figure 4. Response rate to factors influencing sexual violence in areas under study. Source (Field Work).

over who never employed at all. The researcher noted that lack of poverty alleviation programmes in the area under study contributed to high poverty levels.

That is, 30% were experiencing shortage of decent accommodation. The researcher discovered that women aged 30 - 39 years were as households but with poor house structures in these area of study. A study conducted by Save Children (2022) concurred with the current study when its findings show that a family of 6 share one room and this affected children primary socialization. For example, when parents engage into sexual intercourse in one room influenced adolescents' boys and girls to early indulge into sexual intercourse at a tender age. The researcher noted that shortage of decent accommodation fueled incest in the area under study. The study findings indicated that 57% of both girls and boys living with disabilities were affected as result of type of commendation that were not suitable for people living with disabilities. A study by Save Children (2022) revealed that 43% of these girls living with disabilities are vulnerable to child

sexual abuse by close relatives as result of sharing one room accommodation in the area under study. The researcher further observed that, in Epworth District, 57% of sexual violence acts such as child sexual abuse were attributable to shortages of decent accommodation. For example, some families share one room divided by a curtain. Thus, during the night, parents had sexual intercourse while adolescent boys and girls would be hearing the act, although they would pretend to be asleep and this exposed them to sexual acts which later influenced them girls to experiment. The researcher furthermore observed that 10% of sexual violence effects in the area under study were influenced by high rate of unemployment among both youths and adults. The youths and adults who were not employed engaged illicit selling of drugs, sexual harassment, rape, marital rape, statutory rape, incest and sodomy. In response to these challenges, Save Children (2022) recommended that the first step should be focused on finding solutions by identifying the problem that include poverty, and this requires a definite way to measure it and to account for what causes it. In the site studied, most groups of people are experiencing absolute poverty as result of unemployment. Chabuka (2012) states that indicates that absolute poverty is often known as subsistence poverty since it is based on assessment of minimum subsistence requirements. This means that the strategies use absolute measurements and usually limit poverty to material deprivation. The researcher noted that in the areas under study there was evidenced of poverty at 40% and affecting societies in urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe and the figure is found by considering material deprivation but importantly, by fixing them at a number sufficiently high to make a political statement against the leadership. Unexpectedly, the government would lower the poverty levels threshold for the same political reasons.

- **Effectiveness strategies for reducing effects of sexual violence on survivors in area under study**

All the respondents (100%) strongly agreed that there were effective strategies for reduction of sexual violence such as rape in the area under study. Figure 5 below shows the responses relating to the effectiveness of strategies that could be used to address effects of sexual violence on survivors in these area of study.

1) *Bystander's intervention approach*

This is an intervention approach which is taught to the community members on how to intervene before a sexual assault such as rape occurs. These opportunities would not be needed really if the violation was never allowed to occur in the first place. The respondents strongly agreed that the Bystander's intervention approach developed by Sarah McMahon may be effective to prevent sexual violence against females in Colleges and Universities. The respondents indicated that if this strategy is well adopted and implemented, it could be effective in the reduction of incidents of sexual violence in the areas under study. Bystanders' intervention approach was successfully used to prevent sexual violence in Colleges and Universities Campuses in Europe, and if taught to local communities through relevant programmes, it holds potential for reducing sexual violence.
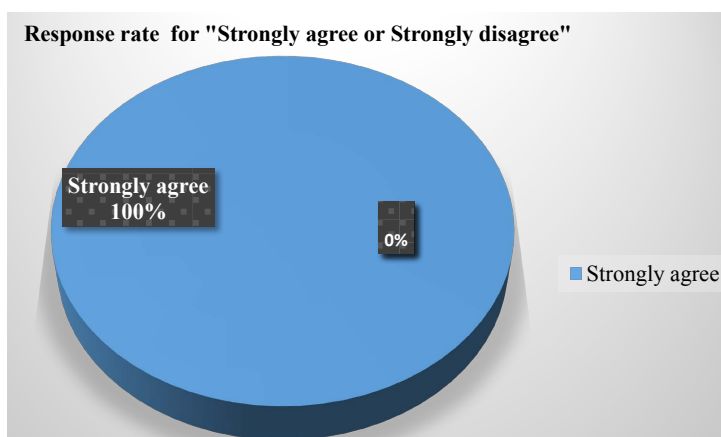
Figure 5. Pie-chart 2 shows response rate on effectiveness of strategies to address effects of sexual violence in the area under study. Source (Field work).

