



Midlands State University
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Our Hands, Our Minds, Our Destiny

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Being a Dissertation submitted to the department of History at Midlands State

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Honours Degree in History and International Studies

Women and domestic violence in Mashonaland East province 2000-2017

By

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Midlands State University for acceptance: A dissertation entitled: Women and Domestic violence in Mashonaland East province 2000-2017, submitted by Racheal Manyange in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in History and International Studies.

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RELEASE FORM

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DECLARATION

I, Racheal Manyange declare that this dissertation is my own academic product and has not been submitted in any University for degree purposes other than Midlands State University. It is being submitted in the partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Arts Honors in History and International studies.

Signature

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Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely family. I appreciate your support, encouragement and prayers throughout my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank the Almighty Lord for giving me the wisdom, knowledge and strength throughout my academic years at Midlands State University. Credit goes to my supervisor Dr I Mazambani who provided guidance, advice, supervision and knowledge which has formed the basis of this study in terms of theory and practice. I would like to acknowledge my History lectures who contributed immensely in ensuring that I complete my studies, thank you so much. My gratitude also goes to my family members, my mother Mrs Manyange, my sisters and brothers for the moral support to ensure the success of my studies, God bless you all. Special mention goes to the love of my life, Canisisus Hwerekwere for the moral and financial support. You proved to be my pillar of strength when the pressure seemed difficult to overcome, God bless you. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Mashonaland East community, government departments and Women organizations who responded positively to my irritating request for information which proved essential towards the completion of this dissertation. My best friends at campus Patie, Olga, Benjie, Sharai, Vizo, Lindy, Susan, Tapiwa, Jerry, Lawrence, Norman, Flavy, Mobby and Tafara, I have ceased to enjoy your company. Your contribution through various ways towards my success cannot be excluded from this research. God bless you all and I say, we made a great team

ABSTRACT

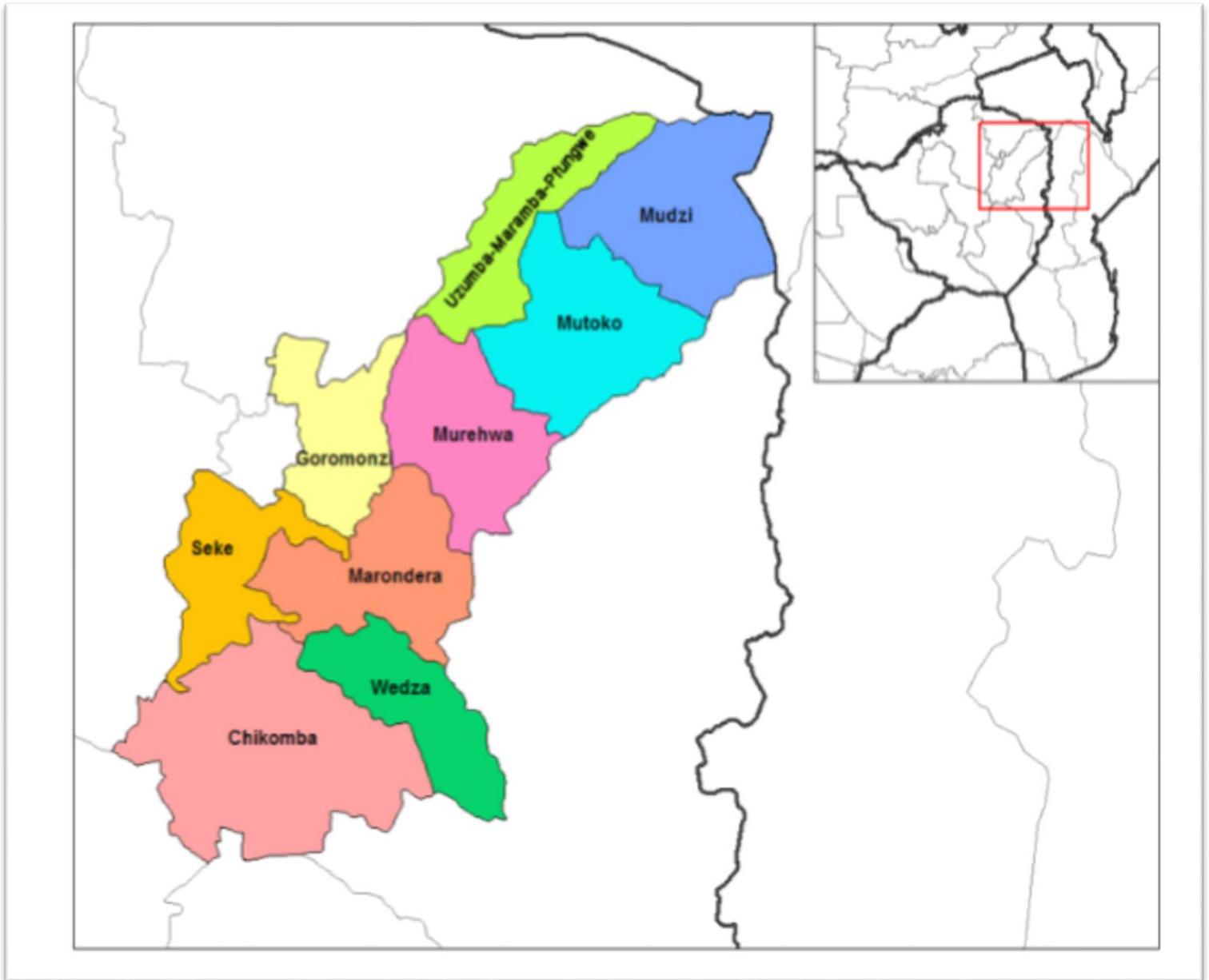
Very little is known about the living experiences faced by most abused women who live in the rural areas in Zimbabwe as they continue to be victims of domestic violence. The current study attempts to redress this short-fall by listening to women's issues, understanding their family situations and assess strategies that have been advanced as well as information to prevent cases of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. Studies have shown that domestic violence cases are rampant in most rural areas due to deep cultural values which perpetuate the subordination of women. This study looks at the issues of domestic violence and its effects on women in Mashonaland East province. The study also seeks to highlight the major factors that contribute to women abuse and its impacts on women. The data gathered for this dissertation was primarily gathered through interviews with a variety of respondents from both the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The main objective being to understand the root causes of women abuse and why women continue to be victims of domestic violence in spite the introduction of different strategies that has been advanced to reduce cases of domestic violence. These interviews reviewed that most cases of domestic violence are due to poverty, religious beliefs which promotes women subordination, higher illiteracy rates and traditional beliefs and stereotyping. The study also analysed effects of domestic violence on women, children and the family. The study in the end will highlight different strategies that have been advanced in Mashonaland East province to reduce cases of domestic violence and assess their effectiveness. These strategies include; the Domestic Violence Act, the Sexual Offenses Act, Victim Friendly unit and the role played by the Ministry of Women, Gender and Community Development. The role played by Non- governmental Organizations shall also be assessed in efforts to reduce cases of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province.

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DV	Domestic Violence
DVA	Domestic Violence Act
GBA	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immune Virus
MWAGCD	Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organizations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization
ZIMSTART	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency

Figure 1: Map of Mashonaland East Province

Source: Google maps



INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon that stems its roots from the time when society started distinguishing roles between men and women.¹ The study focused on domestic violence perpetrated by men to women. According to Brodwin and Siu's definition domestic violence is the willful intimidation ,physical assault and other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetuated by one intimate partner against another.²Women in Mashonaland East province are violated emotionally, physically, psychologically and sexually whilst they continue to live in these abusive relationships due to illiteracy, poverty and lack of access to the law. Despite the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007 and ongoing efforts to protect women and vulnerable population against domestic violence, there is widespread recognition in Zimbabwe that domestic violence cases are on the increase as highlighted by recent research, that the first quarter of 2015 realized 10 500 cases of domestic violence. However nine years down the line since the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act , it has failed to reduce the levels of violence against women. The study is designed to assess the root causes, effects of domestic violence on women and assess intervention strategies to curb incidence of domestic violence on women in Mashonaland East province.

The study focused on women as they remained the most vulnerable group that has continuously been affected by intimate partner violence. Davis argued that , domestic violence issues against women have been excluded from everyday conversations for many reasons.³ In most cases, women have been deprived off their rights hence victims of domestic violence .Women have continuously been violated emotionally , physically denying them the right to enjoy fundamental freedoms in the social , economic and political sphere. Domestic violence has continuously been a global epidemic that has killed and tortured the social welfare of women. Therefore they is

need to examine the consequences of women abuse in Mashonaland East province and capture their untold stories as women abuse has been naturalized as a tool for men to discipline their wife.

The Study is confined to Mashonaland East province as a case study for various reasons. It is therefore important to reveal the reasons that make Mashonaland East an interesting case study in analyzing cases of domestic violence from the period 2000 to 2017. Mashonaland East province represents the breeding ground for most cases of women abuse and a study of gender based violence cases in Zimbabwe's rural areas has received little attention from Scholars and researchers, hence most cases of domestic violence have often been addressed with bias. The study of women abuse in rural areas has greatly been overlooked and generalized without carrying out intensive and serious field research to capture the real truth of continuous abuse of women by men in most Zimbabwe's rural areas.⁴ Mashonaland East is a province faced with serious problems of unemployment , higher rates of illiteracy ,poverty, limited healthy facilities. According to the 2008 Zimstart Poverty Survey, estimated that over 60% of the populace in Mashonaland East are living below the poverty datum line and cases of domestic violence have been on the increase.⁵ This is because of the strong link between poverty and domestic violence. The lifestyle of people in this province are strongly embedded in their African cultural beliefs hence they still live in a Patriarchy society which perpetuate male dominance , a major cause of domestic violence in most societies in Africa. In Zimbabwe, patriarchy and cultural norms of different groups came together to shape higher levels of domestic violence in which women are commonly the 'victims'. This probed the researcher to investigate on the root causes of domestic violence and why women in Mashonaland East province continue to stay in abusive relationships. I realized that rural areas are more likely to be affected by incidence of women

abuse because of their cultural diversity which engender and generate conflict but little attention is given to such areas.

The Study wishes to investigate on the effectiveness of the Strategies that has been implemented to curb domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province. There are various strategies and government programs that have been implemented in efforts to reduce cases of women abuse These include the National Coalition against Domestic violence, The Sexual Offences Act of 2001, the Domestic Violence Act of 2007 and currently the 2013 constitution in Section 52 on the right to be free from all forms of public and private violence. The role of the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in reducing cases if women abuse in Mashonaland East shall also be accessed. The effectiveness of these measures in reducing domestic violence cases is also a priority of my study.

The study targeted men who are the perpetrators of domestic violence in most cases. The inclusion of ‘men’ as the main ‘perpetrators’ is interesting that when I conducted the research, study tried to move away from the blame mentality of viewing men as perpetrators of women abuse to that of viewing them as ambassadors of change where cases of domestic violence are concerned. It shall be demonstrated by the study that working with men will enable them to be responsible family men and agents of change so that they will be in a position to live peacefully with their families, communities and Society at large. The study intends to find out from men why domestic violence cases are higher regardless of efforts by different Organizations and legislations to address the problem. Mashiri and Mawire argues that gender based violence is rampant in Zimbabwe and there is need to have strategies to address the root causes of women abuse.⁶ The study aims to address men as one of the underlying cause of domestic violence. The Director of Enkundleni \Padare men’s forum on gender, Mr Kelvin Hazangwi said, “It is highly

disturbing that the main causes of domestic violence were petty issues such as, burning of food, touching a man's mobile phone, or going out of the house without telling the "man of the house".⁷ Therefore it is necessary in this study to address men in efforts towards reduction of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the study is to empower men who are believed to be the perpetrators of domestic violence with non-violent strategies in order to reduce cases of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. This will be achieved through the following objectives;

- To investigate on the major causes of domestic violence and view men's perceptions.
- To assess the extent to which domestic violence has impacted on the lives of women in Mashonaland East, economically and socially.
- To assess strategies that has been implemented to reduce cases of domestic violence.

Literature Review

Various scholars have written books and articles on issues of domestic violence however their studies were not on Mashonaland East province. There is a general pattern of neglect on rural communities such as Mashonaland East communal area. Most researches that has been carried out by UNICEF notably the one that was carried out in 2005 to assess the rates of family violence included countries such as Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Brazil, Serbia, Japan.⁸ It omitted communities such as Mashonaland East where cases of women abuse are higher due to deep cultural beliefs that perpetuate male dominance.⁹ Therefore from the above analysis, it is clear that most researchers who carried out studies on domestic violence cases tend to omit

smaller communities such as Mashonaland East province which is the priority of this study to close that missing gap.

