



SELINUS UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

**A Critical Analysis of Parenting Practices on the
Development and Behaviour of Adolescents: The Case of
Children's Homes in Zimbabwe**

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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of
Psychology
program at Selinus University

Faculty of Psychology
in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Psychology

2025

Abstract

This research was conducted to critically analyse the impact of parenting practices on the development and behaviour of adolescents residing in children's homes in Zimbabwe. The study used the multiple case study methodology where data was collected using focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and key informant interviews. A total of 279 participants consisting of nine administrators, 72 social mothers, nine couples of biological parents, 18 community elders, and 162 adolescents participated in the study. Evidence from the study strongly suggested that communities were a better alternative than children's homes for nurturing orphans and vulnerable children, especially preparing adolescents for transition into the society. The results of the study showed that the community in which the children's home is located has profound influence on the cultural, social and socio-economic values imparted to adolescents. The study established that parenting practices in Zimbabwe are continuously changing due to the impact of immigration, globalisation, social media, information technology, and cultural infusion. The study noted that biological parents focussed on love and affection, religious activities, relationship skills, education and learning, life skills development, health and safety issues while these aspects were rarely visible in children's homes. The study noted that the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013), the Majority Age Act (1982) and the Zimbabwe Children Protection Act (2002) were found to be major factors affecting choices of parenting practices in children's homes. Guided by the results of this study, a proposed contextual parenting model was developed for implementation in children's homes in Zimbabwe to enhance adolescent development and behaviour including the attainment of desired outcomes under physical intelligence, cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. In addition, the study proposed a management structure for the parenting model to create a conducive human development environment in children's homes.

Key Words

Administrator, Adolescent, Biological Parent, Children's Home, Cognitive Intelligence, Community Elder, Emotional Intelligence, Multiple Case Study, Parenting Model, Physical Intelligence, Qualitative Design, Social Mother, Spiritual Intelligence

Acknowledgement

This study is dedicated to my late loving mother Regina Zvoma
and
to my father Million Zvoma who has just turned 100 years of good life.
He has been a major source of motivation for my educational achievements
because of his consistent commitment to the education of the girl child.
May God continue to grant him more years of quality life.

Many thanks go to my children and their families, and to my little nephew Alex Zvoma
for their encouragement and most appreciated support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgement.....	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Chapter 1	1
Introduction and Aim of the Study.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Aim and Specific Objectives of the Study	4
1.4 Research Questions	5
1.5 Significance of the Study	5
1.6 Scope of the Study.....	6
1.7 Organisation of the study	6
Chapter 2.....	8
Literature Review	8
2.0 Introduction	8
2.1 Parenting Styles	8
2.2 Parenting Practices and Cultural Values	12
2.3 Emergence of Children’s Homes.....	17
2.4 Effects of Institutional Care on Children.....	20
2.5 Adolescent Lifestyle and Behaviour	22
2.6 Legislative and Policy Frameworks	24
2.7 Deinstitutionalisation.....	25
2.8 Summary of the Chapter.....	28
Chapter 3.....	29
Research Methodology.....	29
3.0 Introduction	29
3.1 Qualitative Research Design	29
3.2 Research Methodology.....	30
3.3 Target Population	31
3.4 Sampling Procedures.....	31
3.5 Data Collection Methods.....	32
3.5.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	32

3.5.2 In-depth Interviews.....	33
3.5.3 Key Informant Interviews (KII).....	33
3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation.....	33
3.6.1 Within-case Analysis.....	33
3.6.2 Cross-case Analysis.....	34
3.7 Ethical Issues.....	34
3.7.1 Informed Consent	34
3.7.2 Privacy and Confidentiality	34
3.7.3 Researcher-participant Relationship.....	34
3.7.4 Data integrity and accuracy	34
3.7.5 Ethical reporting	35
3.8 Summary of the Chapter.....	35
Chapter 4	36
Data Presentation.....	36
4.0 Introduction	36
4.1 Descriptive Data of Participants.....	36
4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants	37
4.1.2 Marital Status of Adult Participants	38
4.1.3 Religious Affiliations of Participants.....	39
4.1.4 Distribution of Participants in Selected Provinces.....	40
4.2 Presentation of Qualitative Data from Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews and In-depth Interviews.....	40
4.2.1 Origins of Children’s Homes in Zimbabwe	41
4.2.2 Parenting Practices in Zimbabwe and Their Impact on the Development of Adolescents in Children’s Homes	43
4.2.3 Consequences of Parenting Practices of Social Mothers as Measured Through Their Relationships with Adolescents.....	53
4.2.4 Parenting Differences Between Biological Parents and Social Mothers	68
4.3 Chapter Summary.....	81
Chapter 5.....	82
Discussion of Results	82
5.0 Introduction	82

5.1 Emergence of Children's Homes in Zimbabwe	82
5.2 Changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and their impact on parenting practices employed in children's homes	83
5.2.1 The Absence of a Father Figure in Child Institutions.....	87
5.2.2 Religious Influence in Children's Homes.....	88
5.2.3 Influence of Media in Children's Homes	89
5.2.4 Identity Crisis in Children's Homes	90
5.3 Consequences of Parenting Practices of Social Mothers as Measured Through Their Relationships with Adolescents	91
5.3.1 Psychosocial Distress Among Adolescents in Children's Homes	93
5.4 Parenting Differences Between Biological Parents and Social Mothers	94
5.4.1 Influence of Corporal Punishment on Adolescent Behaviour	96
5.5 Proposed contextual model of parenting practices to enhance the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe.	97
5.5.1 Assumptions of the proposed parenting model	98
5.5.2 Factors Influencing Parenting Practices	102
5.5.3 Adolescent Outcomes	104
5.6 Chapter Summary.....	108
Chapter 6.....	110
Conclusions.....	110
6.0 Introduction.....	110
6.1 Emergence of Children's Homes in Zimbabwe	110
6.2 Parenting Practices in Children's homes.....	110
6.3 Factors Influencing Changes in Parenting Practices	111
6.4 Parenting Practices Used by Social Mothers and Biological Parents	111
6.5 Recommendations	112
6.6 Contributions of the study.....	114
Appendices.....	116
Bibliography.....	121

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2. 1: Baumrind's (1967) (Maccoby and Martin (1983) Patterns of Parenting Styles	9
Table 4.1: Distribution of Participants by Category, Gender, Age and Educational Level.	37
Table 4.2: Distribution of Adult Participants by Marital Status	38
Table 4.3: Frequency Distribution of all the Participants by Religion.....	39

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Pie Chart Distribution of all Respondents by Province	40
Figure 5.1: Proposed Operational Management Structure	99
Figure 5.2: Inferred Parenting Model Employed in Children's Homes	100
Figure 5.3: Proposed Contextual Parenting Model	101
Figure 5.4: Factors Influencing Parenting Practices	103
Figure 5.5: Expected Adolescent Outcomes	105

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Aim of the Study

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the purpose, scope and context of the study. It highlights the aim of the study, statement of the problem, justification of the study, objectives of the study, key research questions, information on the location of the study, the theoretical frameworks and how data is collected.

While goods are manufactured in industry, human behaviour and personalities are “manufactured” in families and communities during childhood and adolescence. Parsons, (1951) argues that families are “factories” which produce human behaviour and personalities. A study on early childhood care and education in Kenya and Uganda established that households and communities in a child’s micro environment remain the most critical safety nets even under major transformation of the family and community (Okwany & Ngutuku, 2017). Murdock (1949), cited in (Haralambos & Holborn, 2008), concludes that: “No society has succeeded in finding an adequate substitute for the nuclear family to which it might transfer its functions”. To appreciate the significance of this finding, it is important to examine the structure and functions of a nuclear family.

According to the Institute for Family Studies (2021), a nuclear family has unique characteristics that include the following:

- shared values,
- shared responsibilities,
- a common surname,
- a common totem between the father and children,
- unconditional love,
- healthy attachment patterns, and
- an environment that supports growth and learning.

In order to realise the attainment of the family characteristics highlighted above, the father figure and the mother figure have important roles to play in order to establish a caring and nurturing family. According to The Institute for Family Studies (ibid), the father figure performs a number of critical roles that include the following:

- Provision of financial resources,
- Providing security for the family,
- Providing decent shelter for the family,
- Providing quality leadership to the family,
- Modelling healthy relational behaviour with family members,
- Being kind, nurturing, and genuinely connecting with children without distractions,

- Taking good care of himself both physically and mentally and modelling appropriate behaviour when help is needed,
- Being understanding and forgiving,
- Not imposing or projecting his notions onto his children,
- Giving his children the space to be themselves,
- Offering acceptance and compassion,
- Teaching and modelling healthy communication skills, as well as appropriate conflict resolution skills, and
- Setting boundaries and discipline standards appropriately (no violence, no spanking, no yelling, no withholding affection, and no prolonged punishment).

On the other hand, in the nuclear family the mother figure plays a central role in the formation of attachment with the child. According to Amato (2019), the mother figure performs important roles that include:

- Childbearing,
- Catering for the family,
- Managing family resources wisely,
- Teaching and nurturing the children to acquire acceptable moral and cultural values,
- Promoting cohesion among family members,
- Building a strong emotional bond with family members, and
- Caring for the social, physiological and safety needs of the family.

However, the execution of roles by the father figure and the mother figure have to be synchronised to guarantee consistence on the demands made on the children. In real terms, the father figure and the mother figure complement each other in the socialisation of their children.

Based on the characteristics and functions of the father and mother figures highlighted above, any changes in the structure of the family, its parenting practices and the environment surrounding it all, have an impact on the development and behaviour of children in particular of adolescents. In an African traditional setup, children belonged to the nuclear family, extended family and the community at large (Gohwa-Kapesa & Maunganidze, 2017). Together, these groups became natural sources of warmth, security and mutual support that produced socially accepted adolescent behaviours and personalities (Adinlofu, 2009). However, the modern culture has introduced child-institutionalised care as an alternative parenting practice by creating children's homes for orphans and vulnerable children globally (Carter, 2010). This has seen the marked decline of extended family and community functions on child care. However, the roles of the community and the society in child care should be considered seriously. A family is situated in a community which is part of the society. The society expects the family to be the first learning institution for the child. According to the Institute for Family Studies (ibid), a family is expected to teach its children the norms and values of the society that include respect, compassion, fairness, love, right and wrong, and responsibility. A family setup selected to raise orphans and vulnerable children is expected to discharge functions that closely resemble those found in a nuclear family.

In some cases, childcare has been taken up by children's homes that have been viewed as an alternative to the nuclear family. While children's homes have helped many orphans and vulnerable children for more than a century, their artificial environment and parenting practices

continue to produce adolescents who exhibit socially condemned behaviours and personalities (Okorodudu, 2010). In an effort to provide a possible family setup to raise orphans and vulnerable children, the Government of Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy (2010) has defined a six-tier safety net mechanism consisting of, in order of preference, nuclear family, extended family, community care, foster care, adoption and institutional care. For reasons to be explored, the first five preferences appear to have fallen away resulting in children's homes being legally accepted as an alternative to a nuclear family to raise orphans and vulnerable children. According to the Government of Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy (ibid), children's homes are legally empowered to wean adolescents on attaining the age of 18 years. This position is clearly stated in the Zimbabwe Legal Age Majority Act (1982) and the Zimbabwe Constitution, (2013) which states that an individual is an adult on the attainment of the age of 18 years. A critical question to raise is how adequate is the preparation of adolescents approaching the age of 18 years for adulthood when they are weaned from a children's home. The assumption of this law is that these nearly emerging adults who have no family or individuals to rely on are now capable to fend for themselves, to provide shelter for themselves, to exist in the society independently and to look for gainful employment. This study undertake a critical analysis of parenting practices employed in raising children in children's homes in Zimbabwe and their consequences on children approaching the age of 18 years. The study will be guided by leading human development theories, in particular Erikson's (1959) 'Theory of Psychosocial Development, Bowlby (1977) theory of Attachment and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Bio-Ecological Theory.