This sexual violence intervention approach that could only be effective if society puts in place both an opportunity for reactive situations after a sexual violence occurred and also creates situations where no risk to the survivor is present. The implications of this strategy (typology) are discoursed in the context of whether the bystander's programme can be developed in the areas under study and this depends on the availability of resources for the implementation of the programme by experts.

2) *Individual approach for psychological care and support*

The respondents strongly agreed that individual approach for psychological care and support is effective and applicable in the areas under study. The respondents indicated that it is effective for counselling therapy of sexual violence survivors and as part of support group initiatives. The respondents strongly agreed that individual approach for psychology care and support is effective and applicable in areas under study. It hastens the rate of improvement of the survivor from the psychological damage arising from the sexual violence trauma. The sexual violence survivors tend to blame themselves on occurrence of a sexual violence. This approach could be applied in Zimbabwe, particularly in the areas under study where individual survivors need psychological counselling. Still, the approach requires considerable further evaluation.

3) *African Ubuntu/Unhu philosophy*

Afrocentric perspectives. These retreats lacked *Unhu* or *Ubuntu* Shona people's philosophy, an Afrocentric perspective, which was effective in reducing incidents of sexual violence in areas under study by encouraging local communities to have respect, morality, humanity, integrity and observe dignity and sexuality of females.

5. Discussion/Interpretation of Data from Interviews

The participants were purposive selected from Epworth District, Zimbabwe. Table 1 below show the participant's codes, employment status, affiliation, and educational level.

Table 1. Participants codes, employment status, affiliation, and educational level.

Code	Employment status	Affiliation	Educational level
A001	Community Development Officer	Min. of Women Affairs	Masters in Community Development
B002	Rep. of NGO	Girl Child Network	Diploma in Counselling
C003	Lawyer	Musasa Project	Degree in Law
D004	Local Political Leaders	Local community Leader	Standard Four
E005	Adults	Households	Junior Certificate and Ordinary Level
F006	Adolescents	Schools	Grade 7 to Upper Sixth
G007	Children	Schools	ECD & Grade six
H008	Govt. Official	Judiciary	Masters and PhD

Theme 1: Effects of sexual violence on survivors

The participant coded (B002) revealed that sexual violence has negative effects on survivors in Sites "A" and "B". The participant stated that the negative effects of sexual violence were physical, psychological and social. Participant (H008) said that:

Sexual violence in Epworth District, Zimbabwe has resulted in death of children and girls due to serious physical injuries during rape. The parents of victims could not afford required long-term and complex medical care. The effects on children include: fistula, other injuries to the reproductive system, gastrointestinal problem and they are infected with sexual transmitted diseases and HIV and AIDS infection in areas under study.

A survey conducted by UNICEF (2018) concurred with the participant above on the fact that there are survivors in the country who have been infected with HIV and AIDS by rape perpetrators. The survey revealed that fear of having contracted HIV was one of the main reasons girls ran away from their parents' homes and communities after they have been raped. The researcher concurred with the above participant and the UNICEF (2021) survey and feels that the rise in young girls aged 15 to 30 who engage in prostitution after rape is down to this fear and stigma which pushes victims away from homes and towards such extremes. The researcher also noted that, in addition to sexual violence perpetrated on them, the other major driving force for young girls and boys to engage in prostitution and become drug addicts respectively was their experience of the vicious cycle of poverty or the deprivation trap of poverty in the areas under study.