Berry and Rakoczy concentrated more on stress and poverty as the major cause of domestic violence.¹⁰ Therefore there is a need to include men as the main perpetrators of domestic violence in-order to curb cases of women abuse. There has been a general tendency of neglect by many scholars to ignore men as touch bearers of change in-order to curb higher cases of domestic violence which the study serves to do. Men are the main perpetrators of domestic violence but little attention has been focused on men as the perception is that men are unwilling to address the issue of domestic violence. Mashiri and Mawire state that in most communities, men are the key figures that can pave way for change if they are included in strategies of curbing domestic violence.¹¹ Therefore this study seeks to close that gap by shifting from the blame mentality of viewing men as perpetrators to that of seeing them as touch bearers of change. Ruxton argues that, the struggle towards liberation of women will not yield expected results if men are excluded.¹² Therefore this study seeks to close that missing gap by focusing on the perpetrators to find out the root causes of women abuse and include men in suggesting solutions to reduce cases of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. Jewkers et al concurs with the above view when he argues that, working with men will bring positive results towards reduction of domestic violence cases.¹³ Jewkers further argued that, there is little research on men on their violent behaviors, hence most researches conducted only focused on women.¹⁴ A weakness that my study sought to address as there is a need to address the perpetrators of domestic violence i.e. men.

Garba defined domestic violence as a form of insulting manner in a relationship used by one partner to uphold authority and control over another partner.¹⁵ Kambarami asserts that domestic

violence is tantamount to wife mauling.¹⁶ Therefore their description of domestic violence shows an element of authority breakdown and misrepresentation of domestic violence as they mainly focused on the victim without addressing the perpetrator of domestic violence. However this study aims to cover this gap by explaining the contribution of men .

Genyi concentrated more on the effects of domestic violence without addressing the root causes of women abuse. Genyi is of the view that, domestic violence remains a serious economic, social, economic and psychological problem that has no cultural, social and economic group inhibition.¹⁷ Walker argues that, in-order to fully understand the psychological and physical effects of domestic violence on its victims , a clear understanding of how it occurs must be undertaken.¹⁸ Hence most literature omitted on that part which this study aims to cover that missing gap. Walker further describes this abusive pattern against women and named it , ‘The Cycle of Violence’, which describes the context in which domestic violence against women often occurs in and predictably follows. He further points out that tension may be caused by anything caused by a bad day to changes in job status and major financial loses. Hence this study by Walker clearly demonstrate the context and factors which lead to domestic violence other than just discussing the effects which many scholars have done without first addressing the root causes so as to come with solutions to the problem of domestic violence.

There is general tendency of neglect by most scholars to further explore the reasons for under-reputed cases of domestic violence. Tinomuda Chakanyuka gives evidence that in 2005 Mashonaland East province ranked second from Harare with 5273 cases of domestic violence with almost eight in every ten women , about 77% having experienced domestic abuse.¹⁹ The province has however the least reported cases at 16% .There is need to further explore into the disparity between the reported experience and perpetration prevalence. It appears that while

women in Mashonaland East disclose their experience of violence openly , men are unlikely to disclose perpetration. The study did not further give reason why this could be the case. Since the study by Chakanyuka did not give the reasons , my study covered this missing gap by further examining the reasons for the under-reporting of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province. Men's voice is also missing in Chakanyuka's study. Therefore my study will cover this missing gap by adding knowledge available on domestic violence and at the same time bring in the missing accounts from men's side in-order to maintain gender –balance accounts of violence against women.

Mensar in his research also failed to include the role played by men as the main perpetrators of domestic violence. He focused on the lack of education as the major cause of domestic violence in most societies. Mensar states that , culturally in African traditional societies ,boys education was oftenly preferred against girls education.²⁰ Education makes one confident , understand a lot of issues and can therefore make one economically independent. He further argues that, it is crucial for women and girls to acquire the requisite education and all the qualifications if they are to emancipate themselves from domestic violence.²¹ This research omitted men's role as the major perpetrator of domestic violence that needs to be included for total eradication of domestic violence cases. Therefore there is need to consider men's perception in order to liberate women from cases of domestic violence, a weakness that my study sought to address.

Bruyn is of the view that poverty and lack of economic freedom is the other reason why women are vulnerable to domestic abuse , women who continue to stay in abusive relationships are afraid to suffer when they live the marriage.²² Bruyn also blamed the African patriarchy culture which gives men more leverage in a relationship as they will be enjoying . The above study is relevant to my study as it relates to the society that I am going to carry my study.

Methodology

The study seeks to outline the systematic and methods used to conduct the study on the plight of women against domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. To collect and gather the relevant data for the study different methods of data collection were used such as, interviews, questionnaires, and secondary sources were also chosen which had their strength and weaknesses. Bell states that research methodology are the methods by which data is extracted or obtained from a research project. This type of study is rooted in people's experiences and how people interpret their experiences of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province.

Interviews

Interviews were used during my study in-order to obtain more accurate results. An interview is a two way communication between two or more people which involves the extraction of questions by the interviewer to the interviewee. Through face to face interviews I managed to get information about the views of men on issues of domestic violence as they are the main perpetrators of domestic violence. Through these interviews I also managed to get information from men on possible ways of reducing women abuse in Mashonaland East. Interviews were essential during my study as they enabled participants and victims of domestic violence to tell their own experiences of domestic violence and I also managed to observe the non-verbal communication clues that symbolizes discomfort due to the sensitivity of the topic under study. Though interviews are time consuming and sometimes biased they were essential during my study as some respondents could not write and interpret the questionnaires that I distributed.

Questionnaires were also in this study to get the required information from the participants. This is because they are less expensive and also due to the sensitiveness of this study , questionnaires were appropriate as they enabled hidden details from both the victims and perpetrators of

domestic violence to be outlined and this helped in giving out actual information on women abuse in Mashonaland East. Questionnaires were essential during my study as respondents were able to write their untold stories in the absence of the researcher and without being interviewed. However, questionnaires were sometimes problematic especially to the elderly as they failed to interpret the questions being asked.

Personal observations were also used during my study through observing peoples behavioral patterns, thoughts, activities thereby developing a holistic understanding of the concept of domestic violence under study. Through observing peoples behavior I could predict how people especially men, perceive domestic violence in Mashonaland East. Personal observations helped me to understand the rate at which women are affected by domestic violence and how men perceive domestic violence cases.

Newspaper articles were also used in order to gather information on domestic violence cases. Newspaper articles were essential during my study because they provided an overview of how domestic violence has been perceived and they provide current trends of domestic violence cases across the globe. Newspaper articles are less expensive as they can be obtained daily.

For the progression of this study I also collected information from secondary sources and these include literature books, journal articles, reports from NGO's in order to complement results obtained from qualitative instruments. Secondary sources enabled me to have and give a holistic analysis of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province. Through reading books and journals I managed to have a deep understanding and knowledge of the historical background of domestic violence from the pre-colonial era, colonial era up to present day. I also believed that

by reading secondary sources I also managed to get information written by other scholars who also wrote on the same topic under study.

I also visited various institutions such as Musasa project in Harare ,individuals who have produced and documented some reports and information on issues of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. These sources and organizations helped me to have a better understanding and have a better analysis of domestic violence issues.

Chapter Breakdown

The introductory chapter is the initial stage of the dissertation which is made up of the introduction which gives an overview of the whole topic under study, what is to be discussed. It is also made up of the aims and objectives of the topic under study. Various scholars were also consulted to produce evidences of the written literature on the issue. Various data gathering techniques were also used that is, interviews, questionnaires and secondary sources were also consulted. This introductory Chapter also serves to introduce the research to the audience by explaining the reasons and how the study will be conducted.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of domestic violence issues in Zimbabwe that is it discusses post and current trends of domestic violence cases in the country. This chapter traces back historically cases of women abuse during the pre-colonial era and it was all about power and dominance by the traditional patriarchy African society. It will also focus on the colonial period that is how women were abused during the colonial era. The chapter will then shift focus and unpack the current trends of domestic violence from Independence up to date.

Chapter 2 will highlight factors responsible for the prevalence of women abuse in Mashonaland East province. In Zimbabwe, Mashonaland East is amongst the highest provinces that has

recorded highest cases of domestic violence. In Mash East , eight in every ten women that is 77% has experienced abuse by her partner. There are several factors responsible for the continuous abuse of women. These include economic dependency, culture, poverty, the docile nature of women, religious factors, weak enforcement mechanisms, drunkenness or alcoholism, fear of stigma on women, infidelity, and promiscuous behavior, higher rates of unemployment, weak Civil Society and limited participation of women in decision making process.

Chapter 3 will discuss the effects of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. It will focus on the effects of domestic violence to the victims, children and family members. These include deaths due to physical and sexual violence to the victim, serious health problems which have both short and long term consequences on women's physical, mental, and sexual reproductive health, injuries and disabilities to the victims. The chapter will also focus on the effects to the children. It has tremendous effects to the children who witness the occurrence of disputes in families leading to emotional and behavioral problems.

The final chapter will focus on intervention strategies to curb domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. These include legal frameworks by the government of Zimbabwe, the National Gender Policy, the Sexual Offenses Act that is Chapter [9;21], The Domestic Violence Act of 2007, The Ant-Domestic Violence Council of 2007, the role played by Padare/ Enkundleni Men's Forum and the role played by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in curbing cases of women abuse in Mashonaland East province. These strategies have been effective to a lesser extent as they failed to totally reduce cases of women abuse in Mashonaland East province.

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CHAPTER 1: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE

1.1 Introduction

This Chapter gives an overview of domestic violence in Zimbabwe that is. It discusses past and current trends of women abuse in the country. The Chapter will trace back historically how women were abused during the pre-colonial period in Zimbabwe. It will also focus on the colonial period that is how women continued to be sexually and physically abused during the liberation struggle in the country. The Chapter will then shift focus and unpack the current trends of domestic violence from Independence up to present day. Lastly the Chapter will focus on different forms of domestic abuse which women suffer from.

1.2 Overview of domestic violence in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is still intertwined to the history of traditional African patriarchy society despite the legal convections and protocols implemented by the Zimbabwean government to eradicate all forms of women abuse in the country. Kambarami states that , men and women are socialized into gender roles whereby men are the breadwinners whilst women are allocated the roles of caregivers.¹ By these gender roles , it compromises and limits women's freedom to effectively participate in the social, political and economic realm of life thereby excluding them to participate in development.²The injustices and violence experienced by women did not end , despite the legal frameworks adopted by the Zimbabwe government such as the Domestic Violence Act of 2007, women continue to be abused in the country. This is supported by the Gender Based Violence Strategy of 2012 to 2015 which states that over 60% of Zimbabwean women continue to be victims of domestic violence across the country.⁴ A number of factors such as poverty, unemployment, economic dependency, patriarchy, food insecurity, cultural beliefs and a weak Civil Society are undermining the process of ending all forms of women

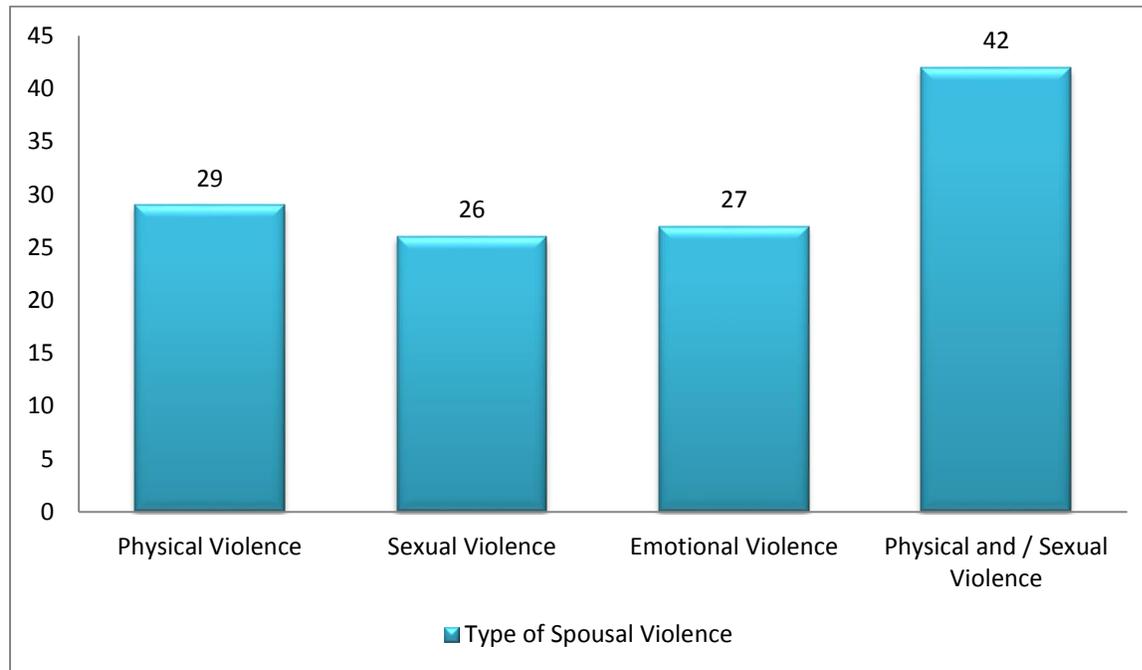
abuse in the country. The underreporting of domestic violence cases is due to fear of being castigated by family members leading to a number of cases being withdrawn thereby drawing back the process of ending domestic violence in Zimbabwe.