The choice of a children's home as an alternative to a nuclear family raises a number of structural and operational questions. Who are the father and mother figures? How are they selected? What are their basic characteristics (age, educational level, experience in raising children, etc.)? How do these key figures socialise children for life beyond the age of 18 years? How do these key figures instil personal and society values in children? How do they promote and sustain social cohesion among children in children's homes? Is the involvement of father and mother figures in children's homes motivated by financial gains or by compassion for orphans and vulnerable children or by both? How are children's homes regulated and managed and with what impact on the development and behaviour of adolescents? What parenting practices and styles are employed in children's homes to prepare adolescents for adult life beyond the age of 18 years? Is there some training of father and mother figures on development, social and cultural challenges faced by adolescents? What are the views of adolescents regarding their upbringing in a children's home? Arising from all these issues is the following fundamental question. What model of parenting practices will develop adolescents in children's homes to be acceptable adults in the society? This study explores and critically analyses parenting practices in selected children's homes and their consequences on emerging adults with regard to their acceptability in society. Consequently, the researcher will develop a model of parenting practices for raising children in children's homes who are well equipped to transition into adulthood in the Zimbabwean society.

1.1 Background of the Study

In Zimbabwe, child institutionalised care has been culturally and legally accepted as an alternative to a nuclear family. Historically, in a situation where the nuclear family failed to take care of the children for one reason or another, the duty was smoothly shifted to members

of the extended family and beyond that, the whole community (Muguwe et al., 2011). With such a parenting practice, orphans and vulnerable children were not removed from their natural communities and family members. Grandparents, aunts and uncles always took care of children left behind by one or the other of their relatives. It was common belief and practice that the family was the most basic unit for child socialisation (Muyila, 2006). Directly or indirectly, the outside community continued supporting those orphans and vulnerable children who were left in the hands of extended family members. As a result, it was common thinking in Africa that every child was everyone's child (Hansungule, 2003). During the 20th century, Africa underwent huge changes. First, Africa was turned into a continent of orphans as a result of civil and international wars as Africans tried to decolonise themselves. Later on, in the late 1980s, the continent was hit by the HIV/AIDS epidemic which resulted in the increase of numbers of orphans (Foster & Williamson, 2000). As a result of this pandemic, the need for more support systems for children's homes also increased. While children's homes seem to be doing a great job in providing for physiological, emotional and psychological needs of orphans and vulnerable children, the most worrisome thing is the behavioural problems of children from these homes. Richman (2000) concluded that institutionalisation places children at great risk of behavioural problems such as adolescent delinquency. In light of the concerns raised by Richman (ibid), the issue of raising orphans and vulnerable children in Zimbabwe deserves serious consideration by both the society and the government. The environment in which these children are raised should be a close proxy of a family consisting of a father figure, mother figure and children (usually referred to as a nuclear family). The pertinent issue is to understand the models of parenting practices being employed in children's homes in Zimbabwe for us to appreciate its reported negative consequences on adolescent behaviour.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Parenting is one of the most important activities of the family, community and society. It is aimed at producing an individual who is acceptable to the society. The challenge regarding this activity is understanding strategies, conditions and processes that must be taken into account when developing such an individual. Leading theorists (Bowlby, (1977), Erikson, (1959), and Bronfenbrenner, (1979) have advanced theories that help in the process of raising children. The acceptance of children's homes as a proxy of a nuclear family raises a fundamental issue of how they raise adolescents to transition into the society. To address this fundamental issue, this study explores and critically analyses parenting practices employed in children's homes in Zimbabwe and their impact on the development and behaviour of adolescents. As a major result of this study, the researcher will propose a model of parenting practices for use in children's homes in Zimbabwe to raise acceptable individuals in the society.

1.3 Aim and Specific Objectives of the Study

The Aim of the Study:

To critically analyse the impact of parenting practices on the development and behaviour of adolescents residing in children's homes in Zimbabwe.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study include:

- 1.3.1.1 To establish the origins of children's homes in Zimbabwe including their structural and operational systems;
- 1.3.1.2 To explore changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and their impact on parenting practices employed in children's homes;
- 1.3.1.3 To explore the differences between parenting practices used by biological parents and those of social mothers including the views of administrators and community elders;
- 1.3.1.4 To establish the consequences of parenting practices of social mothers on the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes; and
- 1.3.1.5 To develop a model of parenting practices to enhance the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research Questions

This study provides empirical answers to the following questions:

- 1.4.1 What are the social and historical factors that gave rise to children's homes in Zimbabwe and to what extent were these factors considered in generating the current parenting practices in children's homes?
- 1.4.2 What are the factors influencing changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and what are their impact on the parenting practices in children's homes?
- 1.4.3 What differences exist between parenting practices used by biological parents and those of social mothers and how are these differences viewed by administrators and community elders?
- 1.4.4 What are the consequences of parenting practices employed by social mothers on the development and behaviour of adolescents raised in children's homes?
- 1.4.5 What are the characteristics of a model of parenting practices that can enhance the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Any study that focuses on any aspect(s) of family functions should be considered significant and important because the family is the home port of all human beings. After all, what happens at this heart of human life has a bearing on what may happen later in life. Parenting practices are critical to the development of a whole person. Understanding what is involved in parenting, changes which may occur and how these changes may affect children, especially those raised in children's homes is important. Any changes in the structure of the family, on parenting practices and the environment surrounding the same will have an effect on adolescent behaviour and personality, especially in situations where the parenting is done away from the original family unit. Muguwe *et al.* (ibid) note that the concept of parenting practices, in spite of its

importance as a determinant of child personality and adult character, has not been much investigated by scientific procedures in Zimbabwe. As if that is not enough, most of the ideas and principles used in children's homes are those from studies carried out in developed countries and not in Zimbabwe. These ideas and principles do not give relevant information on children's behaviour in a Zimbabwean context. They also do not provide enough information on Zimbabwean morals, values, beliefs and methods in which children are raised. Therefore, a study on parenting practices in children's homes would help to identify effective parenting practices that produce individuals acceptable in society. In this regard, the results of this study will have significant implications for various stake holders including:

- Policy makers will have valuable insight into the specific needs of adolescents in children's homes leading to the development of more effective policies and regulations.
- Child welfare organisations will benefit from the results leading to the development of better parenting practices and training programmes for caregivers in children's homes.
- The findings of the study can help identify effective interventions to support the social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural development of adolescents in children's homes.
- The study will contribute to the body of knowledge on child development and the impact of institutional care.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on a number of issues related to the development of adolescents in children's homes. First, the sample of children's homes in the study are taken from different provinces to cater for cultural differences of ethnic groups in Zimbabwe. Second, the study explores areas that include, government policies on children's homes, social mother's knowledge of child development (physical intelligence, cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence), child protection, adolescent reactions, family reunification, education and administration of children's homes. Third, the study also targets the views and opinions of biological parents and elders in the community surrounding the children's home.

1.7 Organisation of the study

This study sequentially consists of the following major activities. First, literature review to gather relevant information from academic databases, journals and books. This will enable the researcher to identify key findings, methodologies, theoretical frameworks and gaps in the topic of research area. Second, the researcher will develop in detail a research design highlighting the specific procedures and the techniques including consideration of ethical issues. Third, the researcher will focus on selection of a sample from the population of children's homes in Zimbabwe. In addition, data collection tools will be developed to facilitate a systematic collection of empirical data from the selected participants in the study. Fourth, data analysis involving cleaning, organising and interpretation will be undertaken to draw meaningful findings conclusions. Fifth, the researcher will proceed to prepare the research report clearly

presenting the findings and discussing their implications and their significance. Sixth, as a major conclusion of the study, the researcher will propose a model of parenting practices for raising children in children's homes in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents literature that provides insights into the issues related to children's homes as an alternative to a nuclear family. The assumption being made is that a children's home is a family unit with the responsibility of socialising children. A family is a basic ecology where children's behaviour is manifested in childhood through negative or positive reinforcement (Sarwar, 2016). Alizadeh *et al.* (2011) argue that the family is a socio-cultural-economic arrangement with a significant influence on both the behaviour of the children and the development of their characters. Within the context of the family, parents socialise their children into culturally appropriate values and behaviors and these give the children social competence and ability to act as members of a social group. It is therefore critical to understand child development to fully appreciate the physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, social, political and educational growth that children go through from birth to early adulthood.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) advanced the ecological systems theory which attempts to define the environments through which a child grows and develops. The critical issue is to understand how to make these environments contribute positively to the development of adolescents. Closely related to the environments through which a child grows is the issue of the child's attachment to individuals who interact with him or her. Bowlby (1977) emphasized that attachment is exhibited through psychological tendencies to seek closeness to another person, to feel secure when that person is present, and to feel anxious when that person is absent. It is, therefore, important to explore from existing literature how these attachment patterns develop in children's homes and what consequences they have on adolescent behaviour. Another important area that requires us to delve into existing literature relates to the theory advanced by (Erikson, 1968) where it is suggested that children's development occurs in well-defined stages. It is therefore, important to search existing literature to understand how parents assist adolescents to navigate through the various stages of development. In particular, it is important to understand how adolescents deal with one of these stages which concerns the issue of identity versus role diffusion.

The researcher consulted various literature sources, including monographs, electronic journal articles, dissertations, theses and reports in order to explore critical viewpoints on the research objectives and theoretical frameworks of the study. The areas covered in the literature review include parenting styles, parenting practices and cultural values, emergence of children's homes, effects of institutional care on children, adolescent lifestyle and behaviour, legislative and policy frameworks, deinstitutionalisation and summary of chapter.

2.1 Parenting Styles

Baumrind (1967) introduced the concept of parenting styles to explain the different ways parents apply to control and socialise their children. She suggested three major parenting styles, namely authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style and permissive parenting

style. Maccoby and Martin (1983) suggested a fourth parenting style namely uninvolved/neglectful parenting style. Each parenting style has two attributes, namely responsiveness and parental demandingness. Baumrind (1966) defines the term responsiveness as the ratio of fostering self-assertion and individuality through actions of parents who are attuned, acquiescent and supportive to the demands and needs of children. Baumrind (ibid) argues that the level of responsiveness can be measured through the level of communication, reciprocity and warmth displayed by parents while dealing with children. In addition, she suggests that parents who stress on higher level of reciprocal behaviour, warmth and communication are considered to be highly responsive, whereas low levels of the delineated factors represent low responsiveness. In addition, (Maccoby, 1989) argues that higher levels of responsiveness can be found in both permissive and authoritative parenting styles. Baumrind (ibid) explains parental demandingness (also referred to as behavioural control) as the claims parents make on their children to comply with disciplinary measures. Each of the parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices and behaviours (Yusuf, 2018).