Theme 2: Six levels of the sexual violence ecological model

Figure 6 shows the ecology levels on effects of sexual violence on survivors. The multiple levels system shows post-sexual violence sequalae from a sociocultural perspective. This model was adopted because it helped the researcher to explore the effects of sexual violence at individual levels, micro-system, meso-system, macro-system, and chrono-system (Chasten & Carole, 2014). The model was further justified in this study because it also considers victims' coping
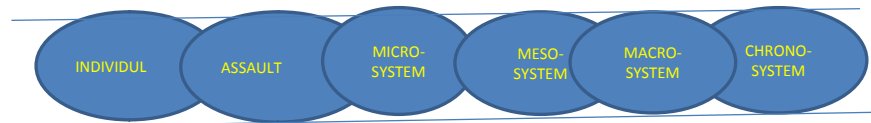
Figure 6. Six levels of the sexual violence ecological model. Source (Neville & Heppner's Model, 1999).

process which is influential in recovering from rape. The model helped the researcher to analyse the Meta constructed by the local community which best fits in this study (example, coping by mobilizing resources, social support that reflects on interaction of individual into the micro-system). This model was relevant to this study because sexual violence takes place in the local ecological environment.

The model helped the researcher to examine characteristics of raped women and their psychological well-being. The researcher noted that sexual violence survivors often remember or are reminded of the occurrence of rape because of the severity of their injuries and thereafter the distress they experience. For example, a perpetrator who uses physical force to rape the survivor often uses threats to kill with a weapon such as a knife or a gun (Estrich, 2023). A perpetrator may also force the survivor to take illicit substance and this result in psychological sequalae. This has been a growing area of studies in recent years.

The ecological model enabled the researcher to explore the effects of disclosure of rape crimes by survivors in the areas under study. The researcher elected a frame and this frame was constructed as a microsystem process. For instance, a survivor gets support specifically from the family, friends, or peers and if ignored or stigmatized, he or she suffers from post rape trauma. Bronfenbrenner (2015) defined the microsystem as the face-to -ace interaction and interrelations between individuals (sexual survivors) and others in their immediate settings, especially because the provision or denial of social support occurs through direct interactions with family members and friends, or peers after a sexual assault occurs. On the other hand, the microsystem level was conceptualized from perspectives. It also distinguished whether the interactions took place between informal supports (microsystem) or formalized support (meso/exosystem). The model assisted the researcher to incorporate the chronosystem with Bronfenbrenner's ideas specifically that a person's interaction with the environment is reciprocal and changes at one time (Altman & Ryan, 2011).

The researcher observed re-victimization across the life period which affects the recovery process. This led to sexual violence survivors developing self-blame as shown in **Figure 7** below. Finally, the justification for the use of the ecological model levels was explained by Neville and Heppner (2015). For example, Fillipas and Ullman (2015) add that some survivors experience racial discrimination in European countries, where also ethnicity minorities are more likely to be subjected to re-victimisation and self-blaming treatment (Campbell et al., 2010). The researcher noted that sexual violence survivors experience certain types of
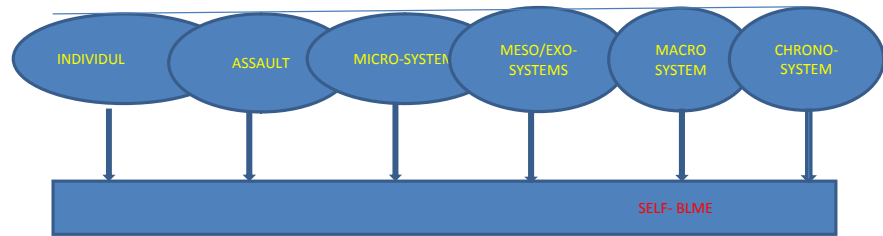
Figure 7. Self-blame as a Meta Construct that stems from all levels of the Ecological Model. Source (Fillipas & Ullman, 2015).

sexual assault such as acquaintance/date rape and had severe experiences of re-victimization and are more susceptible to self-blame for the sexual assault occurrence (Fillipas & Ullman, 2015).