The report by the Zimbabwe National Statistics on the Conference for women held in 2000, clearly indicates that, domestic violence cases against women was the most prevalent form of abuse against women.⁴ Furthermore, the Poverty Assessment report in 2000, states that over 80% of the Zimbabwean population were living below the poverty datum line thereby making men the breadwinners leading to women's subordination as they depend on their male partners for their survival.⁵ This is supported by ZIMSTARTS survey conducted in 2012, it indicates that of the 4 658 married or previously married Zimbabwean women have experienced either sexual , physical or emotional violence by their partner or husband.⁶ Statistics shared by the Chief Magistrate's office in Harare indicates that from January 2013 to December 2013, a total of 6 654 new cases of domestic violence against women were received by the Courts and they had been an increase of 60% murder cases perpetuated by domestic violence in the country. This clearly shows that harmful forms of abuse such as domestic violence have been maintained across the boundary of Independence as cases of women abuse continue to escalate in the country.

According to the National Statistics report shared by the Victim Friendly Unit [VFU], a department in the Zimbabwe Republic Police, it indicated that approximately about 1081 cases of domestic violence were reported in 2013 alone. To add on, statistics shared by the Chief Magistrate in the country indicates that from the period between January to April 2013 alone, the courts recorded a total of 2654 cases related to domestic violence. These figures clearly shows

that gender based violence cases in Zimbabwe are still prevalent despite the introduction of various mechanisms towards liberation of women from domestic violence.

Figure 2: Zimbabwe National Gender Based violence strategy 2012 - 2015



The above table indicates the type of domestic violence experienced by women at the hands of men as illustrated in the Zimbabwe Demographic Survey of 2010-2011. As illustrated from the above table, women who experienced physical violence recorded 29%, emotional violence recorded 27% and sexual violence recorded 26%.⁷ These current trends clearly depicts that domestic violence cases against women is not coming to an end due to cultural patriarchy society, economic difference, power and the social and structural justification of violence.

1.3 Historical background of domestic violence

Domestic violence cases can be traced back historically to the pre-colonial era in Zimbabwe and it was all about power and dominance. This is due to the patriarchy society and cultural values

which perpetuate male dominance and gives men an upper hand in an African marriage set-up, at the same time promoting female subordination thus perpetuate women abuse. During the pre-colonial era in Zimbabwe, if a Shona wife resisted her husband's authority by skimping or shunning on the food she prepared for him or refused to sleep with her husband. In Zimbabwe, she would have committed a serious offense that could end up striking at the center of their marriage contract. Hence under such circumstances a man was justified to beat or discipline his wife in whatever way without a social sanction. Research findings by Schmidt clearly confirms Holleman's earlier findings which postulates that, a husband had the mandate to punish his wife when she refused to clean, cook or have sexual relations with him.⁸ Further, other scholars who had examined women's position in the country have also demonstrated that Zimbabwean women have experienced a long history of violence and abuse at the hands of men. Longwe argues that, domestic violence cases witnessed today have been due to the traditional Zimbabwean patriarchy society of the pre-colonial Societies which has stubbornly stood the test of time.⁹ Therefore the theory of patriarchy is deeply rooted upon Zimbabwean norms and values and therefore cannot be dealt with in just a single day as it is a process not an event. The system has been commonly and continuously practiced as to appear natural rather than a humanly constructed social order that is both changing and changeable as argued by the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning.¹⁰ This control by men has led to the penetration of domestic violence by men against women in Zimbabwe. Further, harmful pre-colonial Zimbabwean cultural practices against women and girls such as female genital mutilation, virginity tests, early and forced marriages and widow inheritance continue to hamper global efforts towards eradication of all forms of domestic violence against women. Traditional cultural practices of lobola payment has also exacerbated the rates of women abuse in Zimbabwe.

Payment of bride price is also used as a tool to control and oppress women in that women may feel obliged not to question the husband's actions, plans and decisions as argued by Omiyi.¹¹ This therefore provides the social context in which domestic violence exists in Zimbabwe during the pre-colonial era and sometimes thrives up to date. The oppression of women and the rights of men to abuse women.

1.4 Women abuse during the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe

A great deal is known about what transpired during the Colonial period in Zimbabwe because some people were able to capture and record events that transpired at that time. These people were mainly missionaries, lawyers and journalist. During the 1970s and 1980s human rights groups that advocated for the rights of women such as Amnesty International and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights in USA also produced documents about what transpired against Zimbabwean women during the liberation struggle. Therefore the study will demonstrate that women were also abused during the Colonial period in Zimbabwe.

Barnes states that during the Zimbabwe's Nationalist struggles of the 1940's and 1950's women were victimized by other forms of violence.¹² Most cases of women abuse in Harare was at Carter House, which was a hostel for women whereby women were raped and assaulted. The raping of women at Carter House clearly represents another example of how African men abused women in times of political unrest and transition. Chiwome and Mguni argues that, during the liberation struggle in the Zimbabwe, violence against women has become an everyday occurrence whereby men were encouraged to be tough and aggressive against their female counterparts.¹³ Reported cases were recorded whereby comrades in the struggle took other people's wives and used them for their sexual desires. Studies have also shown that women were also abused during the Gukurahundi atrocities prior to Independence even though the Catholic

Commission for Peace and Justice did not produce a well documented report of what women went through during that period.¹⁴ This clearly shows that the injustices and subordination of women experienced by Zimbabwean women during the pre-colonial era contributes to the continuous abuse of women during the liberation struggle.

Mayall further argues that, Zimbabwe like many other states in Africa faced women abuse and violence during the Colonial period from multiplicity of bases such as ethnic and religious differences.¹⁵ Zimbabwean women were sexually abused during the Colonial period. Hence sexual violence was used as a tool of frightening opposing armed groups during the war. Therefore in such incidents women's bodies were used as an envelope to convey messages to the intended enemy. The study will demonstrate that domestic violence emanated from the pre-colonial Society, reshaped during the Colonial period up to present day. Nyakudya postulates that women in Zimbabwe suffered double violence as they were physically and sexually abused by both the guerillars and the Colonial regime.¹⁶ Mtisi further argued that, the Rhodesian Front soldiers also sexually abused women , especially in the so called 'protected villages'.¹⁷ Therefore the Study has clearly demonstrated that the, Cultural Society imbedded in Zimbabwe during the pre-colonial era and the abuse of women during the Colonial period contributes to the vulnerability of women and the negative attitudes towards them hence their continuous abuse up to present day in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Post independence era-current trends of domestic violence in Zimbabwe

The injustices and violence experienced by women during the pre-colonial era, Colonial era did not end with the coming of Zimbabwean Independence in 1980. This is despite efforts by different private and government stakeholders in the country to end all forms of gender based violence, hence the prevalence of domestic violence cases is rather shocking. With the coming

of Independence hopes were high that domestic abuse against women would end or at least decline. Hopes were high and tied on the Independent State to end violence to all its citizens, women and other marginalized groups included. By extension most people expected that with Independence in the country the reduction would be greater as all citizens gained equality and rights enshrined in a binding Constitution as observed by Niahm.¹⁸ Today on the contrary , violence cases against women in Zimbabwe particularly domestic violence has been on the increase. Many Scholars argues that, what only changed in Independent Zimbabwe was just spectacular violence but other offensive and more harmful forms of abuse such as domestic violence has been maintained across the boundary of Independence and cases of women abuse continue to escalate due to the patriarchal society, economic difference , power and the social and structural justification of women abuse in the country.

Cases of women abuse continue to increase up to present day since Independence. Despite recent advancement in the law and national campaigns to address women's issues , hence women in Zimbabwe continue to be victims of domestic violence and Societal discrimination due to their subordinate position within the community , home which is deeply rooted in the traditional patriarchy Society. According to a research conducted by the United Nations Situational Analysis in 2010, out of six African countries , Violence Against Women Research [VAW], Zimbabwe was ranked third position in terms of higher cases of domestic violence with Zambia taking the first position.¹⁹ Furthermore it also alarming to realize that in an article published by the Zimbabwean daily newspaper the Herald quotes; the then Vice president of Zimbabwe, Cde Joyce Teurairopa Mujuru as stating that cases of domestic violence have sharply increased with 1940 cases recorded in 2008, 3 193 recorded in 2009, 7 628 recorded in 2010, 10 351 in 2011 and 10 871 in 2012. Statistics from Musasa Project conducted in 2005 revealed that thousands

offered counseling services in 2009 were issues related to domestic violence cases.²⁰ Further they also states that, one in every four women in Zimbabwe is either kicked, beaten, slapped or hit . This clearly denotes that domestic violence cases against women is not coming to an end due to the above shocking statistics of the continuous abuse of women in Zimbabwe.

1.6 Forms of abuse experienced by women in Zimbabwe

It is important to explore the various forms or nature of abuse experienced by women in order to fully understand its impacts . Hence the study recounts the experiences of the Zimbabwean abused women with regards to different types of violence initiated by their current partners or former husbands. Incidents of women abuse in the country range from physical abuse, emotional and psychological, sexual abuse and financial abuse. When most people think of domestic violence high profile cases such as Rihanna and Chris Brown, Tina and Tunner, Nicole, Simpson quickly came into peoples minds.

1.6.1 Physical abuse/violence

Physical violence is the deliberate use of physical force with the intension of causing injury, harm, disability or death. Physical violence is the most frequent form of abuse perpetrated by men against women in Zimbabwe. Physical violence includes behaviors such as hitting, slapping, kicking, punching, burning,, use of weapons and other harmful acts that can cause physical injury. According to a report carried out by Gender Based Strategy from 2012-2015, it indicates that, 29% of women were victims of physical violence.²¹ Further, Gender Based Violence statistics conducted from 2000-2008, it also indicates that , 40% of women aged between the age of 15 to 49 years have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.²²Physical violence can also include extreme behaviors such as denying the victim or injured permission to seek for treatment when needed. Medzani further stated that physical violence has been documented as

the utmost form of domestic violence affecting victims of abuse especially women.²³ It should also be highlighted that, physical violence was also included in the Domestic violence Act thereby clearly showing that it is the major form of abuse which calls for victims to be assisted on. Therefore they is need to establish whether victims of domestic violence in Zimbabwe are aware that physical violence is a punishable criminal offense and they is need to the case to the police whenever it is committed. This is due to the increasing number of physical violence cases being orchestrated against women across the country.

1.6.2 Sexual violence

Sexual violence includes any sexual behavior performed without the partners consent or approval. The National Baseline on the Life Experiences of Adolescents, postulates that this type of women abuse takes different forms which include; physically forced sex, unwanted touching, kissing, grabbing or fondling, pressured sex which includes threats, harassment or tricking without the approval of another partner.²⁴ Lovett further highlights that sexual violence is a term used to describe rape and the humiliating range of unwanted sex.²⁵ Therefore it should be noted that forcing an individual to engage in sexual activities against her will despite the fact that the victim is your intimate partner has been regarded as a violent behavior thereby calling for legal action. Sexual violence is another form of domestic violence which has been affecting most women across the globe. In Zimbabwe the Sexual Offenses Act has been introduced in order to protect women who continue to suffer from Sexual violence and sexual harassment. In a Survey conducted in the country in 2000 by the United Nations of about 1006 women, it revealed that 4.4% encountered or reported sexual violence cases perpetrated by their partners.²⁶ Sexual violence occurs in different forms that includes; rape, sexual harassment, forced marriage, trafficking and other violent acts that deprives the sexual integrity of women. In

Zimbabwe sexual violence has caused detrimental healthy problems such as obstetric, psychological healthy problems, gynaecological healthy problems and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV-AIDS.