A parenting style is an affective context that sets the tone of interaction between the parent and the child (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). If the parent fails to choose an appropriate parenting style, the child might succumb to psychological and social challenges. Temperament, educational achievement, culture and socio-economic status have an effect on the choice of a parenting style. In addition, the mother's and father's parenting styles within a home can differ but should complement each other.

It is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to shape the behaviours of their children through guidance, teaching and control. As part of this role, (Joseph & John, 2008) established that parents must discuss new concerns, including misuse of services such as the internet, cell phones, drug addiction, underage pregnancy, peer-to-peer problems and emotional problems. For the researcher to easily identify parental styles in use at a children's home, it is important to highlight the characteristics of each of the parenting styles. Table 2.1 captures the different characteristics.

Table 2. 1: Baumrind's (1967) (Maccoby and Martin (1983) Patterns of Parenting Styles

Authoritarian Parenting Style	Authoritative Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style	Uninvolved Parenting Style
High demandingness/ control and low acceptance/ responsiveness. Engagement is strictly adult-centred. These parents often fear losing control over children, and they discourage open communication.	Moderate demanding/control, and acceptance/ responsiveness. Open communication, trust and acceptance and encouragement of psychological autonomy are typical to this pattern.	High acceptance/ high responsiveness, but low demandingness. These parents lack parental control. They are lenient and no limits, no enforcement of rules, avoid confrontation, focus on happiness over discipline.	Low responsiveness, low demandingness. These parents often fail to monitor or supervise the child's behaviour. They are minimally involved, little emotional support or guidance.

From Joseph and John (2018) shcolararticle.net/impact-of-parenting-styles-on-child-development/.

2.1.1 Authoritarian Parenting Style

Authoritarian parenting is directed at shaping, controlling and evaluating behaviour and attitudes of children to conform to a set standard of conduct with deviations meeting “forceful measures to curb self-will” (Chang, 2018). Sharing the same sentiments, (Cherry, 2015) asserts that authoritarian parents expect the child to follow the strict rules established by the parents and punishment would be meted for failing to follow the rules. Cherry (ibid) points out that such authoritarian parents usually fail to give reasons behind their rules but will still insist on compliance with their rules. Buttressing the above position, (Cashmore & Parkinson, 2012) added that children raised under authoritarian parents are under the absolute authority of their parents and lose their independence and freedom.

According to Baumrind, (1968) observes that the authoritarian parent leads by example, based on his or her own system of rigid moral constructs and lays down the law, without offering the child a reason. This leaves a child little latitude to develop his or her own belief system. Authoritarian parents are very demanding, but not responsive. These parents do not express much warmth or nurturing and utilise punishment with little or no explanation. Maccoby (2000) established that children from these parents are more aggressive or defiant over time and will likely suffer anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. Baumrind (ibid) further states that the authoritarian parenting style generally leads to obedient and proficient children who, however, rank lower in happiness, social competence and self-esteem.

The authoritarian parent generally sets out what the child should do, instead of allowing the child to choose. Cashmore & Parkinson (ibid) observe that children from authoritarian parents rarely take initiatives and are often characterised by a lack of spontaneity and intellectual curiosity. They are socially withdrawn and look up to others to decide what is right and tend to be low in self-confidence and lacking in social and academic competence. In addition, Darling & Steinberg (1993) observe that children of authoritarian parents have relatively lower levels of psychological well-being while (Santrock, 2017) adds that adolescents of authoritarian parents have low persistence to challenging tasks and have anti-social behaviours.

2.1.2 Authoritative Parenting Style

Supple & Small (2006) observe that authoritative parents define and determine rules associated with family, while encouraging adolescents to embrace that family for their own betterment (Sarwar, ibid). These parents also provide their children with guidance in a rational manner. This style also demands parents to be patient to explain to a child the consequences of an action. The authoritative parent values a child’s autonomy and self-expression, but knows when to put on the brakes (Maccoby, 2000). An authoritative parent directs the child’s activities in a rational, issue-oriented manner and encourages verbal “give and take” (Baumrind, ibid). Children are encouraged to be part of decision making and come up with their own ideas and exert their freedom. However, boundaries are established and compromises with parents made. In a similar vein, Santrock (ibid) claims that children of authoritative parents are lively and are of a happy disposition, self-confident and have the ability to master tasks. These children have well-developed emotional regulation and social skills.

Children and adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves and are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (Santrock, *ibid*). These children achieve academic competencies, are good at problem-solving, have social maturity, high self-esteem and confidence in completing set tasks and also show self-controlled thus are not likely to engage in disruptive behaviours (Maccoby, 1989). Baumrind (*ibid*) further claims that children of authoritative parents are good followers in most cases, whereas children of authoritarian parents cannot initiate any reasoning or do things their own way as they are so much used to the parent directing them on what to do.

According to Ballantine, (2001) parents monitor their children and impart clear standards for their children's conduct and their disciplinary methods are supportive rather than punitive, producing, in the process, happy, capable and successful children. Ballantine (*ibid*) adds that disciplining children without physical punishment seems best in today's world. The child is given a rational explanation for following rules Ballantine (*ibid*). Discourse between parents and children is encouraged and the parent uses adult reasoning and logic during communicative interactions. In addition, (Serfcik, 2009) points out that children who have been raised from authoritative homes score higher on a variety of measures of competence, social development, self-perceptions and mental health than those raised in authoritarian, permissive or neglectful homes.

2.1.3 Permissive Parenting Style

A permissive parent allows the child to regulate his/her own activities as much as possible (Baumrind, *ibid*). Children with such parents are often encouraged to exert their own independence, delegate their own interests, structure their household roles and even make their own decisions in life and such children often need little parental guidance in making decisions. Maccoby (*ibid*) argues that the permissive parent is a great cheerleader when it comes to encouraging the child to pursue his or her own goals and is always there for the child in case of crises. However, the permissive parent puts too much faith in the child's ability to know right from wrong and rarely leads by example (Sarwar, *ibid*). Cherry (*ibid*) observes that permissive parents try to reason with the child when it comes to his or her actions or manipulate the child into a different behaviour, but do not use punitive measures when the child misbehaves. Neither do they admonish inappropriate behaviour. Santrock (*ibid*) saw permissive parenting style as 'indulgent' or 'nondirective'. These parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are non-traditional and lenient. They do not require mature behaviour and they allow considerable self-regulation while also avoiding confrontation.

Baumrind (*ibid*) states that the permissive parenting style is nurturing and accepting but it avoids making demands or imposing controls of any kind on the child. The parenting style allows children to make many of their own decisions at an early age when they are not yet capable of doing so. Although some permissive parents truly believe that this style of child-rearing is best, many others resort to it because they lack confidence in their ability to influence their child's behaviour and are disorganised and ineffective in running their households (Cherry, 2015). Children with permissive parents tend to have high self-esteem and good social skills but many of them are prone to problem behaviour such as shunning responsibilities.

2.1.4 Uninvolved Parenting Styles

Maccoby and Martin (ibid) assert that parents who are minimally involved in their children's lives usually score lowly in both responsiveness and demandingness. These parents do not place healthy boundaries around their children, allowing them to explore life beyond what their emotional and spiritual maturity can handle. They allow and expect others to raise their children for them. Children of uninvolved parents were likely to be clingy and needy, rude and easily get into trouble (Okorodudu, 2010). Although these children enjoy high levels of psychological and emotional well-being, they have lower levels of achievement coupled with higher levels of misconduct. In addition, these children are demanding and exhibit low development of emotional intelligent. Santrock (ibid) claims that children develop best when they have guidance, love and are given boundaries. In addition, Santrock (ibid) added that if children are indulged or neglected and get little guidance, they lack self-control and may end up as selfish, unruly and impulsive. Although most researchers have applied Baumrind's ideology, Joseph & John (ibid) argue that the four basic parenting styles do not always map onto local parenting methods. Good parenting prepares children to meet the demands of the specific culture or subculture in which they live. Parenting styles applied by caregivers are largely influenced by the way they were socialised as well as their temperament, educational achievements and culture, among others. The result of any given parenting style on any given child behaviour depends on many related factors (Joseph & John, 2008). These include the age and sex of the child, characteristics of the caregiver, socio-economic factors, and political and cultural factors.

2.2 Parenting Practices and Cultural Values

Parenting refers to carrying out the responsibilities of raising and relating to children in such a manner that the child is well-prepared to realise his or her full potential as a human being until adulthood (Baumrind, 1991). On the other hand, parenting practices are specific behaviours and actions that parents use in their interactions with their children. In fact, parenting practices are the concrete manifestation of parenting styles. While parenting styles create the overall emotional context in which parenting practices occur, the latter reflect the cultural understanding of children, these are behaviours and actions provided by parents and care-givers to ensure that children are healthy and safe, acquire skills, and get social and basic cultural values to be acceptable in society.

Research and theory have identified several parenting practices, including discipline techniques (e.g., time out, reasoning, rewards, grounding), communication styles (e.g., active listening, assertive communication), monitoring and supervision (e.g., setting curfews, checking homework, checking cleanliness), providing support and encouragement (e.g., praising effort, offering help), social development (e.g., encouraging playdates and social interaction, teaching social skills, encouraging face-to-face interaction and outdoor play, promoting a sense of community), and cognitive development (e.g., encouraging reading in language development, encouraging curiosity and innovation, setting academic achievement expectations, enrolling children extra curriculum). The extent to which parents successfully monitor their child and

engage in effective discipline practices, as well as their ability to maintain a warm, close relationship are critical in promoting child development (Lippold & Jensen, 2017).

Culture is a way of life of a group of people normally passed on from one generation to another (Bornstein, 2012). It consists of knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities, attitudes, and habits. Cross-cultural studies affirm that different groups of people have different beliefs and cultural activities. These beliefs and behaviours shape how parents care for their offspring. Once one has decided to become a parent, he or she has committed himself or herself to be the first teacher for his or her child. Chang (ibid) claims that parenting is one of the oldest human activities normally carried out by a biological parent. Parenting practices differ from one place to another and from time to time due to a number of factors that include culture, personality, parental background, educational level, socio-economic status, family size and religion. Bornstein (ibid) claims that roles are defined within the family system in ways that may influence parenting. Family members may operate with a division of labour, based on their own personal resources, mental health, skills and education but in a complementary way. As systems, families are interdependent with the broader world and are susceptible to influences and inputs from their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Actions occurring in one system can result in reactions in another. For example, children who have not developed healthy relationships with their parents may have difficulties in relating to teachers. There is an increasing acceptance across various development theories that an individual develops within a specified environment (Murry & Lippold, 2018).

Parents influence the development of children's personalities as they provide them with the basics of life like food, shelter, protection and health care. To this end, one expects individuals and organisations which influence the parents (grandparents, friends and media) to also have a direct influence in the development of children (Falbo, 1991) & (Wu & Leng, 2020). In child development, the question of nature versus nurture has remained an interesting debate. Nature refers to the genetic inheritance and biological factors that influence an individual's traits, behaviours and characteristics. These traits include eye and hair colour, temperament and personality, and pre-disposition for certain medical conditions. On the other hand, nurture refers to the environmental factors that shape an individual's development, including experiences, upbringing, culture, and social interactions. These factors include parenting styles in family environment, educational experiences, cultural influences and social norms, and life experiences and events. An environment is often thought of as having the ability to shape a child's lifestyle, personality, and self-concept. These attributes are inherent in the child. Since the family is the first learning institution of a child, parents are expected to have the most significant influence on the development of a child. Most children depend on their parents for companionship and guidance in the first 18 years of their lives. During this critical time, parental love, disciplinary measures, motivational strategies, and counselling and guidance are important factors in the development of a child (Chang, ibid). Environmental factors continuously evolve leading to globalisation, information technology, mobile phones, social media and the television which have significantly impacted on parenting practices. Images of childhood that dominate in popular media show that a child can either be a victim of abuse and manipulation or a dangerous perpetrator of anti-social and criminal behaviour.