Theme 3: Self-blame as a Meta Construct that stems from all levels of the Ecological Model

Figure 7 is different from Figure 6 in the sense that conceptualized self-blame is a macro-level phenomenon informed by the ecological model views where sexual violence is internalized and societal rape myths lead to survivor self–blame. The researcher observed that sexual violence led survivors to self–blaming in their interaction with formal and informal systems. For example, sexual violence survivors of rape at police stations were asked embarrassing questions by the police investigating officers. The survivor was also forced to be the first State witness. The rape survivors were then re-victimized at medical centers such as hospitals by medical doctors and staff who will be taking semen from her using swabs with instruments and hands, and who again ask her to open her legs wide (Altman & Ryan, 2011). In criminal courts, the sexual violence or rape survivor would be asked to testify against the perpetrator by demonstrating what actual transpired during the sexual assault intercourse. Therefore, sexual violence survivors are re-victimized in the ecological environment set up in the areas under study. The researcher observed that, in any given society, rape is a crime against the State and the survivors are "the State" first witnesses for the prosecution of the rape perpetrators which further hurts the survivors and makes their healing more challenging (Briggs & Joyce, 2017). Carole Pitman (2014) states that indicates that, the survivor is attacked by the defence attorney on *Consent a*nd asked questions such as "How much did she resist?" The second issue is on *corroboration*, where the State still requires another witness to testify that a rape took place or there is some evidence such as the survivor injuries or the presence of semen. Campbell and Soeken (1999) argue that, if the survivor was not harmed or delayed reporting a rape so that semen had disappeared, there would be no physical evidence and the case might be dismissed.

Theme 4: Developed Eurocentric and Afrocentric Cultural Inclusive Model (EACIM)

The researcher established a new theory of sexual violence and the theory is "Eurocentric and Afrocentric Cultural Inclusive Model (EACIM) which is different from Neville and Heppner (2015) and is extended from Bronfenbrenner

model that explain how sexual assault affects women' well-being and recovery processes". This they termed CIEMSAR. The researcher discovered new knowledge and came up with a Eurocentric and Afrocentric culturally inclusive ecological model for sexual assault such as statutory rape and rape recovery processes. The fundamental premise of this model would be cultural inclusive of European and African cultural norms and values to prevent sexual violence and to aid rape recovery processes. These processes would include respect of survivors' dignity. This may be effective in the recovery process of survivors' emotional stress and in mitigating the psychological and social impacts of rape. The perpetrator of sexual violence would also be empowered with both Eurocentric and Afrocentric cultural ideas for preventing immoral behaviour during their imprisonment to prevent repeat offending. This theory is recommended for further research and it is open for scholarly criticism and debates. Of the research participants coded (D004), 60% were of the view that Unhu or Ubuntu approach as informed or informing an Afrocentric perspective was effective to reduce an increase of sexual violence such as rape, marital rape, statutory rape, incest, sodomy, and early child marriages in Epworth District of Zimbabwe. The researcher discovered that Unhu or Ubuntu was an Afrocentric perspective or philosophy which encouraged people in areas under study to have respect, morality, humanity, integrity and observe dignity and sexuality of females.