1.6.3 Emotional and psychological violence

This type of abuse which women in Zimbabwe suffer from intends to weaken the victim's psychological integrity. Emotional and psychological abuse includes such acts , name calling, insults, intimidation, shaming, humiliation, isolation and denial of access to needs and requirements. According to a report shared by the Zimbabwe National Gender Based Violence carried out in 2012-2015, indicates that 27% of women in Zimbabwe were subjected to psychological and emotional violence.²⁷ However emotional violence is difficult to detect thereby making it difficult for women to seek help and report cases of psychological abuse to the police. Emotional or psychological abuse can lead one to lose sense of self esteem and sense of worth will be undermined thereby controlling the victims confidence and autonomy. Cambell further states that, emotional abuse leads to degrading the victim behind closed doors , even in public and behind family members thereby controlling the does and don's of the victim with the intention of making the victim feel humiliated and diminished.²⁸ This type of abuse usually separates the victim from her close family members and friends. In Zimbabwe's rural areas this type of abuse is common due to the deep rooted cultural values that encourages women to be submissive to their husbands and spouses.

1.6.4 Financial abuse

The study reviewed that financial abuse is also another type of abuse faced by Zimbabwean women. In most households in Zimbabwe , men are the breadwinners leading to misuse of family funds through extra marital affairs \small houses. Financial abuse entails denial to

sufficient household funds which involves withholding money, causing a partner to lose their job whilst the husband did nothing to financially support the whole family, controlling financial assets and damaging a partners credit score. Hence most women in Zimbabwe had no access to money resources leaving most of them financially dependent on their partners. This dependency makes most women to be vulnerable to different acts of abuse from their partners. It was found out that 25 out of 30 women in Zimbabwe are exposed to financial abuse. The motive behind financial abuse is to prevent a partner especially women from acquiring resources thereby forcing most women in the country to be financially handicapped who depends on their husbands or spouses. This type of abuse might also include, preventing the victim from advancing their education, finding employment and acquiring assets. In Zimbabwe cases of financial abuses are rampant especially in most rural areas where women are regarded as minors who are expected to be passive. This is clearly evidenced by the increase in the maintenance cases that has been recorded over the years. Osrim states that, domestic violence cases in Zimbabwe rose due to the decline in the countries economy in the 1990s during the Economic Structural Adjustment program ESAP.²⁹ This was further worsened by the counties economic meltdown experienced since 2000. This led to economic violence being directed towards most women in the country. Under such circumstances the administration of the family income become difficult especially in most rural areas were most of the unemployed people are thereby leading to most women being economically abused by their husbands or spouses.

Conclusion

The Chapter has given an overview of domestic violence cases in Zimbabwe. The Chapter captured the historical trends of domestic violence that is tracing it from the pre-colonial , how the traditional Zimbabwean patriarchy Culture has laid seeds for women abuse and subordination

in the country. It also took a view on the Colonial period that is how women continued to be abused during the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Furthermore the Chapter also unpacked the current trends of domestic violence since the attainment of Independence and evaluate whether they are changes and reduction in cases of domestic violence due to different government initiatives and campaigns against women abuse in the country. Lastly the Chapter unpacked different forms of abuse experienced by women in Zimbabwe.

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CHAPTER 2: CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter will focus on the causes of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. In this province women continue to be victims of domestic violence due to multiplicity of reasons. Factors such as, poverty has become one of the major cause of women abuse in Mashonaland East province. Most of the families are living in poverty due to unemployment. This causes tension and stress to escalate leading to violent relationships. Religion has also played a pivotal role towards the continuous abuse of women in this province. Members of the Johanne Marange and Johanne Masowe Echishanu are using religion as a tool to continuously abuse their spouses. Religion allows women to be too submissive to men to an extent of allowing men to make every decision without women's consent thereby making women vulnerable to continuous abuse from their husbands. Also deep rooted cultural practices and social circumstances under which most women in this province live under contributed to their vulnerability to domestic violence and limit their ability to escape it. Most women in this province hardly have access to legal advice and knowledge of laws that are supposed to protect them. Hence without access of acts to protect them also promotes domestic violence cases. More so alcoholism and drug abuse makes most men in this community to misbehave and lose control thereby making them brutal to their spouses.

In order to fully understand the causes of domestic violence in this province and why it has become an interesting case study they is need to first explore the social, economic activities in this provinces. Mashonaland East is one of the provinces in Zimbabwe with eight districts that

include; Murehwa district, Uzumba Maramba Prungwe district, Chikomba district, Mutoko district, Mudzi district, Wedza, Goromonzi and Marondera district. Of all the aforementioned districts except are in rural areas except Marondera which is a urban location. The population in this province is made up high concentration of women and infants from zero months to about 130 years. This province is not economically active because about 70% of the people are unemployed and the remaining 20% are involved in the informal sector which is not rewarding. It can be argued that most of the families in rural districts except Marondera are unemployed and they only depend on farming cotton, tobacco which again is not rewarding due to higher cost of farming inputs which leads to tension and stress associated with poverty and unemployment leading to violent relationships. People living in rural communities live in overcrowded conditions which include sharing of houses with extended families in order to reduce expenses. Resources are limited and most women in this province find themselves unsafe and unprotected neighborhoods making them vulnerable to abuse by their spouses. It also needs to be highlighted that women in this province have limited resources to satisfy their basic needs such as education, adequate health facilities , better housing opportunities hence they have little to say in decision making in a family setup. More so , most of the women in this province except Marondera are housewives whose work at home had no limits that is no clear beginning and ending points. Therefore the above environmental factors and geographical location of the province perpetuate women abuse hence domestic violence cases continues to be a rampant occurrence in this province.

2.2 Poverty and domestic violence

Poverty is one of the major causes of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. Most of the abused women in this province continue to live in abusive relationships due to poverty.

Poverty limits the choices which women have forcing them to stay in violent relationships. Most men in this province are unemployed due to the country's economic meltdown which resulted in many losing their jobs. The country experienced economic meltdown since 2000 after the Fast Track Land Reform program which affected most people in this province leading to loss of great farmers due to lack of inputs leading to deep poverty in most families. Women in this province solely depend on their husbands thereby decreasing women's potential to visit law institutions that are supposed to protect them from abusive husbands. Due to poverty in most families in this province, most women depend on their husbands to put food on the table leading to men turning to violence after realizing that the money they have earned after working in local farms and shops is not enough. In explaining this, the headmaster at Maramba primary school in Uzumba Maramba pfungwe notes that;

Overdependence of most women in this community makes them vulnerable to continuous abuse by their spouses after realizing that the little money they earned from doing unskilled menial jobs for the teachers is not enough to feed the family leading to violent behavior by most men. Hence most abused women in this community choose to stick to their abusive husbands since they would not be able to get other means of surviving due to poverty.¹

It can be denoted from the above that most women in Mashonaland East province are victims of to report their income providers due to poverty. In another interview with Mrs Kambanje from Mukarakate Village in Murehwa she notes that;

I have experienced physical violence from the first year of our marriage Up to present day and its now five years now in marriage. My parents are Poor and they cannot take care of my upkeep when I return home from My husband they forced me to return back to my abusive husband. Therefore I am forced to continue living with my violent husband.²

This shows that poverty being experienced by most families in Mashonaland East is a major cause perpetrating cases of women abuse in most communities.

2.3 Religion and domestic violence

Religion is also one of the major causes of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. Johanne Masowe eChishanu and Johane Marange are the common churches found in this province especially in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, Murehwa and Mudzi whereby their doctrines abuse women. They tend to use religion as a cover to abuse their partners. The Bible quotes from Genesis 2;23 that, ' Woman [Eve] was made out of man [Adam] 'And Adam said, 'This is now bone of my bones , flesh of my flesh; She shall be called a woman, because she was taken out of Man'.And Ephesians Quotes 5;22-23" Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands , as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the family, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body.⁴ [*Kings James Version*]

Hence most denominations tend to mis-quote the Bible and use it to suite their oppressive desires to abuse their spouses . Most young girls are forced into early marriages and they are not even allowed to question decisions made to them by their husbands. In an interview conducted with one of the members Madzibaba Titus notes that,

Women should do good to their husbands if they do so they will not receive Any form of abuse from men. The Holy spirit guides our behavior, When the Holy spirit said I should discipline my wife in whatever way, It does not matter. No-one should question our Church doctrines. Therefore most women in the church are left with no choice but to bow down to the teachings offered by the church. Most women are forced to believe the interpretation from the church leaders and do as they say.⁵

Therefore these teachings has been used to exacerbate the exploitation and oppression of women by men. In addition these churches promote gender based violence which looks down upon women and treat them as second class citizens. Most women in these churches are not allowed to preach in front of men thereby perpetrating continuous abuse of women in Mashonaland East province. This clearly shows that religion has greatly influenced higher rate of domestic violence cases in this province.

2.4 Patriarchal society

Women in Mashonaland East province have been victims of domestic violence due to the deep patriarchal society that teaches men to view women as possessions. Most communities in this province are a patriarchal society which places men at a level unreachable by their spouses making them prone to continuous abuse. The subordination that women experience on a daily basis takes various forms that is physical, psychological, mental, sexual abuse. Feminist theory emphasizes that violence by most husbands against their partners arises out of socio-cultural beliefs that asserts that women are less important and less valuable than men and are not entitled to equal respect.⁶ Hence most communities in this province exhibit male authority and most women in this province tend to accept the validity of patriarchal norms and customs in their marriages thereby leading to the underreporting of violent crimes against women. Women in Mashonaland East province are dominated by a patriarchy society whereby men dominates them in all spheres of life whether socially , politically , economically and religiously making them vulnerable to continuous abuse. Jenkins defined patriarchy as the social organization of men's control of power. In an interview with one of the victims in Sandati Village, Mrs Simboti she points out that," Simboti is the head of our family. He owns me just like God.'

Therefore it can be seen from the above the extent to which patriarchy does to women as in some cases even if the man is wrong a woman just overlooks his abusive behavior and continue treating him like a king. In most communities in this province it is not surprising that one of the homesteads I visited in Nyaitenga village in Mutoko , young boys were treated with respect as compared to the mother of the family. The men or father of that family was sometimes called by the totem and has preferential treatment accorded to them just because he is a man. Hence most women in this province have eventually accepted their subordinate and inferior position in society as natural and a fact of life that cannot be altered due to the patriarchal society hence they continue to be victims of domestic violence. Due to the patriarchal society most women have accepted wife beating and justify it with different scenarios. One of the victims of domestic violence in one of the rural communities in Chikomba district highlighted that, they suffer double violence , one from the husband [the perpetrator] and the other from the family members. Chief Matiki of Mukarakate village also argues that, ‘They is no problem if a man has several girlfriends, but for a woman to do like- wise it is absolutely unacceptable.’⁹

This clearly shows that patriarchy has deep roots in most communities in Mashonaland East province and women are usually the victims due to the unbalanced power dynamics that exist between man and women in most rural traditional societies. More so patriarchy considers male child to be very important. Therefore in most communities there is joy and celebration when a boy child is born compared to a girl child. Statements such as ,Baba Vabarwa [the family head is born] and Dzinza rakura [the lineage has expanded] are often said to express the significance of the male child to the family. Therefore in most cases women are always under the authority of the patriarchy and cannot make independent decisions without family approval and consultation

making them vulnerable to continuous abuse from their spouses due to the patriarchy society imbedded in most rural communities.

2.5 Lobola payment and domestic violence

The payment of lobola is prevalent in most communities in Mashonaland East province. Payment of lobola is sometimes problematic as it creates problems and perpetuates women abuse. In most cases due to the payment of lobola, the wife is usually viewed as an asset that has been bought and can be used in whatever way thought necessary by the husband and the family thereby causing women abuse. Because of this most women in this province are victims of domestic violence. She cannot disclose her problems to her family or friends as it is seen as a taboo. Most of the girls especially in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe are married at an early age of 14-25 years . Most of them remain uneducated, unemployed , dependent, illiterate and naïve about the issues of sex and reproductive. This leads to continuous abuse of these young women and vulnerable to injustices and exploitation by their spouses. Therefore within two or three years of marriage these married young women escape to their parents as the man starts to abuse them and they receive no sympathy from their parents hence they are forced to return to their abusive husbands. Therefore it can be denoted that lobola payment is perpetuating domestic violence as it is used by most men to abuse them as they are seen as assets that has been bought and can be handled in whatever way.