Literature has shown that many cultures in developing countries welcome children into stable, nurturing extended family structures where duty and responsibility override individualism as the dominant value system (James & Prout, 1997). Bornstein (2013) points out that parenting calls for interpersonal skills and it makes emotional demands while Bornstein (2012) stresses

that knowledge of parenting, attitudes of parents and parenting practices are all found within family composition, social class, ethnicity and culture. These assertions reveal how parents treat their children and their thoughts about them which affects how their children develop. According to Bowlby (1977), children develop secure emotional connections with adults they are attached to and who care for them. However, parents develop these connections in different ways, depending on their cultural beliefs about parenting and child development. It also rests on the parents' preferences, capacities, and abilities. For example, in Shona culture, children are expected to always listen and respect their elders (authoritarian parenting style) while in other cultures, such as western cultures, children are taught from an early age to speak up for themselves (authoritative parenting style).

Since the earliest experiences are with the parents, it should be argued that the quality of parenting practices is a crucial component of the individual's psychosocial development. In support of the aforementioned, Rutter *et al.* (2010) argue that the experiences of an adolescent in the family set the course of the child's psychosocial development. Hence, once these original qualities are established, they are difficult to change. Therefore, parents have a commitment of teaching their adolescents, the skills and knowledge that they will need in order to function as effective adults in society. In fact, parenting is left to trial-and-error learning by individuals who must prepare the next generation to cope emotionally and socially in the future. Khanday (2016) noted that parents develop feelings of frustration and disappointment, especially the feeling of incompetence to do an adequate job of teaching their adolescent child.

Research consistently shows that parenting is linked to the behavioural and emotional development of adolescents. On another note, Tingvold *et al.* (2012) assert that realities around economic and cultural globalisation and its corollary demands on families have compelled parents to re-orient their socialisation precepts and practices in a way which brings together the traditional and modern cultural values of bringing up children. On the other hand, Kurtz-Costes (2015) asserts that today's parents often have to deal with parenting within a cultural milieu different from the one they grew up in. Part of this disjuncture involves raising children in child institutions. In recent years, the role of family factors, particularly parenting, on adolescents' psychological well-being has received increased attention (Khanday, *ibid*). Kurtz-Costes (*ibid*) claims that it is important to discuss the needs for parent education and to state what parents need to properly determine the values that are important to transmit to their adolescents to help them cope with changes in society. Kurtz-Costes (*ibid*) adds that these values should include a commitment to personal integrity and the use of one's abilities to the fullest in contributing to society and the life around. Other values relating to rationality, the acquisition of abstract knowledge for its own sake, effective coping with an environment that society feels can be mastered and the use of self-restraint in consideration of others' needs are just as critical. While these values are taught by parents in a bid to contribute to good parenting practice, the question remains as to whether the same is taught to children in children's homes by caregivers. Santrock (*ibid*) reveals that childhood experiences of today's parents are different from those of children who lived during pre-modernisation and this can be a hindrance to good parenting. The parents who raised those people who are parents today were also affected by these time and generational differences in preparing children for the future. Santrock (*ibid*) further emphasises that patterns of parental behaviour correlate with children's responses when, where possible, parents adopt a consistent parenting practice over time. Children tend to adapt to parenting practices with consistent patterns of behaviour of their own. These personal adaptations by children tend to persist throughout childhood, consistently developing into an adulthood personality. Kurtz-Costes (*ibid*) notes that a child who grows up to become a parent may adopt the same parenting

practices that they saw modelled at home, thereby perpetuating those patterns of behaviour across generations.

Although parents use different methods of parenting available for bringing up children, each option usually focuses on fostering the emotional needs of both parents and children (Hoskins, 2014). Some of the strategies that parents use to bring up their children are therapeutic in nature; others attempt to resolve or prevent conflicts between parents and children and; others propose a more humanitarian strategy for conducting parent-child interaction. Adults who need the information because they may have found that what they modelled from their own parents was inadequate for guiding the behaviour of adolescents, eagerly embrace these approaches and strategies for parenting (Hoskins, *ibid*). Parents are expected to monitor and control how adolescents develop yet the same parents might be struggling with pressing economic activities to sustain the family (Aysegul, 2008). Emery *et al.* (1993) suggest that poor parenting practices end up affecting children's cognitions. Factors which constitute negative parenting (poor parenting) include parental harshness, aggression, lack of love, lack of affection, lack of care, lack of adequate monitoring and supervision and lack of control, to mention a few (Aysegul, *ibid*). These and a host of other conditions may raise or spike the adolescents' depressive symptoms, maladaptive behaviours and enhance adolescents' health problems.

The parenting practice employed by parents to bring up their children informs the parent-child interaction that emerge across situations. These practices are also non-direct behaviours such as tone of voice and gestures, among others. The same parenting practices may have different outcomes when they are expressed or implemented differently (Darling & Steinberg, *ibid*). For example, parental affection may be typically perceived as a positive parenting practice but if this kind of parental affection is expressed in a type of emotional climate that is usually less warm or overly controlling, it may not be received in a similar manner. The parenting practice is associated with the adolescent in healthy development and it gives equilibrium between affection and support with the corresponding degrees of parental control when it comes to managing the behaviour of the adolescents. Children who are brought up in care homes will not have the opportunity to be self-reliant and be autonomous within a set of parental limits, rules and guidelines.

Parenting practices employed to discipline children can either produce negative or positive developmental results, hence many parents usually use a combination of different parenting styles to discipline their children, especially adolescents. The behaviour of the adolescent determines the parenting style and parenting practices to be adopted by the parents. Assuming either the authoritarian or the authoritative parenting style is chosen, the parents' objective is to set and enforce rules according to their culture and to deal with the specific behaviour of the adolescent (Pinquart & Kauser, 2018). A responsible, cooperative and motivated adolescent is likely to have parents who are authoritative in parenting style. In addition, an adolescent who is immature, irresponsible and uncooperative is likely to elicit an authoritarian or uninvolved parenting practice. Therefore, parenting has gained importance due to its long-lasting correlations on child's personality and behaviour. Amos (2013) observes that there are various ways in which African children are brought up by their parents which are in line with their people's cultural values and are meant to produce a responsible citizen. Some of these parenting practices relate to story-telling (folktales), the extended family, traditional rites and the mother's care, attention and love. Rutter *et al.* (*ibid*) argue that parents are models to adolescents and they raise their children following what their parents did with them. Expectedly, parents who are brought up in a strict environment create similar conditions for their own children (Aysegul, *ibid*). Literature

reviews reveal that in most African cultures, the use of high control, authority and punishment is thought to bring the best out of a child; whereas treating a child in an institutional care in the same manner may legally translate to abuse.

According to Degbey and Saeed (2012), the family is the major source of necessities of life and health, love and tenderness, food, water, clothing, shelter and sanitation that are made possible by the socio-economic cultural and environmental conditions. Thus, in discussing major issues concerning parenting, it would be impossible to overlook the functions of the family. The African systems in countries like Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Zambia and Zimbabwe have been influenced by external systems which changed, mostly in a negative way, the rich parental values these people had long held (Gelfand, 1982) & (Amos, *ibid*). The extended family system which is under pressure is rapidly being eroded and failing to fulfil its primary role of child socialisation (Amos, *ibid*). In the urban areas for instance, the nuclear family is prominently cropping up to the exclusion of the extended family that had for long been central in the socialisation process.

Mensch *et al.* (2001) observe the overbearing role of the media in family lives which even replaces the traditional folktales (Amos, *ibid*). Children now prefer television, the internet and the computer which teach them little of their African heritage and values. Many young people have lost touch of the rich cultural values of their African origins, especially regarding what is expected of them in society. Hammarberg *et al.* (2008) point out that presently, teenage pregnancy is on the increase because young girls no longer consider values where things like virginity and marriage are concerned and they are likely to have children before they think about marriage (Amos, *ibid*). Some young women fall pregnant just to prove their fertility. Many, because of the lack of parental care and control, lack the commitment to stay with one partner (Amos, *ibid*). This comes with challenges of sexually transmitted diseases and also an increase in children abandoned by their parents who now roam the streets in cities as hawkers, prostitutes, pickpockets and armed robbers. Amos (*ibid*) posits that it would be vital to note that African culture is a major determinant of how adolescents develop and this calls then on African nuclear families to rise up and restore the neglected extended family unit which is being destroyed in cities. Nuclear families need to get in touch with the extended families again by visiting their rural homes and patching up relations with the rest of the family unit. Parents ought to also introduce their children to the entire extended families; that is, to both paternal and maternal relationships.

On another note, Mutambara (2015) argues that parental factors are critical in the development of adolescents' psychosocial problems. Given the complex nature of relating specific parenting practices to particular domains of child development, conceptualisation of parenting practices was developed as a heuristic device to establish parenting practices at a global level. Amos (*ibid*) states that people share universal human cultural traits despite the differences of the environments they inhabit. Bornstein (*ibid*) notes that even when cultures share universal traits, each culture has its own specific ways of carrying out or expressing its values. Cultural differences even among ethnic groups where parenting is concerned can cause misunderstandings between children and caregivers in the children's homes and can be very stressful (Chang, *ibid*; Murray *et al.* (2011). This point will have a significant bearing in the selection of children's homes in this study.

2.3 Emergence of Children's Homes

One cannot study children's homes in Zimbabwe without referring to the emergence of the first children's homes in Europe. Some of the children's homes that emerged in Zimbabwe trace their origins to Europe. The Catholic Encyclopaedia (2020) reports that historians suggest that the Roman Catholic Church founded the first Children's homes in Western Europe and North America called orphanotrophia in the first century. Later on, in the Middle Ages, foundling (or orphan) homes for abandoned children were set up by the Church in Italy, and the practice spread across Europe (Carter, 2010). A foundling home was a means of taking neglected and abandoned children away from the streets to make the problem invisible in the society. The homes were originally meant to support widows and orphans of dead military personnel until the age of 18 years (McKenna, 1911).

The participation of churches helped to elevate the status of orphans and vulnerable children, especially in Southern Europe. Roman emperors issued edicts against infanticide which was prevalent between 315 AD and 451 AD. The church councils continued with the tradition of elevating the status of children even after the fall of the Roman Empire. The facilities especially designated for infants and children were widespread in many European cities, usually under the direction of the church and these had a receiving cradle attached to a revolving door where the depositor would ring a bell to announce the arrival of the "little stranger". The door would then open to accept and let in the infant into the asylum while maintaining the anonymity of the depositor. In medieval Europe, the Plato Laws, 927 were enacted at the time of reformation, which say that:

"Orphans should be placed under the care of public guardians. Men should have a fear of the loneliness of orphans and of the souls of their departed parents. A man should love the unfortunate orphan of whom he is guardian as if he were his own child. He should be as careful and as diligent in the management of the orphan's property as of his own or even more careful still (McKenna, *ibid*)".