Of the interviewees coded (E005), 20% revealed that the Behaviour Change Approach may only be effective in preventing sexual violence crimes such as rape, marital rape, statutory rape and incest in the areas under study if the local community members, particularly sexual violence perpetrators, change their sexual behaviour, wrong perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and immorality towards gender differences. The researcher noted that there were men and women who had wrong perceptions and belies that if they rape children, they may be cured from diseases such as HIV and AIDS. An AIDS Council of Zimbabwe survey conducted in Harare Province revealed that 1 in 10 children reported cases of rape perpetrated against them (Figure 8).
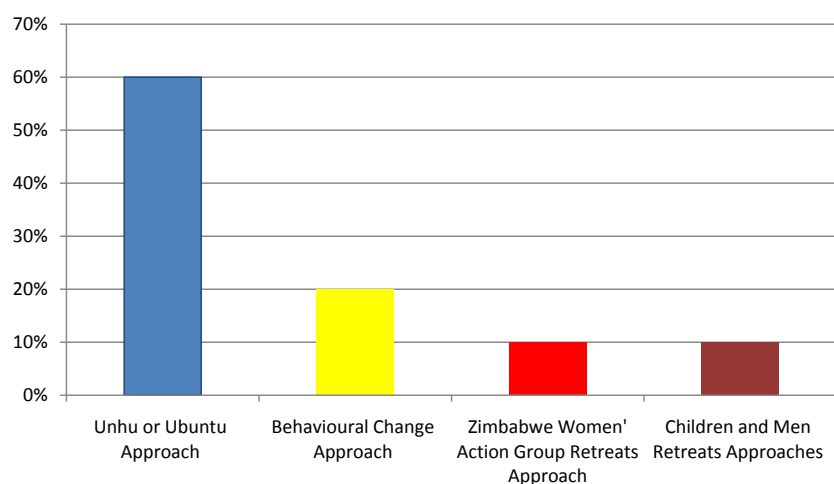

Figure 8. Sexual violence strategies for preventing rape from the Zimbabwean context.

Of The participants coded (B002), 10% revealed that Women Action Group Retreats were effective for psychological counselling and recovery programmes but not effective to prevent the increase of rape cases in the areas under study. The researcher discovered that the Women Action Group Retreat Approach provided psychological counselling for sexual violence survivors through story-telling, drama, netball, quiz, and dances. After every session, sexual violence survivors were given T-Shirts as rewards. These women retreats were effective for psychological counselling and recovery of sexually violated women in Zimbabwe (Women Action Group, 2010).

The remainder of the participants coded (G007) who made up 10% of the respondents, were of the view that Children and Men Retreats Approaches were not effective in reducing sexual violence in the areas under study. The participants revealed that the retreats were only effective for psychological counselling and recovery process for sexual violence in the areas under study. The participants further reveal that retreats for children and women are short-term for psychological counselling as compared to *Unhu* or *Ubuntu* which can be used to prevent rape. Afrocentric perspectives. These retreats lacked *Unhu* or *Ubuntu* Shona people's philosophy, an Afrocentric perspective, which was effective in reducing incidents of sexual violence in areas under study by encouraging local communities to have respect, morality, humanity, integrity and observe dignity and sexuality of females. Overall, the researcher concurred with the participants that the retreats approaches modelled on Eurocentric values were not that effective to reduce sexual violence in the areas under study but were quite effective for psychological counselling and recovery processes.

Theme 5: Factors affecting sexual violence strategies in the Site

The researcher observed that there were factors affecting perspectives used to deal with sexual violence in the areas under study. In the areas studied, these factors included corruption by ZRP investigating police officers at police stations and by magistrates or judges presiding over sexual violence cases. The corruption was impeding fair trail and convictions of sexual violence perpetrators in police stations and criminal courts of Zimbabwe. The researcher further discovered that perpetrators of rape and statutory rape were paying bribes to have their cases withdrawn or their crimes swept under the carpet. The corruption of police investigating officers, magistrates, and judges was attributed to government failure to remunerate these officials well. The researcher also discovered that inconsistencies of the largely legal instruments such as the Sexual Violence Offenses Act (2007) and Domestic Violence Act (2006) not effective to reduce incidents of sexual violence in areas under study as shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9 shows factors that affect strategies in handling sexual violence in the areas under study. The major factors affecting the sexual violence strategies were impacted by corrupt ZRP investigating police officers at police stations, and the Judges and Magistrates presiding over sexual violence such as rape crimes in criminal courts. The researcher observed that the inconsistent of sexual
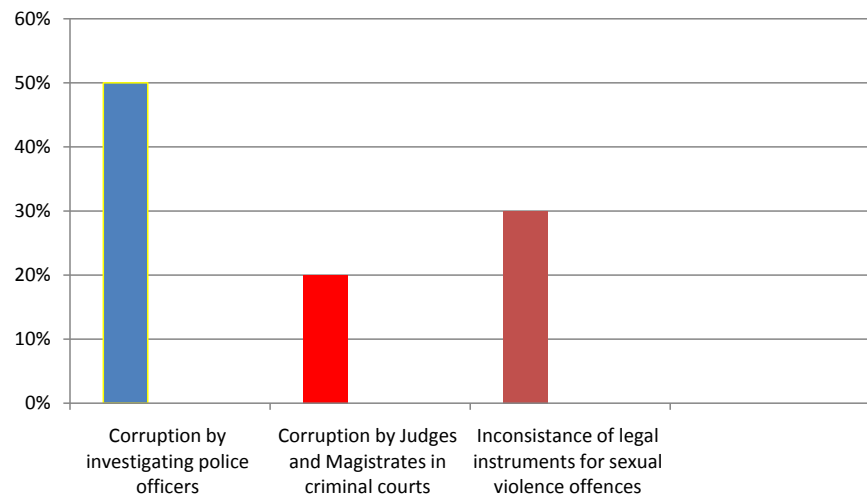
Figure 9. Factors affecting sexual violence handling strategies in the areas under study. Source: Field Work.