2.6 Alcohol, drug abuse and domestic violence

Alcohol and drug abuse has also influenced the higher prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province .There is a general link between alcohol and violence. Drug abuse can weaken decision making and thereby increase impulse behavior. Therefore the lack of inhibition can affect and cause the drug abusing person to do certain things that he would not do

when not drinking or taking drugs. Therefore the use of alcohol has made most violent men in this province to misbehave and lose control thereby making them brutal to their partners. In most interview carried out with the abused women they indicated that their husbands usually got drunk during the weekends and they start shouting at them, beating them for no apparent reason and kicking them. Most men who wish to carry out violent acts become drunk in order to perform their actions. Interviewed women in Mashonaland East province highlighted that without the use of alcohol and drugs , violence would not occur in most relationships. They further highlighted that when their spouses are not drunk, they are responsible family man but when they take alcohol their behavior totally changes. Mrs Mapuranga from Chinhenga village in Murehwa narrates how her husband abuse her when he is drunk,

He fights me whenever he is drunk, my in laws do not intervene, saying I provoked him. He drinks too much . Most of our fights starts when he takes drugs. He stays up all night and parties . When he is drunk he gets provocative He insists on telling me how wrong he was on marrying me.¹⁰

This clearly shows that alcohol and drug abuse are major perpetrators of domestic violence and they makes most men lose control and abuse their partners.

2.7 Culture

Ridgeway argues that ,culture is central to the forces that trigger domestic violence leading to the violation of women's rights and the spread of HIV.¹¹ Tsanga further points out that, most African traditional and customary practices regard women as minors to men and hence their gender roles perpetuate the stereotype view of women.¹² Traditional cultural practices such as pre-marriage counseling practiced in most communities in Mashonaland East province have been used as tools to articulate the sexual and gender roles of most women as that of serving or pleasing his husband. Hence social-cultural norms and values in this province have prevented women from

reporting their abusive partners and have also negated women's ability to use the protective measures of the law that protects women against domestic violence as they fear to be shunned or castigated by their family members hence women continue to be victims of domestic violence due to cultural values and norms. Therefore most women in this province are deeply trapped in a domestic violence cycle about the subordinate role of women thereby giving men the tools to abuse their partners. Observations have showed that most men in this province thought that wife beating is the traditional/cultural way of dealing with a misbehaving wife. Mawire argues that , in Zimbabwe the aggressive behavior, physical strength and threatening gesture in male children and young men are approved and fostered as positive qualities through culture. Cultural norms in this province requires women to be submissive to their husbands. As a result women are prone to physical, economic abuse and they are sometimes forced into sexual intercourse against their will due to cultural norms. Most cultures in this province still accept domestic violence as a correctional measure that men can do without hesitation. Schmidts argues that,

If a Shona wife resisted her husband's authority by skimping on the food she prepared, to him the wife could have committed a serious offense that struck at the heart of their marriage contract. Under such circumstances, a man could beat his wife without social sanction.

That's the problem which women in Mashonaland East province are facing due to their cultural norms which approve the abuse of women. I have found out that most women in this province consider it a taboo to challenge some forms of domestic violence as they fear to be seen as hostile to their customs and tradition. It is important to note that most women continue to stay in those abusive relations despite being abused. They will be afraid that if they report their husbands they would have defied their cultural norms. As a result this has caused the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province.

2.8 Illiteracy and domestic violence

Lack of education and illiteracy are also other factors causing domestic violence in this province. This is because most young women in this community are in deep poverty because they are not educated thereby making them vulnerable to abuse by their husbands. Most of the interviewed women in this community cited that if they were educated, they would have been employed so that they cannot become dependent on their husbands who abuse them because of lack of education. However their husbands no longer allow them to go back to school further making them vulnerable to domestic violence. Hence they are forced to stay at home and focus only on raising children and domestic chores. Dr Kutiwa a counselor representing Mutoko district points out that, most of the married young women are in deep poverty due to lack of education and they are continuously abused by their spouses. She further gave an example of woman who live in Nyaitenga village who do not have education and they are continuously abused by their spouses on a daily basis because they depend on them to put food on the table.¹³ In an interview with one of the women who live in Nyaitenga narrated her experience, Mrs Shungu notes,

I failed to complete my ordinary level and I was forced to get married whilst I was in form 2 when my husband gets paid, he enjoys it alone. Our marriage is characterized by endless fights. He calls me names for not being educated to the extent of deciding the amount of food we cook. This is because he knows that I am not educated and we depend on him.¹⁴

Due to lack of education most women in this province fail to negotiate with their husbands when it comes to family planning hence they continue to be victims of domestic violence. They are abused to the extent that, they are forced not to use contraceptives therefore when they reach 24 years most of them would have four to five children whom they fail to take care of due to poverty. More so due to lack of education most women in this province are economically handicapped that most men take advantage of them especially at household level. Most women

in this province are full time house wives hence they continue to be economically dependent on their spouses making them vulnerable to abuse. A local community health worker at Marondera hospital , highlighted that, economic dependency is one of the major factors that has forced most abused women in this province to continue living with their violent partners. This means that no –matter how many times they are abused, most women find themselves clinging to the perpetrators of domestic violence and as a result women abuse cases tend to be recurrent.

2.9 Weak enforcement mechanisms, weak civil society and domestic violence

Government Institutions and Crime Agents that are supposed to protect women and arrest the perpetrators of domestic violence have a problem and this has caused the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province. This is due to inadequate resources , reluctance of the police and judiciary to take action against perpetrators of domestic violence. Law enforcement and Court mechanisms have to be made friendly and accessible to victims. Again, units like the Victim Friendly Unit are biased towards women , when women report abuse they are not taken seriously hence women continue to be victims of domestic violence in this province. More so weak Civil society has also caused domestic violence in this province. Organizations which deal with domestic violence issues such as Musasa Project do not effectively penetrate in rural communities such as those in this province that include; Mudzi, Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, Jekwa, Chinhenga as they are regarded as more remote areas beyond reach. They mostly carry out their campaigns in towns neglecting these marginalized rural communities that needs special attention thereby leading to continuous abuse of women. According to the United **Nations** Women Report conducted in 2010, it points out that the problem faced by most Civil Societies in Zimbabwe is that politics is affecting the operations of most organizations to work in most rural communities in order to eradicate all forms of domestic

violence.¹⁵ Therefore weak civil society and weak enforcement mechanisms have also caused the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonalnd East province.

2.9.0 Infidelity, promiscuous behavior and domestic violence

Infidelity and extra marital affairs commonly known as small house is one the factors that has caused friction and violence in most relationships in Mashonaland East province. The promiscuous behavior of most men in this province has been the main source of marital disappointment leading to maladjustment and friction in most relationships. Hence the unfaithfulness of men oftenly becomes the center point of the quarrel in relationships. In an interview with female spouses of Nyadire Lectures in Mutoko, they indicated that, their husbands no longer have time with them and the family as they spend most of their time hanging around with female students at Tamutsa Shopping center spending family money. Thus they feel hurt, cheated, disappointed leading to violence. In an interview with Mrs Dengu the wife of one of the lectures narrated her story,

My husband spend most of his weekends at Tamutsa with students were he spends A lot of money partying with them. When I confronted him of cheating on me with students, he even started beating me. His promiscuous behavior makes me angry, hurt my feelings and put me down.¹⁶

Further, infidelity has become a tropical issue in this province and a major cause of domestic violence. Most of the girls are married early at the age of 12 hence their spouses end up having small houses. Feminist thinkers argues that , most of the physical injuries are caused by infidelity and promiscuous behavior especially young couples.¹⁷ Therefore this lead to most young women in this province engaging in extra marital affairs because of jealousy. A shop owner by the name Mr Shumba at Mukarakate growth point axed his wife to death after he found her having intimacy with a teacher from Mutize primary school. This clearly shows that infidelity and

promiscuous behavior have caused and propelled higher incidents of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province.

Conclusion

From the above discussed factors that causes domestic violence, it can be noted that women in Mashonaland East province continue to be victims of abuse due to various contributing factors. Religious beliefs especially from Johanne Marange and Johanne Masowe Echishanu use religion as a tool to abuse their spouses, higher illiteracy rates in the province, the docile nature of women, deep rooted cultural beliefs and lack of legal advice and services have influenced rampant cases of domestic violence in this province. Findings from the above Chapter have also indicated that poverty was highly noted as a major factor causing domestic violence. Thus most women in this province are economically handicapped thereby making them vulnerable to abuse, they indicated that they cannot press charges to the hand that feed them even if they are abused.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 3: EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE

3.1 Introduction

The Chapter will focus on the effects of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. Domestic violence has devastating effects to the victims, children, family and socio-economic and political aspect of the community. The study will focus on effects to the victim. Many victims of domestic violence have perished due to continuous physical abuse. Some victims are affected psychologically leading to mental health disturbances. It causes health problem, sapping women's energy, it swept away their self-esteem. The study will also focus on the prevalence of HIV-AIDS and other sexually transmitted disease due to domestic violence. It also needs to be highlighted that domestic violence does not only degrade women but it takes away their dignity and humiliates and traumatizes them. Abused women are not the only persons who suffer the impacts, in most cases children are also found to be very vulnerable to the long term effects of domestic violence just like their mothers. It affects children's healthy, compromising their education and it also affects infants and toddlers. Domestic violence hates children, and a women's family by creating a culture of fear and mistrust that leads to lack of intimacy and safety within family relationships. The bottom line is domestic violence has caused negative than positive impacts in Mashonaland East province.

3.2 Domestic violence and deaths

Domestic violence is a serious cause of death among women of reproductive age. In a family set up, physical violence and sexual violence have contributed to the deaths of many victims in Mashonaland East province. Interviewed health practitioners in major hospitals in this provinces that included Murehwa hospital, Marondera hospital, Mutoko hospital, Nyadire and Nhowe

sshospital, they indicated that since 2000 up to date they have recorded and witnessed numerous cases of deaths of victims of domestic violence in this province. According to Marondera Chief Magistrate , he noted that recently in June they received a case whereby a farm worker at Nhowe Mission farms axed his wife to death [Abigail Chindavata] following a domestic dispute in Nhowe mission.¹ Therefore from the above, it can be denoted that domestic violence did have devastating effects on women.

3.3 Psychological effects, physical trauma and domestic violence

Domestic violence has dangerous psychological and physical consequences on women. It can lead to injuries and disabilities. Most rural people in Mashonaland East province believe that it is justified for a husband to discipline his wife in whatever way thought necessary . Hence some are even left with permanent injuries and damages by their spouses but they continue to live in these abusive relationships. In most cases women are beaten up and are afraid to report their abusive husbands to the police because of economic dependence. These fears affect most women psychologically. According to research done by Musasa project in Mashonaland East province, they noted that, physical abuse is a daily reality for most young married women leaving them physically injured and psychologically affected. Hence their husbands are a threat to threat to them.² Mrs Mutemeri from Svosve narrates her story;

My husband is very abusive, he beats me all the time using dangerous weapons

Especially when he is drunk. My left leg does not walk properly due to dangerous

Weapons he used to beat me with. As a result I continuously encounter problems

When walking especially during the winter season due to this limping leg.³

More so , many interviewed women in this province stated that, they suffered from migraines and frequent headaches as a result of long term physical health effects of domestic violence. Five

women from Nyaitenga village in Mutoko recounted about their back/abdominal pain, chronic neck pain and permanent extreme physical marks due to burning injuries. Other physical health impacts narrated by these abused women include the experiences of respiratory system problems such as severe coughs and shortness of breath as well as having asthma symptoms. In an interview with Mrs Matsika , a nurse at Nyadire Hospital she notes that ‘,Most of the victims of domestic violence came to this hospital for medical treatment However one of the patient we treated last year in April suffered permanent visual Impairment as she lost her left eye during a domestic fight with his husband.⁴⁷

Further, to clearly show the devastating physical effects of domestic violence to women in Mashonaland East province, Mrs Chindavata, Mrs Masore, Mrs Sandati and Mrs Dengu shared their experiences,

I was physically abused by my husband. But I never filed a police report. When my Grandmother asked, I lied and said I fell down when bathing. My husband even hit My head with a wooden stick, yet I still said I fell down. Over time the physical abuse Became even worse, [Mrs Chindavata]⁵

Usually it just started as a small wound. Nobody noticed until the final stage. At the End of 2010 he started to physically assault me using dangerous items, he hit me until My right hand was badly bruised. On the left and right part of my legs, all became bruised severely bruised. [Mrs Masore]⁶

It just started with kickings then sometimes if he was not using his legs, he hit me using a big stick. He was bully, he eventually hit me until I was swollen. At one point, I couldn't even eat or able to drink water. That is what

I considered the worst I have experienced. [Mrs Sandati]⁷

My husband used to take a large stick and hit me hard on my head, that was
Still not enough. After that , he could punch me on my left eye. The Doctors
At Murehwa hospital said, the veins of my left eye were severely damaged
because of the physical beatings. I then lost my eye vision until today.[Mrs
Dengu]⁸

Therefore with the experiences of women's stories above it clearly shows the devastating effects of domestic violence to women's physical health that can be seen in short term and long term physical damage.