UNICEF (2013) estimated that, globally, there were approximately 153 million children who had lost a mother or a father with 17.8 million of them having lost both parents. The most frequent causes of separation of children from parental care include poverty, lack of access to basic services, abuse, neglect, disease, disabilities and disasters. UNICEF (2012) estimated that at least 2.2 million children in the world lived in children's homes and these included all types of residential care, from small (15 or fewer children) to large-scale institutions. This number is considered by many to be a significant underestimate, given that many orphanages around the world are unregistered and the children living within them are not officially counted. UNICEF (*ibid*) reported that if orphans were in a country of their own, the population would rank 9th in the world. For example, in Rwanda, 28 out of 30 children's homes were found to have between 16 and 566 children.

UNICEF (*ibid*) further reported that, in many countries across Europe, vulnerable children were placed in one institution but the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) was against the decision. Instead, they preferred a family model where children can freely express views and be taken seriously from the earliest ages. This provided a conducive environment in which children can exercise their rights to be heard in the wider

society. The Convention also acknowledged that such children should enjoy all the rights enshrined in the law. UNICEF Regional Office for CEE/CIS and UNICEF (2010) reported that in Western Europe, an estimated 0.2 to 1% of all children lived in foster families or in residential centres. Out-of-home placement is considered an ultimate choice, especially when open care services have proved to be inadequate and the child's psychosocial development is seriously endangered. In Central and Eastern Europe, 43% of children who need substitute care are placed in residential care (Boswell, 1998). A survey carried out by Browne *et al.* (2006) in Western Europe established that the vast majority of children averaging some 69% were placed in institutions because of parental abuse and neglect, 4% due to abandonment, 4% because of disability and 23% for social reasons such as family ill health or parent in prison.

Fuchs (1984) claims that in the United Kingdom, foundling hospitals were founded in 1741 by a philanthropist sea captain, Thomas Coram, to cater for the maintenance and education of deserted young children. Sentimental philanthropy in the 18th Century initiated the birth of the first charitable institutions. Physicians, surgeons and nurses were assigned to serve six infants each in the orphan houses (Heywood, 1998). The first charitable institutions were established through the efforts of Edward Rudolf in the mid-18th Century. He was touched by the lives of children who were not humanely treated by society. He suggested that the Church of England lead social action for such disadvantaged youths. This gave birth to the Central Home for Waifs and Strays. Rudolf did not like the idea of children going into work houses as they were often considered as places of last resort.

Many people regarded these institutions with fear and distrust because there was no assurance of absolute consistency in managing the behaviours of these children. Also, the institutions did not provide a good environment for a child who was growing up, and building his or her emotional resilience and self-confidence. Rudolf preferred to keep children in their local community rather than move them to care homes. His vision was to give the poor, homeless children a loving and secure “family” environment and to do this, he set up small “family” groups or cottage houses, each with 10 children aged between five and 14 years with a master and matron acting as parents.

Heywood (ibid) revealed that, in 1868, there were other children's homes in London, such as the one founded by Thomas Boverman, a minister of the Methodist Church who was moved by the fate of street children in London. The home started with two boys and girls were admitted later. The home was made up of houses which were divided into small family units and run by a ‘house mother’ and ‘house father; in marked contrast to large institutions and work houses common at the time. Fuchs, (ibid) reported that the women who took care of these children went through a child-care training course. The graduates of this programme were called “the sisterhood” or “the sisters of the children”. At that time, many orphanages practised some form of binding out in which children, as soon as they were old enough, were given as apprentices to the need households.

As time went by, the number of these children swelled and homes could not be readily found. The alms houses became the standard refugee camps for the children. The declining standards of care for the children in alms-houses was linked to their failure within these houses to have the right moral climate in which children could grow up. The assumption being that the poor were immoral and could, therefore, not be in alms-houses as this would not help them in any way (Fuchs, ibid). Moving children from alms-houses into orphanages was thus meant to turn impressionable children into “worthy” citizens imbued with work ethics, something which alms-houses were thought to lack (Heywood, ibid). Orphanages had schedules for activities like

work and prayer and others which focused on learning and maintaining ‘correct’ ways of living. Reforms focused on avoiding a generation of paupers by encouraging children to be brought up in the slothful alms-houses environment. The social and moral costs of holding children in alms-houses were of great concern and social reformers soon took up the cause as religious orders for orphans as philanthropists.

In Africa, levels of institutionalisation were always low as the extended family normally absorbed orphaned children and other victims of family casualties. Abebe and Aase (2007) claim that in many African countries, the only orphanages that existed and which are still there today, were set up by missionaries before the countries attained their independence. Private orphanages are now mushrooming in contemporary Africa as faith-based organisations, NGOs and private donors seek to respond to the growing numbers of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS and armed conflicts in such as those in Ethiopia (Abebe & Aase, *ibid*). Historically, the emergence of children’s homes in Africa shares the same causes of poverty, the ravaging burden of HIV/AIDS, broken families rendering the children vulnerable to all forms of abuse and inappropriate care. There is also consensus from researchers that faith-based organisations and churches are the major players in the development of children’s homes in Africa, with governments providing the necessary policy and legal frameworks to ensure that children’s rights are upheld.

According to Faith to Action Initiative (2015), the 19th Century saw an explosion in the number of charitable children’s homes, from small homes run by a local charitable organisation or philanthropist, to well-known national organisations. A number of religious groups operated children’s homes through charities, churches and other voluntary bodies. Faith-based agencies have played and continue to play a crucial role in providing care and assistance to disadvantaged and needy children as they are frequently the first to recognize and respond in situations of need to children and families. Pastors also have the confidence of members of their group, and they can talk and act with authority to help organise and lead local responses. In many HIV/AIDS affected communities throughout Africa and around the world, faith-based groups have provided psychosocial support in the form of food, health, education, clothing and shelter to those under difficult circumstances, especially women and children. Many of these initiatives are small, but the influence they have on strengthening families is significant. In the case of Zimbabwe, Faith to Action Initiative (*ibid*) reported that local faith-based initiatives were providing a significant amount of help that was derived from the community itself, demonstrating the resilience of communities and the innate sustainability of their actions. We now review why, how and when children’s homes emerged in Zimbabwe.

2.3.1 The 1896/7 Chimurenga (Uprising) War in Zimbabwe

The Ndebele and Shona uprisings against the British South Africa Company’s administration started in March and June 1896, respectively. The influence and consequences of the Chimurenga war are well-documented (Chigwedere, (2001); Jackson *et al.*, (2001); Mudenge, (1986); Pankhurst, (1998) and many of the people who died were heads of families who left behind orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children. By March 1897, colonial military settlers concluded that the quickest way to suppress the Shona uprising was to starve them into submission by burning down their crops of maize (Foster & Williamson, (2000); Stanlake, (1898). The

worst result of the fighting was the suffering of women and children. Reverend Temple, quoted by (Zvobgo, 1991) observed from the war how:

“The Solusi Mission of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church had between 20 and 30 children, some of them orphans and others who had been abandoned by their parents”.

Children of the Shona people who died in the war were kept at Chishawasha Mission of the Roman Catholic Church as orphans. Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kaguvi’s children were part of the orphans at this mission (Schmidt, (1992); Zvobgo, *ibid*). Keeping orphaned and abandoned children at Solusi Mission and Chishawasha Mission was not by design, but by military force. and apart from other effects elsewhere, the war created the earliest institutions for children, something African societies had never experienced in the region before the colonialists came.

In addition to the Chimurenga war 1896/7, the local people experienced other devastating challenges, namely famine, disease outbreaks, domestic violence, and HIV/AIDS pandemic. First, the consequences of the uprising lead to the inability of people to cultivate any new crops to improve their food security, (Vambe, 1972). This resulted in a severe famine which lead to many families breaking down and their inability to care for their children. Second, the outbreaks of diseases resulted in man losses of life that left many children without parents to care for them. This increased the number of children who needed institutional care. Third, since the birth of Zimbabwe in 1980 domestic violence has become a menacing phenomenon leading to the displacement of women and children with the latter ending up in children’s homes. Furthermore, HIV/AIDS pandemic has wiped out many adults in families leaving children desperately needing institutional care. All these social challenges have significantly contributed to the need for establishing children’s homes in Zimbabwe. By 2017, Zimbabwe had 39 children’s homes and of these, eight were operated by the government and the remaining 31 were operated by churches and faith-based organisations.

2.4 Effects of Institutional Care on Children

Attachment is an emotional bond and is a lasting psychological connectedness between people (Bowlby, 2008). Parents play a pivotal role when they afford their children the chance to grow up in an environment that responds and respects their emotional needs and gives them the chance to develop skills that are necessary in coping with anxieties, fears, and any other environmental and societal challenges. The capacity of parents to nurture a sense of identity and self-worth in their children is important for the early growth of the children (Bretherton, (1985); Keller & Chaudhary, (2017). Primary care-givers ought to be available and responsive to a child’s needs allow the child to develop a sense of security and an ability to navigate and manage social relationships in adult life. Children exposed to abuse and neglect by their primary care-givers are usually insecure and have attachment problems (Hildyard & Wolfe, 2002).

Caregiver’s attachment patterns are particularly critical for the early emotional and social growth of a child. When children have an unstable relationship, the caregiver becomes a source of danger or harm and leaves the child in conflict. Without the necessary or required security and support from a primary caregiver, children struggle to trust others when in distress, leading

to their anxiety or anger. Attachment disturbances are some of the most notable effects of institutionalised care dating back to seminal observations of the 1940s (Burlingham & Freud, (1944); Bronfenbrenner, (1979); Nelson *et al.* (2007). While it is uncontested that care institutions offer a clean environment, adequate nutrition and even good medical care, the rotating shifts of caregivers and their large numbers (with a ratio of caregivers to children of up to 1:12) impact negatively on adolescents. Crockenberg *et al.* (2008) argue that such arrangements where care-givers are many and seemingly always changing, affect the growth of stable relationships between children and caregiver. By their third birthday, many institutionalised children would have related to 50 or more different caregivers (St Petersburg Orphanage Research Team, 2008) and these children would not have created a lasting personal relationship with any of these caregivers. Bronfenbrenner (*ibid*) argues that a home environment provides better conditions for development when there is positive interaction and goal consensus between the setting and other settings in a youth's life. Buttressing the above sentiments, Burlingham & Freud (1944) add that institutional care settings typically do not meet the conditions of the average expected environment. In such settings, internalising disorders in young children, which include depression (withdrawal, persistent sadness) and anxiety (Bulanda & Majumdar, 2009) are likely to occur simultaneously with, and or independently of, externalising disorders which include non-compliance, aggression, and coercive behaviours directed at the environment and others (Dishion, 2016).

A study on perceived parent-child relations and adolescent self-esteem conducted by Bulanda & Majumdar (2009) reveals that weakened attachment during socialisation may result in children having a low self-esteem, and an aversion to touch and physical affection. The adolescent might flinch, laugh, or even say "ouch" when touched rather than producing positive feelings, and may, generally, perceive touch and affection as threats. Rage may be conveyed directly by tantrums or acting out, or through deceptive, passive-aggressive behaviour. In socially appropriate acts the child can mask his or her frustration and these include giving a high-five that hurts or hugging someone too hard. The teenager could act as though he or she had no conscience and display no guilt, regret or remorse even after having behaved badly (Jones *et al.*, 2018).