violence legal instruments which are used in criminal courts of Zimbabwe contributed to acquittals of rape perpetrators in the areas under study. These lacked periodical review and were gender biased. For instance, DVA was alleged to only protect females as compared to males. The DVA was a legal instrument that was confusing its inconsistent the application and this was compounded by the fact that it originated from the former British Common Law which had originated from the outdated Roman-Dutch Law, itself in place since 1891. The act was difficult to apply in addressing domestic violence against women and men in Criminal Courts. This notion was supported by Gab (2016) who argues that, the law has given magistrates and judges presiding over sexual violence crimes in criminal courts a leeway to wrongly interpret the laws when trailing the rape perpetrators. These legal instrument texts were not aligned with the Constitution of Zimbabwe and, therefore, they remained legal instruments which side-lined the African Customary Law which, if properly implemented, may be effective in reducing sexual violence.

6. Conclusions and Gaping into New Sights

The study concludes that sexual violence is a serious challenge in Epworth District, Zimbabwe. The study concludes that 40% to 60% of rape survivors become dependent on alcohol and 39% to 61% use other illicit substances. The study further concludes that sexual violence has negative effects on survivors in areas under study. The effects relate to vicious cycles of poverty, post-traumatic disorder, aggression, women health mental problems, anxiety, substance abuse, prostitution, unwanted pregnancy, HIV and AIDS infection, high school drop-outs and psychological disorder. These negative effects of rape transcend to physical injuries of the survivors, psychological traumatic disorders and mental health problems for women who also face social rejection.

The research gaps identified and justified for further studies are use of Zim-

babwean indigenous knowledge systems (local based knowledge) to prevent effects of sexual violence in Zimbabwe. These include application of social norms and values to control individual's sexual behaviour. The use of African cultural concept of Ubuntu, having self-respect and respect of others may be effective to reduce sexual violence in Zimbabwe. The study further identified the gap of information on African traditional beliefs in magic which are used in some parts of Zimbabwe to prevent sexual violence against females such as *runyoka* or *rukawo* (*woman trap*) and *mubobobo* (*magic rape*) observed as primitive by Western perspectives and alleged unscientifically proven. Nevertheless, the Tonga and Korekore people used them to prevent sexual violence against children, adolescents' boys or girls and women (Brown, 2001).

The study recommends social scientific researchers to be conducted on importance of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) that can be used to reduce sexual violence against females in Zimbabwe. These IKS concept are the *Unhu* or *Ubuntu* philosophy which places emphasis on human dignity and respect according to the African norms and values, particularly of the Shona and Ndebele people in Zimbabwe. The *Unhu* or *Ubuntu* as Bantu concept of knowing what is wrong and right has previously been successfully used in Zimbabwe to curb sexual violence. The weakness is that it only lacks scientific provenance which government ought to give it now. Furthermore, the study recommends more researches on Eurocentric and Afrocentric Inclusive Models (EAIM) developed from this thesis.

Declaration

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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