3.4 Mental disturbances and domestic violence

Most of the abused women in Mashonaland East province who participated in this study have indicated how the violence experience has affected them mentally. For most of the women in this province they indicated that, it takes time and a long period of time that they tried to endure and forget about their husband's abuse at home. Most of the abused women admitted that they now face and live in stressful experiences and depressed following years they had lived in violent relationships. It is greatly believed that mental disturbances is linked with the exposure to domestic violence. Mrs Masore narrated how her violent relationship has affected her mentally. It has been years but Mrs Masore is still mentally traumatized to the extent that she associates other violent incidents to her own experiences. She noted that,

I am traumatized by violent incidents I encountered. I can't stand it to see any man
beating up his wife, even if it is a television movie or drama. I can't stand bear it to an
extent that at one point, I screamed uncontrollably to the extent that my daughter

called my mother in law because of my reactions. I still can't manage to forget experiences of my abuse. I am so affected and frightened if I encountered situations where married couples are quarrelling, my body will start shaking as if it will come to me and beat me up.⁹

Referring to mental disturbances, Mrs Shumba and Mrs Chindavata also added their experiences in order to clearly show the devastating effects of domestic violence to women in Mashonaland East province.

I always see him in my dreams. In these dreams, my husband will be trying to do something bad to me. It seems as if it was real. He punched me on my face, pulled my weave. I am so afraid of him. When I work up in the morning I wondered..... why I continued to have such dreams of him??? [Mrs Shumba]¹⁰

I usually have nightmares when I sleep. I dreamt that he chased me, he wants to beat me again. That is how I continuously dream about my abusive husband. I don't know. Some of my relatives and friends advised me to visit a Sangoma for cure. [Mrs Chindavata]¹¹

This shows that women's experiences of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province has made most abused women to be mentally disturbed even years after the abuse. Hence these violent experiences have led to deterioration in women's mental health and well being.

3.5 Sexually transmitted diseases and domestic violence

Abused women in this province are at a higher risk of various sexually transmitted diseases, infections, vaginal, cervical infections, the deadly HIV-AIDS and kidney infections due to abuse. These diseases have spread among them because women lack sexual autonomy for safe

intercourse due to abuse. They are afraid to ask their husbands to use protection and contraceptives during sexual intercourse. Most of the abused women in this province due to lack of education and violence they experience , do not have the knowledge on the importance of safe intercourse with their partners. A research presented at the 2010 International AIDS Conference in Vienna , clearly indicates that, the risk of contracting HIV-AIDS is at least two times greater for women who experience domestic violence.¹² This is because most of the spouses have different sexual partners .That is the scenario in Mashonaland East province especially from Johanne Marange and Johanne Masowe eChishanu sect , it has the highest number of women suffering from HIV-AIDS. This is because their husbands has more than one sexual partner. Therefore the husband can spread the disease from one partner to the other. In an interview with one of the respondents she states that, the higher spread of HIV-AIDS in this province is due to the fact that most of their husband tend to have more than one sexual partner and most of their partners due to cultural beliefs in that province they refused to get tested hence the spread of sexually transmitted disease. More so abused women in this province also suffer from maternal health problem, psychosomatic systems. Sexual violence leads to obstetric vaginal fistula that affects women during delivery of their babies. One of the victims of sexual violence Mrs Sandati from Dombwe village notes that,

My husband used to sexually abuse me to the extent that I developed maternal problems during delivery of our first child. I had complications during delivery I was told by the Doctors that my bladder was damaged, I developed complications and medical problems . Due to these complications I was forced to go for an operation¹³

The above experiences of different abused women in this province clearly shows the effects of domestic violence which leads to the transmission of different sexually transmitted diseases due to different abuses they experience at the hands of their spouses.

3.6 Loss of self-esteem and domestic violence

Women who experience domestic violence in their relationships tend to lose their self esteem, lack of self- worth and self -identity. In most cases abused women in this province highlighted that their husbands continuously use aggressive behavior such as constant criticisms, humiliation, belittling and called different names to weaken their confidence leading to most women believing that they are worthless. Mrs Tinoenda narrates her humiliation,

My husband scolds me as he pleases no matter where we are. He even
Sometimes loudly shout at me in public places or in front of our children
and relatives. I am very disappointed because he humiliates me in front
of people and this reduces my dignity. To save the continuous humiliation
I will just accept his abuse and follow his ways. I feel useless in front of my
children and relatives.¹⁴

Respondents believed that their dignity and sense of identity is affected due to violent experiences of abuse by their husbands. Findings from the interviews conducted clearly demonstrate that women's dignity was gradually compromised by their husband's controlling and aggressive behaviors. These women have reported feeling embarrassed, lacked dignity, whenever they were cursed especially when the incidents happened in front of their children and other people in public places. More so these abused women in due course may develop a sense of vulnerability self when seeking professional guidance and assistance.

3.7 Domestic violence and children

Children who witness violence at home display emotional and behavioral disturbances as diverse as withdrawal, low self-esteem, sleep disorders[insomnia, nightmares, bedwetting] self blame and they became aggressive against their peers, family members and property. Many develop physical symptoms which includes frequent colds, headaches or upset stomachs. The children's development and health may be affected negatively as parent's capacity to meet basic needs is impaired due to violence. This is frequently exacerbated as domestic violence greatly impact on family functioning, housing, income and social integration. Parents may fail to control their emotions and continuous mood swings may frighten their children leaving them feeling insecure, uncertain and anxious. In order to clearly demonstrate the negative effects of domestic violence on children, Mutukudzi reiterates these effects through his song, Tozeza Baba

Imi baba manyanya,kurova amai	father the way you hit mother is extreme
Imi baba manyanya kutuka amai	You father, it is too much, you verbally abuse our mother
Munoti isu vana tofara sei//?	How
Kana mai vachichema pameso pedu	When we see our mother crying
Kana mai vachingochema	when she always weeps
Hunzi ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu	Kill me I will die here with my children
Ponda hako ndifire pavana vangu	kill me I will die here
Tozeza Baba	we fear you father
Baba Chidhakwa	Our father is drunkard
Vauya vadhakwa	He comes home drunk ¹⁵

This song by Oliver Mutukudzi clearly demonstrate the effects of domestic violence to the children. Hence the pain is not just to the mother but it extends to the children. More so another

aspect of effects of women abuse on children is their use of violence when they grow up. Social Learning Theory suggest that, children who witness violence at home may also learn to use it.¹⁶ Considerable evidence has shown that , most children who are exposed to domestic violence are more likely to become perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. Imitation and modeling appear as to play significant roles in this process. Hence children may normalize violence as a means to conflict resolution and communication. Hence most of the interviewed women in Mashonaland East province reviewed that, they is a strong link between the children and the negative behavior they show outside such as physical aggression, delinquency and verbal abuse to other peers. Mrs Hokonya from Manyange Village narrates how her child misbehave due to his father's abusive tendencies.

Tino is my first born child. He watches his father abusing me. He follows the

behavior of his father and does the same to his younger brothers

He kicks and beats his younger brothers. He is like his father. Most of the time

I scold him because of his behavior. I don't want him to follow his father's

Behavior.¹⁷

More so, domestic violence has destroyed paternal- child bonding. During the interviews , quite a number of negative responses regarding the child father relationships were noticed. Most of the children did not bother to know the whereabouts of their father although the father might not be around for quite some time. Also the love-relationships that is expected between the boy-child and father were lacking due to children's hatred and anger because of the father's abusive behavior to their mother.

3.8 Maternal effects and domestic violence

Domestic violence episodes and impacts escalate during pregnancy. It can pose a threat to the unborn child, because assaults on pregnant women usually involves kicking, slapping, punching directed to the abdomen or stomach thereby risking injury to both the mother and the unborn child. The impacts of domestic violence can also extend to the infants and toddlers with negative developmental, social, emotional, and behavioral consequences, excessive irritability, immature behavior and sleep disturbances. Also at the time of neurological growth an infant's development may be compromised by the exposure to ongoing violence. Exposure to domestic violence interferes with a child's normal development of trust and later exploratory behaviors which lead to the development of autonomy. Trust develops early and is primarily contingent on the infant's relationship with his or her care giver. Mistrust is compromised in most toddlers and this affects their relationship build up due to traumatic and violent environment they have grown up into. In an interview with one of the victims she narrated the effects to her unborn baby,

I had two miscarriages in my initial year of our marriage because of beatings from my husband. The same thing happened during my third pregnancy my husband continued to beat me. As a result my child was born premature but the child is now safe. Mrs Kandenga ¹⁸

This clearly shows that domestic violence had greater effects to the unborn baby who will be at risk of harm since in the mother's womb due to physical abuse. Domestic violence also has devastating impacts to the toddlers. More so infant mortality rates are also experienced in this province due to physical abuse to the pregnant women. Infant mortality is the death of unborn child in the mother's womb. Pregnant associated death are also experienced in this province. These are death of pregnant woman due to physical abuse from their spouses which causes their blood pressure to shoot.

3.9 Effects on school aged children

Children in Mashonaland East province who are exposed to violent families continue to show signs of problems at school. Hence they continue to show trouble with their school work and they show poor concentration and focus. They tend not to do well at school as highlighted by UNICEF.¹⁹ Their social development is compromised with other peers at school is greatly compromised. The violence which children witness at home also affects their relationship with other children at school. Bancroft and Silverman argue that, children's perspective on relationships is so skewed that they have no idea on how to share or co-operate with others and others lose their ability to feel empathy for others. Others might feel socially isolated, unable to make friends as easily due to social discomfort or confusion over what is expected . In a survey that I conducted in most rural communities in this province more than half of the school –aged children who live in violent families show clinical levels of anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder. These children are at a higher risk of delinquency ,substance abuse, school drop-out and difficulties in their school work. Hence most school going children who witness domestic violence early in life may view the world as unpredictable, possibly dangerous and chaotic.

3.9.0 Human development domestic violence

The continuous abuse of women in Mashonaland East province has undermined this province's full potential to develop unless cases of domestic violence are totally eradicated from society and also they is need to ensure that both women and men in this province are given equal potential to participate fully in the society. Heisse postulates that, the social –economic and health cost of violence leave no doubt that domestic violence against women undermines progress towards human and economic development.²⁰ Hence women's participation has become a key fundamental factor in all social, economic and political development programs be they

environmental, for poverty alleviation in the community or for good governance. Therefore in most cases resources that are supposed to develop most rural communities in Mashonaland East province for rural electrification have been channelled to cater for victims of domestic violence in this province. Due to higher prevalence of domestic violence cases in this province it has also hampered the full participation and involvement of women in developmental programs and this has eroded the capital of half of the communities population in this province.