Ainsworth & Bowlby (1991) report that the initial studies on attachment within child institutions suggested that infants brought up in residential group care, even in institutions involving multiple caregivers, develop selective attachments. However, these early studies did not observe infant-parent relationships with the Strange Situation Paradigm (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). This involves the infant and care-giver being separated and then reunited, along with the introduction to an adult stranger in a set order. Children show insecurity by avoiding the caregiver, specifically, if they have little interaction with their care-giver. They even show no signs of distress when he or she leaves the room. When the caregiver returns during the strange situation, avoidant babies do not re-establish contact and might even turn their back or look away. The first such report came from the Metera Babies Centre in Athens, Greece (Rutter *et al.*, (2010); Vorria *et al.*, (2003). The study was designed to investigate children who had been reared from birth in residential care and who had not encountered adverse family circumstances before institutional life. In the institution with its parents, all infants living in residential community care were examined to ensure that the children displayed some sort of attachment activity to their most familiar caregivers. The results showed that the majority (66%) of the infants brought up in residential group care exhibited disorganised patterns of attachment, when their most familiar caregiver was absent, compared to 25% of the infants in the comparison group of children brought up in a nuclear family (Vorria *et al.*, *ibid*).

In a similar situation, Zeanah (2000) carried out a study on continued attachment disorder, basing on the quality and sensitivity of institutional childcare. After comparing the emotional attachment problems of three groups of children from Romania, the study found out that very few children raised by their biological parents showed attachment problems. Rutter *et al.* (2010) observed that children who were brought up in small family-like homes with four consistent caregivers also showed some attachment problems whilst children raised in institutionalised homes with 20 rotating caregivers showed significant attachment problems. Even in those institutionalised homes with quality services in terms of emotional attachment, the adolescents will struggle to form relationships in adulthood.

Research conducted in Russia has shown that one in three children who leave residential care become homeless, one in five end up with a criminal record and one in ten commit suicide (Foster & Williamson, 2000). Hence, countries with a history of institutional care have registered developmental problems faced by children who grow into young adults and later experience difficulties reintegrating into society. These children face negative consequences from society as their development and adulthood productivity get affected (Sachiti, 2011). They become vulnerable to medical and psychosocial changes found in institutional homes. Some of the problems are short-term effects where children risk contracting severe illnesses and may also develop language impairments. Similarly, long-term effects for the children include the development of psychological problems such as personality disorders. Sachiti (*ibid*) asserts that even if the institutions are good, they cannot adequately prepare the adolescents for the outside world. It is thus crucial to pay attention to the negative consequences noted by Browne *et al.* (2006) and Sachiti (*ibid*) who claim that children's rights are grossly compromised and, therefore, it is preferable to have a community-based approach rather than an institutionalised approach in dealing with orphans and vulnerable children.

2.5 Adolescent Lifestyle and Behaviour

A WHO (2006) report defines adolescence as the period of life between 10 and 19 years of age. Adolescent lifestyles are shaped at a personal and also at a community level. At a personal level, lifestyles are the results of decisions made according to individual competences whereas at a community level, especially during adolescence, lifestyles start to unfold in social and community environments where opportunities for constructive leisure play an important role. For most children, lifestyle issues become a concern between the ages of 16 and 18. This adolescence period is usually challenging for everyone within the home as the needs of adolescents are unique when compared to other developmental stages. During this time of life, the adolescents grow physically and change in addition to their new emotional, psychological, social and mental experiences which have to be handled. Hall (1904), who coined the term 'Storm and Stress', views the adolescence period as a period of semi-criminality which he says is normal for all healthy adolescents. Hall (*ibid*) stresses that the period is characterised by storm and stress with children having to deal with various emotional, psychological and academic concerns.

Adolescents' behaviour is a result of how children are reared, especially the cultural influences of the process (James & Prout, 1997). According to UNICEF (2013) adolescents undergo numerous phases of human development such as cognitive, emotional (especially negative) and behaviour change. It is during this period that parents are required to have a wide understanding

of the adolescent developmental changes in order to avoid conflicts, which are more likely when the adolescent is experiencing depressed moods (Cole & McPherson, 1993). These conflicts are also experienced when the adolescent is experiencing other problems such as substance abuse and when the adolescent is maturing (Buchanan et al., 1992).

During adolescence, children go through various emotions in relating to their parents, caregivers, peers, teachers and society at large. The emotions may be aggressive and inhibitory; that is, fear, anxiety and worry, or they could be joyous and happy in nature. Adolescence in contemporary times is a particularly stressful period as it is affected by many stressors from various sources. James & Prout (1997) observe that the period is characterised by rebelliousness resulting from a non-conducive environment. Stressors may be from intra and inter-psychic spheres and may be a product of the adolescent's personal, family, physical, social or environmental realities. Adolescents respond or choose to respond differently. Some adolescents may manage despite the challenges of their environment, while others fail to cope and end up in depression.

Despite the negative portrayals and behaviours attributed to puberty, the image of teenagers today is mostly a rather positive one. Most adolescents in fact succeed in school, are attached to their families and their communities and go through their teens without serious problems such as substance abuse or involvement with violence. Poduthase (2012) claims that, it is easy to overlook positive aspects of adolescence and focusing on the negatives. A good example is ignoring play or taking it as negative when also it actually involves the mutual, sometimes complex, coordination of goals, actions, and understanding. Through sports and leisure activities teenagers learn to physically, mentally and spiritually support each other. The experiences acquired through recreational activities enhance the relationships between adolescents, increase their self-esteem and also boost their performance in school (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005).

Adolescence is also said to be a time where there may be some natural disruption in the relationship between adolescents and their parents. For example, Poduthase (ibid) argues that adolescents can be delinquent when they lack intimacy, guidance, parental involvement and attachment, and when exposed to anger and blame. The absence of proper parental involvement and interaction increases the risk of violence, especially in the lives of male teens (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, ibid). On the other hand, Information and Communication Technologies have become crucial and they make adolescence different from what it was in the past. Schulz (2013) noted that research into the media's role in children's lives suggests both positive and negative effects. Media content, the environment in which they are consumed, why they are used, and the individual traits of the children using the media affect children differently.

Currie (2014) posits that parents are better served if they understand how technology impacts their children and if they encourage their children to put technology to good use. Lenhart *et al.* (2015) claim that the internet is clearly very popular with teenagers, but is treated with suspicion and scepticism for its supposed negative and corrupting impact on the youth (Currie, ibid). Adolescents have the highest level of internet use compared to other groups. They are inclined to stay awake until late at night connected to the internet behind a screen, ignoring social interaction, homework, school, and the world in general (Schulz, ibid). This kind of behaviour is a concern to parents.

Parents are critical in moulding and shaping the behaviour of adolescents (Sarwar, 2016). Expectedly, as (Connor, 2019) point out, parents are often blamed for the criminal or maladaptive behaviour of their children. For example, delinquent behaviour is one of the most distressful problems during adolescence. Some of these maladaptive behaviours include refusal to adhere

to parental demands, alcohol abuse and drug addiction, stealing, property destruction, theft and rape. Moitra & Mukherjee (2010) even argue that parents' role in shaping these delinquent adolescent behaviours is huge. For example, Currie (2014) claims that home is the place where the normal and healthy development of any child starts and the family constitutes the backbone of an individual. Erikson (1968) acknowledges that young people do not forget their path in isolation, but in collusion with families and society's values and prototype. The family is thus a basic ecology in which the behaviour of children is manifested in their childhood by way of negative or positive reinforcement. Alizadeh *et al.* (2011) stresses that a child's family is a socio-cultural-economic arrangement whose importance is shown through the child's behaviour. Therefore, shortcomings in parenting styles and parenting practices during the socialisation process can lead to maladaptive behavioural problems in adolescents.

2.6 Legislative and Policy Frameworks

Global, continental, regional, and national concerns about children's rights and welfare have received legal attention since 1989. This section presents summaries of legal frameworks and protocols on the rights and welfare of children produced by the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), and Zimbabwe.

2.6.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

In 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This charter entered into force on September 2, 1990 after agreeable member countries had appended their signatures to the charter. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international treaty that outlines the civil, political, economic, social, health, and cultural right of every child, regardless of their race, religion, or abilities. It aims to protect children from harm, ensure their well-being, and provide them with opportunities to reach their full potential. Zimbabwe is a signatory to this convention and hence, is expected to abide by its provisions.

2.6.2 African Union Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

This charter was adopted in 1990 and entered into force in 1999 after agreeable member countries had appended their signatures to the charter. The charter aims to protect the rights and well-being of children in Africa covering a wide range of issues including the following:

- Right to life, survival, and development; freedom from discrimination; right to a name and nationality.
- Right to parental care; protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Right to health care, adequate nutrition, and clean water.
- Right to education, including primary and secondary education.
- Right to be protected from economic exploitation and hazardous.
- Right to preserve their cultural identity and languages.
- Right to express their views and participate in decisions that affect them.

Zimbabwe is a signatory to this charter and hence, is expected to abide by its provisions.

2.6.3 Zimbabwe Children Protection Act

Zimbabwe has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child. These international instruments, along with domestic laws like the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) and the Zimbabwe Children Protection Act (2002), form the legal framework for protecting children's rights in Zimbabwe. However, while they exist, a legal framework together with various policy documents, challenges remain to fully realise children's rights in Zimbabwe. The main challenges include:

- Poverty which affects children's access to basic necessities like food, shelter, and healthcare.
- Child labour mostly affecting children in rural areas resulting in hindering their education and development.
- Early child marriage which is prevalent in rural and farming areas, depriving girls of their education and childhood.
- The continuous impact of HIV/AIDS resulting in many orphans and vulnerable children.
- Existence of violence against children resulting in physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

2.7 Deinstitutionalisation

According to the United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, Child Deinstitutionalisation is the process of reforming childcare systems and gradually closing down orphanages and children's homes while finding new placements for children in non-institutional care. Globally, the move towards child deinstitutionalisation is on the cards. The United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children advocates that while residential care remains functional, alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall deinstitutionalisation strategy, with a target goal of gradually eliminating orphanages and children's homes.

According to (Bajpai, 2017), deinstitutionalisation has occurred in the United States of America, Italy, Spain, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. In Africa, Kenya is one of the countries that initiated the deinstitutionalisation process. On another note, (Ochanda, 2016) indicates that children who were deinstitutionalised and reconnected to their families displayed great improvement in their behaviours and even in their performance at school. In Kenya, the process was successful and improved the lives of orphans and vulnerable children, although the institutional care was not eliminated. The process of deinstitutionalisation is not a one-day event, but a gradual process. However, if a country engages in the deinstitutionalisation process, it should ensure proper administration in terms of law, expertise and adequate funding so that children regain their right to a family life. Bajpai (ibid) argues that no matter how best the institutions might be; they cannot substitute the care provided in a nuclear family. Bajpai (ibid) reports that in India, children are removed from poor families and placed in institutional care for better life and educational achievement. This approach negates the deinstitutionalisation movement being advocated by the United Nations.