3.9.1 Homicides, family disintegration and domestic violence

Suicide or homicide and family disintegration are also other effects of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province. The effects of women abuse in this province are traumatizing to the extent that some abused women end up committing suicide as they will be left with no option. Chief Chizanga from Jekwa village in Murehwa highlighted that, most homicides experienced in their district are associated with a long history of domestic violence. For many women who are beaten , sexually abused, emotional and physical strain has led to many suicides. He further points out that, these homicides are a testimony of limited options for some women facing violent relationships in this district. He further describes an account of a woman who took her life last February due to domestic dispute,

A married woman aged thirty five years of age, had five daughters. The husband Wanted her wife to have a son and because of this he continuously assaults her on a daily basis and emotionally abuse her in front of her children and relatives. She usually returns to her parents when the abuses went beyond her control and each time the parents could chase her back to her husbands. One night she committed suicide by hanging herself outside her husband's bedroom. She left behind a written note before she died and she stated that, she has killed herself because of abuse she

continuously suffer at the hands of her husband.²¹

This clearly shows that domestic violence has devastating effects to the extent of some women committing suicide. More so domestic violence has led to family disintegration. The father might be arrested and the woman may choose to remarry thereby leaving the children behind. Some of the abused women in this province also indicated that, they end up abandoning their marital homes due to continuous incidents of continuous abuse and others might opt for a divorce leaving behind the children alone. Mrs Maphosa one of the victims of domestic violence indicated that, she left her husband of four years and also left behind her three children and choose to stay in a nearby village in Chinhenga due to abuse from her husband and she never returned leading to divorce.²¹

Conclusion

In summary the study has found out that, domestic violence has created a multiplicity of effects on the abused women and children. The effects range from health problems that include sexually transmitted diseases such as the deadly HIV-AIDS, it also has adverse effects on children who grow up in abusive home might become violent when they grow up and their performance at school is greatly compromised . More so , it was believed that the women's self-esteem and self independence is greatly affected by the experience of domestic violent relationships. Therefore it can be denoted that the violent destructive effects of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province may gradually erode the overall sense of identity which leads to homicides and family disintegration.

Endnotes

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CHAPTER 4: EFFECTIVENESS OF STRATEGIES TO CURB DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE

4.1 Introduction

Domestic violence in Mashonaland East province has continuously remained a major problem for decades and particularly in rural communities in this province. As a response to the alarming rates of domestic violence cases in the province the government of Zimbabwe introduced various strategies aimed at reducing cases of domestic violence. The Zimbabwean government came up with various mechanisms such as, the Domestic violence Act of 2007, the Sexual Offenses Act, the introduction of the Victim Friendly Units, the Sexual Offenses Act, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act no 20, the introduction of the Victim Friendly Units and the introduction of the Ministry of Women, Gender and Community Development. Non-governmental Organizations such as Musasa Project, Padare Ekhundleni Men's forum, have also made tremendous efforts in trying to reduce cases of Domestic Violence in this province even though women continue to be victims of abuse. This Chapter will review these strategies towards reducing cases of domestic violence and their effectiveness among abused women in Mashonaland East province over the past seventeen years that is from 2000-2017.

Zimbabwe and the global community implemented various laws and conventions on domestic violence related issues in order to curb all cases of women abuse. Various laws that support the total eradication of domestic violence cases have been enacted. However it seems these policies have not been fully implemented to reduce cases of women abuse especially in most rural communities in Mashonaland East province with the exception of Marondera which is urban set up. The UNICEF strategy paper of 2008-2011 indicated that, the government's policies on

women empowerment and prevention of all cases domestic violence were paper tigers, as the majority of women in rural communities continue to be victims of domestic violence as they are lagging behind in terms of empowerment hence they continue to be victims of domestic violence. Survey that has been conducted has reviewed that the majority of Organizations that fight for the total liberation of women from domestic violence are located in bigger towns thereby making their effectiveness limited. For instance in Mashonaland East province most organizations that are charged with the duty of implementing gender based violence strategies are located in Marondera town. As such government employees should travel out of town to implement these policies. At the same time the areas that need to be attended are widely spread from Marondera town. Thereby hampering the effectiveness of these strategies to achieve their goals as the program implementers stay away from the rural community. There are Organizations that are operational in this province which are complementing government efforts towards eradication of all cases of women abuse. The study made use of group discussions from different villages in this province for gathering information on the effectiveness and implementation of domestic violence policies. To ensure the success of the study, the inclusion of both men and women was also used as a strategy to ensure the evaluation of these programs that has been implemented in this province.

4.1The role played by the global community

The United Nations organizations played a pivotal role through its Organizations mounted in different countries. This was achieved through funding from the United Nations whereby awareness and advocacy campaigns were held that aimed at ending all forms of women abuse. These have most often take the form of loosely aligned coalitions of individuals and organizations that are encouraged to take action to raise awareness of violence. The United

Nations End Violence Campaign is usually facilitated by the Women and office of the Secretary General. Its goals are to raise public awareness and to increase political will and resources in different countries and responding to violence against women. Campaign materials and slogans are conducted locally although most promote simple didactic messages like, ‘SAY NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN’³ The sixteen Days of Activism against Gender based violence is an annual platform for local groups to sponsor events and engage the media . These celebrations have been celebrated annually in most communities in Mashonaland East province whereby both women and men are educated about the effects of domestic violence. The United Nations has facilitated the celebration of the International Day Against Violence which is celebrated annually on 25 November and the World Human Rights Day celebrated on the 10th of December. These campaigns have attracted the attention and support of thousands of organizations and local community towards the fight against all forms of domestic violence. It needs to be highlighted that these global initiatives towards the fight against domestic violence cases have helped to break the silence and provided the platform for local advocacy initiatives. For instance these global initiatives led to the introduction of the Domestic Violence Act in 2007, the Sexual Offences Act to mention just a few. However it also needs to be highlighted that these global initiatives are seldom intensive enough to or sufficient theory- driven to transform norms or change actual behaviors.

4.2 Government initiated programmes

4.2.1 The domestic violence act of 2007

Due to the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Zimbabwe, the government introduced the Domestic violence Act in 2007. It aims to protect women from all forms of domestic abuse be it physical abuse, economic abuse, emotionnal abuse. The act also aims at protecting the life of the

Zimbabwean women and safeguard women equality in all spheres of life that compromises a woman's mental and physical health. Hence the act calls for the total protection of women against all forms of abuse, bad treatment, negative and social practice and empowering women. For the effectiveness of this act, the Zimbabwean government appointed a 12 member Ant-Domestic violence council through the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development in order to facilitate the implementation of the Domestic violence Act in all provinces in Zimbabwe including Mashonaland East province. The objectives of the Act were to be achieved through conducting multi-media awareness campaigns on Gender based violence, sensitization of communities on the provisions of the Domestic violence Act, training of police officers including Victim Friendly Officers on the implementation of the act and training of traditional leaders on their role towards the dissemination and raising awareness amongst rural people on the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. Although the introduction of the Domestic violence Act and its provisions was celebrated by most women as a milestone towards reducing cases of women abuse. It is significant to note that the act has not been effective enough to reach out to the rural communities. It needs to be highlighted that in urban areas it was a success though to a lesser extent but in rural areas it failed to meet its intended objectives as cases of domestic violence continue to increase in spite the introduction of the act.

It needs to be highlighted that the dual system found in most rural communities in Mashonaland East province such as Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe, Mutoko, Mudzi, Hwedza, Chikomba whereby customary and general laws co-exist is hindering the effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act. Hence most women in these communities are more likely to seek help from the village chief and village elders because of his accepted role in conflict resolution and peace building than reporting to the police officers. Maxwell Chuma and Bernard Chazovachii

have argued that the implementation of the Domestic violence Act in most Zimbabwe rural areas has proved to be problematic since the ways in which public awareness campaigns on violence can be raised is limited.⁴ Some of the strategies used include large- scale advertising on billboards, drama, theatre and the media can be used to challenge ideas and entrenched belief systems to change the representation of women and violence. The rural set up of most communities in Mashonaland East province have structures that constrains the effectiveness of the Domestic violence Act to be a success.

The effectiveness of the Domestic violence Act has proved to be great challenge due to the dearth of skilled personnel and expertise in the areas of law enforcement mechanisms.⁵ For instance in Wedza, Chikomba and Goromonzi districts ward co-ordinators who have been tasked to assist in the implementation of the act have only secondary or elementary background and they have no practical experience in the issues that directly affects women as most them can only read and write. One of the police officers at Marondera Police station observed that, the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act in this province has been further affected by ward co-ordinators who sees their roles as representatives of the ruling party carrying out party programmes at the expense of the community concerns and women problems.⁶ Therefore such awful inadequate personel, incompetence coupled together with lack of awareness of the Domestic Violence act has hampered the implementation and effectiveness of the act. However it also needs to be highlighted that, despite these drawbacks, the Domestic violence Act has brought its own positives as it managed to eliminate perpetrators of women abuse in some instances. The act has also managed to protect women as well as giving them the opportunity to redress their issues. Hence the act is an essential blueprint of combating domestic violence against women in Zimbabwe.

4.2.2 Victim friendly units

Due to a sharp increase in domestic violence cases, the government of Zimbabwe introduced the Victim Friendly units across its provinces including Mashonaland East province in order to handle all cases of domestic violence that encompasses rape, physical abuse of women. In this province they are Victim Friendly units that has been set up at its district offices that aims at protecting women against domestic abuse. It needs to be highlighted that, in this province the prevalence is high thereby explaining why the law criminalizes it. Despite the establishments of these units, success is has been limited as women continue to be victims of domestic violence. For instance in this province, the legal and institutional framework of the Victim Friendly Unit in place to respond to cases of domestic violence is impressive but the reality is that most geographical areas do not have the resources to match. ¹⁰It needs to be highlighted that most of these units that operates in most rural communities in this province do not have the resources to transport the victims, so victims must use their own resources to transport to the police office and medical centers. Also most Friendly units in Mashonaland East province are located in most remote communities without electricity hence they only operate during weekdays and office hours only, so victims of attack outside of these times may have to wait some time or even days for assistance.¹¹ It also needs to be highlighted that, most of the units in this province comprise of untrained staff not effective enough to deal with domestic violence cases hence in most cases they ended up giving the victim contradicting advice about how to act next. According to an article published by the Financial Gazette, it states that, Victim Friendly Units are no longer properly functional and most women do not trust the police or the court because of the negative perception around justice system in the country.¹² Thus most police encourage complainants to seek a protection order rather than a Criminal trial. Whether this is because they lack the

willingness or resources to effectively investigate the cases, the result is cases of domestic violence continue to increase despite the inception of these Victim Friendly units in Mashonaland East province.

The Sexual Offences Act was introduced by the Zimbabwean government in 2001 in an effort to protect women from sexual abuse and criminalizes marital rape and the willful transmission of the deadly HIV-AIDS. In an article published in the Standard , it highlights that a lot of women are being raped by their husbands in Zimbabwe but the majority do not report such cases because they fear destroying their marriages.⁷ Deep rooted cultural norms in this province and general low self- esteem has contributed to sexual abuse of women by their husbands. Senior commentator Rebecca Chisamba in her talk show Mai Chisamba Show, reiterated that, most women in most rural communities in Mashonaland East province were not empowered enough and called for a radical shift of mindsets on the subject which she said has been neglected far too long.⁸ Sadly only a few women have benefited from this act yet the magnitude of the crime is too huge to disregard due to deep rooted cultural dimensions. Despite the appraisal of the act, there is one crucial area which has not been reached. This relates to the efficacy of the legislation in protecting rural women who live under customary law from domestic violence.⁹ The Sexual Offences Act can only be enforced in the Magistrates courts or family courts. Hence there is no provision for traditional courts in most rural communities to issue protection orders to the rural women. Due to deep rooted cultural practices, linguistic and economic hardships this has limited women in Mashonaland East province to access the magistrates courts which in most cases operates mostly in urban area

The introduction of the Ministry of Women, Gender and Community Development by the government was seen as a milestone towards the liberation of Zimbabwean women which was

mandated at looking at issues that affect women and also ensure the empowerment of women and communities. It was mandated at introducing different strategies and policies that ensure women empowerment, promoting gender equality. In Mashonaland East province it facilitated the introduction of ant-domestic violence counselors from provincial, district to ward level. According to the Gender Based Violence Strategy, the introduction of 4PS awareness campaign in most provinces by the Ministry was regarded as a positive initiative towards ending cases of domestic violence as it also calls for the inclusion of men who are regarded as the main perpetrators of women abuse.¹⁹ The 4PS stands for; prevention, protection, participation and programmes. In facilitating prevention and protection the Ministry through ward coordinators facilitated workshops and community campaigns in communities.

It needs to be highlighted that in Mashonaland East province ward councilors and coordinators have taken the initiative of educating the community on gender based violence, on laws and mechanisms of assisting victims of domestic violence and ways to prevent women abuse. Findings carried out through the district officers at Murehwa centre and Mutoko centre have revealed that the Ministry ensures the implementation of the domestic violence policies. The district through the district officers spearheads the prevention of women abuse and protection measures for the survivors. The Ministry also takes the mandate facilitating the commemorations of international Day of Families and 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based violence in line with national, regional and international requirements. In an interview with one of the ward coordinators at Chinhenga village in Murehwa she indicated that,

We recently held an awareness campaign at Mukarakate Shopping centre which was attended by at least 50 people. It was an Ant-Domestic violence public awareness campaign. It was attended by men, women, and children

Some senior government officials were invited. Several other campaigns have
Of late been held at Jekwa primary, Chinhenga and Karumazondo primary
School. Our main objective was to educate the community about laws that
Women against gender based violence.²⁰

These awareness campaigns have proved to be a success in this community as some respondents indicated that they were unaware that they are laws that protects them from domestic violence.