Human development theories strongly suggest that a nuclear family cannot be perfectly replaced by an institutional care system. Where other options exist, it is best to avoid institutionalisation of children. Instead, child institutions should be shut down and children be moved into family care systems for good care. However, the process should always consider the best interest of the child concept as alluded to by Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that, “Children have the right to family relations and to be with their parents unless this is proven not to be in their best interest”. The reservation in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child statement indicates its doubt in the successful implementation of the deinstitutionalisation process. Consequently, where the best interest of the child is not found, institutional care should remain to accommodate such children.

Several reintegration programmes were initiated in a number of African countries as an attempt to implement deinstitutionalisation of children’s homes. In 2014, the Government of Malawi adopted a reintegration framework which consists of the following critical steps.

1. Careful, rigorous and participatory assessment and decision making about the suitability of a child and family for reintegration,
2. Preparing the child, family and community for reintegration.
3. Carefully planned reunification,
4. Restoring trust and rebuilding relationships through extensive follow-up support to the child and family, and
5. Restoring trust and rebuilding relationships through work with the broader community.

Between 2016 and 2017, Malawi reintegrated about 202 children guided by the reintegration framework. A number of constraints were identified, namely poor planning, poorly trained implementers, resistance from the targeted families in the society, inadequate financial support and lack of conducive legal laws (UNICEF Malawi, 2009). Studies reporting on successes of the reintegration of children in countries like Rwanda, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and Sudan highlighted the political will that was shown by the governments of these countries. This political will translated to proper planning, the enactment of conducive laws, provision of adequate financial resources and the hiring of well-trained implementers of the reintegration programmes (Hope and Homes for Children, 2017).

In Zimbabwe, a total of 801 children were re-integrated into society between 2007 and 2010 (Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Labour Social Services, 2010). This initiative was abandoned due to lack of allocation of financial resources by the government. As a response to the failure of the reintegration programme, in 2010 the government of Zimbabwe adopted a new reintegration framework which is yet to be implemented because of lack of political will. As part of the reintegration process, an individual care plan is put in place for every child who is ready to be reintegrated with his or her family of origin as explained in Section 37 of Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Labour and Social Services (ibid). The Social Welfare Officers are tasked to identify the homes outside the institutions for re-integration through collaboration with relatives of those children who may have volunteered. Visits are made to the home(s) of the relatives of the child and discussions are made to ascertain if they are ready to take back the child into the family. During these visits, continuous assessment is done to ascertain the suitability of the environment until the child is finally re-united with the family. The Social Welfare Officers will also make follow-up visits to make sure the child has settled in safely. Regrettably, the attempt by Zimbabwe narrated above only focused on orphans living in children’s homes as they were admitted into these homes with identifiable surnames.

A case study of Zimbabwe by (Muguwe, 2011) points out that, in instances where the child's relatives are not known, the family is traced through the chief and headman with the aid of the police. The study reported that re-integration should be interpreted as giving meaning of restoration to the child to conditions of total unity with his or her family and society. Alternatively, apart from the relatives of the child, Christian families willing to foster-parent the child during school holidays would also be considered. The pastors and ministers of such churches would assist in identifying the families. (Dinbabo, 2011) added that the selection of foster parents should be restricted to able-bodied and energetic persons below the age of 50. This was done to reduce the cost of living as these able-bodied parents would not opt to get material support and medical care through the child. Therefore, any willing foster-parent had to undergo rigorous assessment necessary for quality child care.

Once the child has been accepted in the foster-parent home, officers from the Department of Social Welfare are expected to make random visits to ensure a smooth transition from the institution into the family home. The administrators have the prerogative of assigning anyone they are confident of to go and assess the conditions under which the child is living and to ascertain his or her safety. They will communicate with the foster-parents through telephone or family reports. This transition period formed the basis of the reconstruction of the family and all age groups were considered for re-integration. The most important issue is to have the psychological preparedness for the re-integration through establishment of relationships with the children's relatives who have readily agreed to take the child back. If the proposed reintegration framework is to succeed, the government of Zimbabwe must draw practical lessons from those countries that have reported successes in their reintegration programmes.

Bajpai (2017) have provided deeper insights why the deinstitutionalisation process is subject to failure. First, there is a severe lack of adequate alternatives to replace institutional care. This is due to insufficient foster care systems, and limited family best care options (e.g., collapse of extended families. Second, most developing countries have serious financial constraints. This factor leads to funding shortages to support community-based services. Furthermore, the needed ongoing support for children transitioning from children's homes to community-based care is too costly (e.g., support for therapy, education and healthcare). Third, there is potential resistance to change by individuals employed in children's homes and by negative attitudes and perceptions of communities. Fourth, the existence of child-specific challenges including complex needs of children living with disabilities, mental health issues or behavioural problems which require specialized care that is difficult to prove in family-based settings. Furthermore, trauma and attachment issues make it difficult for transitioning children to form healthy relationships. Fifth, lack of qualified professionals, including shortage of well-trained social workers to support families and children during the transition process, and limited expertise needed to address complex issues of transitioning children.

Clearly, the economic, political and social changes that accompany the deinstitutionalisation process have generated new problems regarding the care of orphans and vulnerable children. On the other hand, (Frimpong-Manso, 2013) recommends that the deinstitutionalisation policy should be based on the respect of child rights, norms, standards and principles of universality, indivisibility and non-discrimination, while characterised by high sensitivity, flexibility and preparedness to meet the challenges. It is important and necessary to develop a policy that will not only offer appropriate care for children at risk in the short term, but will prevent similar

problems in the future. Hence, the deinstitutionalisation process requires careful planning, implementation and management to prevent exposing transitioning children to further traumatic experiences.

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter analyses literature to tease out issues related to parenting practices on the development and behavior of adolescents, including parenting styles, parenting practices and cultural values, emergence of children's homes, the 1896/7 Chimurenga (Uprising) War in Zimbabwe, effects of institutional care on children, adolescent lifestyle and behaviour, Legislative and Policy Frameworks and the challenging deinstitutionalisation concept. The insight gained from literature review will assist in the development of chapter 3 on methodology, including choice of a research design, selection of a sample from the population of children's homes in Zimbabwe, data collection instruments, and data analysis tools.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights methodological perspectives and procedures that guide this study to facilitate a critical analysis of parenting practices on the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe. Guided by insight acquired from literature review, the qualitative research design is selected for this study leading to the development of research methodology, target population, sampling procedures, data collection methods, research participants, data analysis and interpretation, and ethical issues. In addition, the advantages and disadvantages of the research design and methodology are discussed. The exposition in this Chapter is guided by the following research objectives:

- 3.0.1 To establish the origins of children's homes in Zimbabwe including their structural and operational systems;
- 3.0.2 To explore changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and their impact on parenting practices employed in children's homes;
- 3.0.3 To explore the differences between parenting practices used by biological parents and those of social mothers including the views of administrators and community elders;
- 3.0.4 To establish the consequences of parenting practices of social mothers on the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes; and
- 3.0.5 To develop a model of parenting practices to enhance the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe.

3.1 Qualitative Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is designed to reveal a target audience's range of behaviour and the perceptions that drive it with reference to specific topics or issues under investigation. Qualitative research seeks to understand people's interpretations of their experiences and perceptions using their natural environments and their values. This study is exploring opinions, feelings, explanations, attitudes and perceptions of adolescents, social mothers (caregivers), biological parents, elders and administrators towards parenting practices in children's homes and their impact on adolescent development and behaviour. Biggerstaff (2012) stresses that qualitative methods offer more to a researcher who needs to understand people's interpretations of their perceptions using their natural environments and their values. The qualitative research design helps the researcher to gain deeper insights into the richness and complexity inherent in parenting practices and their impact on the development and behaviour of adolescents.

According to procedures in a qualitative research design, the researcher is the primary player in data collection under natural conditions (Lincoln & Guba, (1985). Chisaka (2011) points out that when doing a qualitative research, the investigator seeks to gain a total or complete picture

of events, procedures and lifestyles occurring in natural settings in order to make accurate situational decisions. Furthermore, Chisaka (ibid) affirms that qualitative research focuses on studying phenomena in their natural settings. This study does not alter the institutional environments of children's homes but observes events in the existing setting. The study uses data collection methods, including focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and informant interviews. These methods provide deeper insights into inner feelings and perceptions of individuals and their shared meanings, values, beliefs and norms in child care in children's homes in Zimbabwe. The study also uses both naturalistic and participant observations to document adolescent behaviours and parenting styles and accompanying parenting practices. Consequently, the study also attaches subjective meanings to the observations.

3.2 Research Methodology

The study uses multiple case study method including, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and secondary data (home management documents, discipline guidelines) across the sampled children's homes. Moriarty (2011) defines case study as an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the uniqueness of a particular project, institution, programme or system in a "real life" context. In addition, Chen *et al.* (2006) assert that the case study method is an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context and in which multi-sources of evidence are used. Creswell (2014) posits that case studies are a means of undertaking a preliminary exploration of a phenomenon through the careful examination of a particular instance. Yin (2012) argues that a case study method also applies to real-life contemporary human situations that are already documented. Moriarty (ibid) proclaims that a case study has an advantage of documenting and analysing developments as they occur, thereby providing timely insights into the factors that researchers consider critical to the outcomes of the investigation.

The case study method helps the researcher to document multiple viewpoints and highlight areas of consensus and conflict. Multiple data sources (Data Triangulation) are used to collect data from adolescents, social mothers, home administrators, biological parents and elders from the surrounding communities. Such varied data are critical for establishing the validity and reliability of the results. Baxter & Jack (2008) claim that a case study enables the investigator to answer "what, how and why" questions, while taking into consideration how a phenomenon is influenced by the contextual factors.

A disadvantage of a case study method is its limitation to generalise results to the target population. Despite this disadvantage, Suryani (2013) points out that there is an opportunity for researchers to verify their preconceived notions. In addition, Suryani (ibid) argues that a case study's reputation may be improved by constantly rendering explanations and interpretations during the research time. The researcher must actively look for data trends related to the research topic in order to create themes. Secondary data collected from children's homes should be reviewed to complement collected empirical data. As argued above, a case study approach becomes appropriate to explore in detail the challenges faced by adolescents, social mothers and administrators in children's homes. The study is guided by human development theories that includes Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Bio-Ecological theory, Bowlby (1977) theory of Attachment, and Erikson's (1959) theory of Psychosocial Development. The selected theories should enable the researcher to address various aspects of the study in a complementary rather than in a disconnected manner.

3.3 Target Population

Target population is described by Johnson & Christensen (2008) as the entire number of subjects under study. The target group comprises all representatives of an actual or hypothetical collection of persons, events or artefacts to which researchers would like to generalize their study findings (Burns & Grove, 2011). In this study, the target population is all adolescents between the ages of 12-18 years, social mothers (caregivers), home administrators, biological parents and elders from the surrounding communities of all 39 registered children's homes. Eighteen (18) years was the maximum age for the adolescents because the Zimbabwe Legal Age Majority Act (1982) and the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) regard the attainment of 18 years as an adult while 12 years is set as the minimum age based on Erikson's (1959) definition of an adolescent age. Erikson (*ibid*) argues that issues relating to identity crisis start at the age of 12 years involving a sense of self which demands answers to questions such as "Who am I?" and "What do I want to do with my life?". Not all registered 39 children's homes in Zimbabwe satisfied the criterion of having children of ages 12 to 18 years.