The survey conducted in Mashonaland East province has reviewed that a number of women in this province are subjected to domestic violence because they are economically handicapped. Therefore as a response to the economic hardships faced by most women in this province, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development through its ward coordinators introduced various mechanisms and development programs and funds to empower women so that they can be economically stable and stand up for their rights.²¹ Hence the ministry seeks to empower women and reduce the dependency syndrome being faced by most women in this province and build the capacities of women for sustainable development. The Ministry through the ward coordinators and counselors introduced development funds that gives women groups loans to engage in different projects so as to reduce economic dependency on men. By so doing it reduces cases of domestic violence.

It needs to be highlighted that, most women in this province have started different projects which include, poultry production, some have ventured into growing potatoes, tomatoes and onion for sale. In a survey conducted at Nyunzu village in Hwedza, findings have shown that women development funds have reduced cases of domestic violence in this community as poverty on women has been reduced due to these projects as most women are now economically empowered. Another project that has been beneficiary was the, Kukuya Dovi Project being run

by Zvinoda Madzimai Cooperative in Wedza district which has greatly reduced the economic dependency of women on men. From a survey conducted from these women venturing into this project they have indicated that the coming of the project has greatly reduced their dependency syndrome on their husbands. It also needs to be highlighted that, the introduction of these loans have also benefited women in Svosve and Nyarwizi villages in Goromonzi which led to the introduction of nutritional and vegetable gardens. In an interview carried out to one of the beneficiaries of these vegetables gardens Mrs Marowa she noted that,

Due to the introduction of vegetable gardens by the Ministry of Women, Gender and Community Development has greatly improved my relationship with my husband. These vegetable gardens have helped me to assist my husband financially, therefore this has reduced domestic violence in my family.²²

Therefore it can be highlighted from the above, that the projects introduced by the Ministry in most communities in this province have greatly improved the status of women hence the reduction of domestic violence cases. Thus by empowering women, the ministry was trying to reduce cases of women abuse by addressing one of the root causes of domestic violence that is economic dependency.

The government of Zimbabwe has also made positive strides towards combating cases of domestic violence in the country through the enactment of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act [No. 20] in 2013. The Act ensures that they are different measures taken the government and the private sector in all provinces across the in order to curb all cases of domestic violence. Chapter 2 no 25 of the Constitution also indicates that, it is the responsibility of the State to ensure that the rights of women in families are protected and not abused by all

means necessary. Therefore through the provisions of the Act, the state and its agencies aims at preventing all cases of women abuse and it also aims at looking at the institution of the family in all provinces, within the range of its resources at their disposal, to adopt measures and strategies for the prevention of domestic violence cases. However the provisions of the act failed to produce positive outcomes in most communities in this province. They is lack of coordination and monitoring of families thus the act failed to yield the intended goals as cases of women abuse continue to increase. Respondents in this province indicated that, the agencies of the Constitution have failed to reach to the poor found in most rural communities in this province. Hence they further highlighted that, in most cases they are left out by most government programmes that educate people about domestic violence issues due to inaccessibility of villages they stay. For instance in Uzumba Maramba Pfungwe the roads are very poor and dusty as a result it makes it difficult for government agencies to reach those remote areas. Also lack of supervision has hampered the effectiveness of these acts as most government agencies are located in bigger towns such as Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru. This therefore exposes women live in rural areas to continuous abuse by their male partners.

4.3 Non-governmental organisations initiated programmes

In fostering the process of prevention and assistance to victims of domestic violence Non-Governmental Organizations such as CERF UNICEF, Padare/Varume Svinurai have also introduced various strategies in order to complement government's efforts. For instance, WAG has introduced various programs in this province aimed at assisting victims under the CERF project. The CERF project was introduced in various districts in this province the most successful being the one at Kotwa Hospital in Mudzi district. The project aimed at assisting victims of domestic violence by providing them with health facilities, counseling sessions, legal

services and teaching women on various ways of coping with domestic violence. This was to be achieved through the establishment of One Stop Centers at most hospitals in this province. For instance there is a One Stop Center at Kotwa hospital in Mudzi, also at Nhowe mission hospital, Mutoko hospital and at Goto local clinic in Wedza district. This strategy was put in place in order to assist victims of abuse, it offers psycho-social support, the victims also go through counseling sessions to restore lost self-esteem and to help them with coping strategies. These One Stop Centers located in this province are inclusive of the hospital in conjunction with the Victim Friendly Unit. Survey conducted regarding these One Stop Centers has reviewed that, they have been effective in the sense that they have helped to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence in this province and helped those who have been affected since the services offered are free meaning everyone in this province can access the services whether rich or poor. It also needs to be highlighted that this initiative by different NGOs has been beneficial towards reduction of domestic violence cases in this province as people no longer travel long distances either to Harare or Marondera to seek help as all services have been brought together on one place.

Varume Svinurai have also implemented various strategies to reduce cases of domestic violence in this province. Their activities have been implemented mostly in Mudzi district one of the districts found in this province. Their programs mainly focused on three main dimensions that is; support for policy reforms, raising awareness amongst the people on issues related to domestic violence, building capacity on women so that they can be able to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence so that they can be able to prevent the occurrence as well as ensuring that justice prevail when domestic violence occur and report all cases of abuse. This was to be achieved through community gatherings for example, mother support groups, ladies home groups, Mukando savings group. This included trainings and sensitization workshops to increase

awareness on people on domestic violence issues. By so doing, this men's organization that mainly operated in Mudzi district was able to reach a large number of people in the community through their orientation and awareness campaigns. In an interview with one of the police officers who work at Mudzi Victim Friendly unit, Segeant Ngoma, highlighted that the measures taken by this organization should be applauded for a job well done due to increase in the number of survivors who were now able to report cases of abuse to the police.¹³ Though they are some loopholes in the implementation of the strategies for them to effectively eliminate all cases of women abuse in this province. Practitioners who conducted these programs have tended to focus more on building theoretical knowledge base of participants paying less attention to the actual effects of domestic violence on the victim and possible ways it can be dealt with at community level. Due to the distance to which the training officials came from, most of them have to travel long distance from Marondera to Mudzi, Murehwa, Hwedza they tend to hold short training sessions without interactive sessions. Hence under such circumstances, participants do not get much information and insight on ground realities which is less transformative. This clearly explains why cases of domestic violence continues to increase despite these intervention strategies in Mashonaland East province. Report carried in 2012 by Musasa Project notes that, in order to eradicate all cases of domestic violence they is need to do more than that as sensitization involves internalization of the issue that can lead to transformative change in attitude, behavior and practice of a person.¹⁴

The inclusion of men by Padare/ Men's Forum was another strategy taken by Non governmental organizations in this province since 2005 towards prevention of gender based violence. Their strategies aimed at changing the behavior and attitude of men in this province who are believed to be the main perpetrators of domestic violence. Therefore men were trained and educated on

non-violent ways of solving family disputes. Mashiri and Mawire states that, in most communities men are the key figures that can pave way for change if they are included in the strategies of curbing domestic violence.¹⁵ Ruxton also concurs with this view when he points out that, the struggle towards women liberation will not yield expected results if men are excluded.¹⁶ In this regard it clearly shows that the strategy that was taken by Padare of including men in their strategies was a positive move towards ending domestic violence in this province as most of the respondents knew nothing about gender bases violence. Reports from the community members taken from the Victim Friendly Unit at Mudzi district and Murehwa centre had shown that, men are changing for the better since the inception of the program by Padare in 2005. They have been a decrease in cases of women abuse especially in ward 18 and ward 20. Interviewed women in ward 18 and 20 have shown that they are seeing a reduction in verbal abuse, harassment, physical abuse, beatings since the formation of the Men's action groups by Padare. Women in this district have indicated that, men are now encouraging their spouses to even attend Women's Action groups and also helping their spouses with domestic responsibilities. They also described how their spouses are now discussing about domestic violence issues with other men who are still abusing their partners. Chief Save of ward 18 indicated that his community has greatly changed for the better as they are few cases of domestic violence being experienced now, though not totally prevented. In an article published by the Financial Gazette has indicated that in most communities in Mashonaland East province, domestic violence cases have been a common phenomenon, however with the introduction and inclusion of men in intervention strategies by Padare, cases of women abuse are now decreasing in Mudzi district.¹⁸

Conclusion

The study has highlighted various strategies that has been implemented at national, regional and local level in efforts to combat the higher prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province and their effectiveness. The findings have shown that, these strategies have been effectiveness to a lesser extent. The intervention strategies implemented in this province have acted as an essential blueprint of combating violence targeting women. They have empowered women economically thereby reducing cases of women abuse in some districts in this province. These intervention strategies can be credited for an increase number in the magnitude of survivors who have the bravery to report cases of violence. However, the issue still remains a challenge despite different strategies that has been advanced. Unfortunately over the past seventeen years, statistics of Domestic violence have increased in this province.

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Conclusion

The study focused on the plight of abused women in Mashonaland East province with regard to their experiences of living on domestic violent relationships. In this investigation, the aim was to assess the victims' experiences of violence particularly with reference to the causes, impacts and assessing the strategies that has been implemented in efforts to reduce cases of domestic violence. The Study has revealed that domestic violence cases especially in most rural communities has been naturalized hence women abuse cases has become a culture. Various scholars were consulted to produce evidence of some of the related literature on domestic violence cases. In addition, various methodologies were used that is, interviews, focus group discussions were conducted. This helped in gathering of information in Mashonaland East province from both the perpetrators and the victims.

From the analysis from Chapter One, it can be concluded that domestic violence cases are far from declining due to the current trends of women abuse in Zimbabwe which continue to increase. This is despite efforts made by different private and government stakeholders in the country to end all forms of gender based violence since the prevalence rate in the country is rather shocking. Analysis from Chapter One also indicates that, physical abuse was the prevalent form of abuse experienced by most women in Zimbabwe. However there are other forms of abuse domestic violence faced by women in the country such as emotional or psychological, verbal and sexual abuse though they are underreported due to deep rooted cultural beliefs in the country. Findings from the study have shown that, victims in most cases opt for seeking assistance from family elders and religious institutions. This is due to the docile nature of most women caused by their ignorance to report to the available laws that protects them.

Chapter two focused on the prevalence of domestic violence cases in Mashonaland East province. Factors such as poverty have caused rampant cases of domestic violence because most people in this province are unemployed this leads to most men turning to violence after realizing that the money they have earned from working in local farms is not enough. Most women in this province are marginalized due to the deep rooted cultural beliefs which perpetuate women abuse. It also needs to be highlighted that, most women in Mashonaland East province are economically handicapped hence they depend on their husbands which makes them vulnerable to continuous abuse. Commodification of most girls through lobola payment as well as alcohol, drug abuse has also influenced rampant cases of domestic violence in Mashonaland East province.

Analysis from the study has shown that domestic violence leads to socio-economic devastating effects which range from physical harm to isolation and emotional disturbances of the victim. It can lead to death among women of reproductive age. Domestic violence can also lead to injuries and disabilities as well as mental disturbances to the victim. Abused women are also at a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV-AIDS, cervical cervical infections. These diseases spread among them because women lack sexual autonomy for safe intercourse due to abuse. Further the damage brought by Domestic violence extends far beyond the women to the children. Children who grew up in violent relationships are more likely to be violent when they grew up.

Finally the study focused on assessing strategies that has been implemented to reduce cases of women abuse in Mashonaland East province. These strategies include, legal frameworks by the Government of Zimbabwe such as the Domestic Violence Act, Sexual Offenses Act, international protocols. More so, NGOs intervened by holding awareness campaigns and workshops in local communities aimed at educating the local people about domestic violence

issues. These strategies have been effective as they acted as an essential blueprint towards reducing cases of women abuse however they are gaps left which still needs to be fulfilled. Despite showing a level of commitment and sensitivity towards reducing cases of domestic violence their work has not successfully bear fruits as cases of domestic violence continue to persist in Mashonaland East province.

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