3.4 Sampling Procedures

Sampling is the process of selecting units from a target population. By studying the sample, the results may be generalised back to the population. Patton (2002) asserts that sampling is an exercise where the researcher selects some elements from a finite population using an appropriate method such that the sample elements are representative of the population characteristics. On the other hand, Grove *et al.* (2012) define a sample as a subset of the population that is selected for a particular study. A sample that is representative permits the researcher to make inferences and generalizations and to draw conclusions about an entire population (Frey *et al.*, 2000). Stratified sampling and purposive sampling are applied in this study. First, the researcher stratified the target population into 10 administrative provinces. Purposive sampling is then used to select homes which satisfy the criteria of having children of ages 12 to 18 years and showing their willingness and readiness to participate in the study. Only nine children's homes satisfying the criterion of ages 12-18 years are selected for the study. These include three homes in Harare Metropolitan Province, two in Mashonaland East Province, one in Masvingo Province, two in Midlands Province, and one in Manicaland Province.

According to Zikmund *et al.* (2010), in purposive sampling, the researcher selects individuals based on personal experiences and judgements about some characteristics of the participants. Black (2010) posits that purposive sampling is a homogeneous sampling method that targets a small group with similar characteristics to represent the whole. It involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest under investigation. Corbin & Strauss (2008) indicate that when using purposive sampling techniques, researchers choose participants arbitrarily for their unique characteristics or their experiences, or their attitudes or perceptions. Application of purposive sampling resulted in the selection of social mothers (caregivers), biological parents, and elders.

Administrators are purposively sampled because there is only one administrator at every selected home. Six adolescents per home are randomly selected for in-depth interviews. However, the researcher maintained gender balance where applicable, so as to document challenges of both male and female adolescents. Those who participate in in-depth interviews are not included in focus group discussions. The researcher is assisted by the administrators and social mothers

to select adolescents for focus group discussions. Each group has a maximum of 12 adolescents per each selected home. In each participating children's home, six social mothers are purposively selected for focus group discussions and two for in-depth interviews. In order to provide the most suitable participants, the administrators are requested to identify social mothers who cared for the highest number of adolescents and who are willing to participate in the study. While the purposive method does not provide equal chance for participation, it provides rich and relevant information on adolescent development and behaviour. The Headmen of local communities are requested to assist in identifying a couple of biological parents and two elders from the surrounding communities, a male and a female of age 65 years and above. The total number of participants included in the study is 279.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Approval to conduct the research in children's homes in Zimbabwe is granted by relevant government departments. The use of English, Shona or Ndebele for data collection is dependent on the language proficiency of the participants in the study. Data in the study is collected using several methods, including, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and key informant interviews.

3.5.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In this study, focus group discussions are used to generate insightful data from social mothers and adolescents. Mack (2011) defines focus group discussions as guided discussions among a small group of people who share a common characteristic central to the topic of investigation. The researcher stands as the moderator who gathers data through asking questions and probing on particular issues. Normally, the group size ranges from minimum of six to a maximum of 12 participants (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the sample participating consists of 108 adolescents (6 boys and 6 girls per home) and 54 social mothers (six per home).

In as much as these focus group discussions are important in extracting the most needed data between the participants in the children's homes, it has one limitation when the adolescents don't open up on their experiences due to lack of mutual trust among themselves. However, there are important benefits of using focus group discussions. These include:

- A lot of time and money is saved,
- The researcher obtains rich and detailed information from participants as they give personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions, and
- The researcher has an opportunity to seek clarifications as well as to paraphrase on many issues.

It is also important to note some weaknesses of collecting data using focus group discussions.

- Some members might be hesitant to express their feelings, especially when their thoughts opposed the views of the most dominant members in the group,
- Some members might exhibit unacceptable social behaviour demonstrating lack of respect and empathy for others, and

- Some members might use irritating language words that could disrupt data collection.

In order to address challenges arising from lack of mutual trust among adolescents and among social mothers, in-depth interviews are conducted.

3.5.2 In-depth Interviews

An in-depth interview is a qualitative research method that involves intensive questioning of a participant by the researcher to extract the respondent's perspectives, attitudes, opinions or reactions to a particular phenomenon (Boyce & Neale, 2006). This technique is further defined as an unstructured direct personal interview in which a skilled interviewer aims to uncover underlying motivations, beliefs, and attitudes by probing a single respondent on a topic being researched (Moriarty, 2011). While these interviews provide detailed data on parenting practices and their impact on adolescent development and behaviour, they are time-consuming. The researcher monitors and records the non-verbal cues of respondent. In this study, the sample participating in this method of data collection consist of 54 adolescents (three boys and three girls per home), and 18 social mothers (two per home).

3.5.3 Key Informant Interviews (KII)

Mack (2011) a posits that key informant interviews are a valuable method of identifying the depth and breadth of the problem areas. The advantage of key informant interviews is the use of open-ended questions and probing which gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words. The researcher conducts these interviews with people who have vast knowledge about the issues being investigated in the study. These KIIs give independent and rich data. The purpose of key informant interviews is to collect data from a wide range of people. In this study, the sample participating in this method of data collection consists of nine administrators, 18 gender-balanced elders (two per surrounding community), and nine biological couples (one couple from the surrounding communities).

3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis in this study is guided by the following methods as outlined in Denzin & Lincoln (2018):

3.6.1 Within-case Analysis

In this approach, a detailed examination of data in each children's home is examined to identify key themes, patterns and anomalies. In addition, data triangulation is done to compare data collected from interviews, documents, and observations to enhance credibility and validity. Furthermore, pattern matching is done to identify similarities and differences.

3.6.2 Cross-case Analysis

Under this method, comparative data analysis is done to identify similarities, differences, and variations across the nine children's homes in the study. In particular, thematic data analysis is done to identify, analyse, and interpret patterns within the collected qualitative data. In addition, narrative analysis is done to analyse stories and statements to understand how participants in the study construct meaning and make sense of their experiences. Furthermore, discourse analysis is done to examine language used by participants to explore power relations, social constructions and ideological conditions. Also content analysis is done to categorise and quantify data to identify patterns and trends.

3.7 Ethical Issues

Qualitative research with its focus on in depth understanding and subjective experiences presents several ethical challenges (Creswell, 2014). This study pays serious attention to the following ethical issues:

3.7.1 Informed Consent

Under this issue, participants should freely choose to participate in the study without coercion. In addition, the researcher must provide a clear and understandable explanation of the research purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits. Furthermore, in such certain contexts, implied consent guaranteed by a responsible official may be adequate but the researcher should be mindful of ethical guidelines.

3.7.2 Privacy and Confidentiality

Key issues to consider include anonymity of participants, confidentiality of information collected and data security.

3.7.3 Researcher-participant Relationship

The researcher should be aware of the power imbalance inherent in the research relationship. In addition, participants should be treated with respect and dignity throughout the research process. Furthermore, the researcher must take steps to minimise any potential harm, both physical and psychological to participants.

3.7.4 Data integrity and accuracy

The researcher should strive to accurately represent the views and experiences of participants. In addition, the researcher should not confound the data with his or her own biases. Furthermore, the researcher should ensure the quality and reliability of the data collected.

3.7.5 Ethical reporting

The researcher must be honest and transparent about the applied research methods and the findings. In addition, the researcher should adhere to ethical guidelines for publication, including avoiding plagiarism and ensuring accurate citation. Furthermore, the researcher should consider the potential social impact of the findings.

3.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter highlighted methodological issues, including qualitative research design, research methodology, research procedures, target population, sampling procedures, data analysis and interpretation, and ethical issues. The next chapter presents in detail the results of the study.

Chapter 4

Data Presentation

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents data collected to answer questions raised about issues relating to children's homes as an alternative to a nuclear or normal family for the socialization of orphans and vulnerable children. Data collection was preceded by a number of essential preparatory activities. First, permission to visit children's homes was granted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. Second, two research assistants were identified and trained on how to assist the researcher in recording data during interviews. Third, preliminary visits were done to identify the exact locations of selected children's homes and to brief the administrators about the research project including permission from the relevant government ministries. In addition, the headman in the surrounding community was approached to identify a biological couple and two elders (a male and a female of age 65 years and above) to participate in the study. Furthermore, administrators assisted in identifying participants in the children's home for the study. Also agreed upon with the administrator was the dates for data collection.

Data was collected from five different categories of research participants, namely administrators, social mothers, biological parents, elders and adolescents drawn from nine children's homes and surrounding communities. The nine selected children's homes under study were coded as Homes 001-009 to guarantee confidentiality and privacy of participants. The homes were headed by administrators of which four were female and five were male.

4.1 Descriptive Data of Participants

This section presents data on characteristics of participants and how they were distributed in the selected five administrative provinces. Section 4.1.1 presents characteristics of all participants focusing on their gender, age, and level of education by category.

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 4.1: Distribution of Participants by Category, Gender, Age and Educational Level.

		Adoles- cents	Social Mothers	Biological Parents	Admin- istrators	Elders	Total & %
Gender	M	72	--	9	5	9	95 (34%)
	F	90	72	9	4	9	184(66%)
Age Range	10-19	162	--	--	--	--	162 (58%)
	20-29	--	--	--	--	--	--
	30-39	--	--	--	1	--	1 (0.4 %)
	40-49	--	15	2	2	--	19 (6.8%)
	50-59	--	42	12	1	--	55 (19.7%)
	60-69	--	15	4	5	6	30 (10.8%)
	70-79	--	--	--	--	12	12 (4.3%)
Education	Illiterate	--	18	3	--	9	30 (10.8%)
	Primary	68	12	7	--	4	91 (32.6%)
	Secondary	94	2	--	--	--	96 (34.4%)
	Vocational	--	25	5	--	4	34 (12.2%)
	University	--	15	3	9	1	28 (10.0%)

(n = 279)

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of the 279 participants by gender, age, and educational level. The data in the table shows that the majority (66%) of the respondents were female and 34% were male. With regards to age, data in Table 4.1 shows that 58% of the participants were in the age range of 12 to 18 years, 0.4 % with ages 30 to 39 years, 6.8% with ages 40 to 49 years, 19.7% with ages 50 to 59 years, 10.8% with ages 60 to 69 years, and 4.3% with ages 70 to 79 years.

The data in Table 4.1 shows that social mothers were mature with ages between 40 to 69 years. This characteristic of social mothers is equally shared by biological parents whose ages were between 40 and 69 years. One can conclude that both social mothers and biological parents had acquired comparable experiences in raising children. With regards to administrators, 88.9% were aged between 40 and 69 years. This level of maturity enables these administrators to administer disciplinary measures on delinquent adolescents in children's homes. Concerns can be raised with regards to younger administrators (aged between 30 and 39 years) because of their limited experience in raising children, especially when it comes to disciplining adolescents about to turn 18 years of age. The data on elders reveals that these were highly experienced parents (with ages between 60 and 79 years).

The level of education is also a critical variable with regards to understanding the issues investigated in the study. The evidence from the study and tabulated above reveals that 25% of the social mothers were illiterate and yet are expected to socialise adolescents who are under the dynamic influence of globalisation and information technology. This type of arrangement creates challenges with regards to the development of a conducive environment for cognitive development of adolescents. This illiteracy rate is likely to hinder the development of mutual relationship between the social mothers and adolescents. Of further concern is the 16.7% of social mothers with primary level education. This group of social mothers is likely to experience the same challenges faced by illiterate social mothers. The remaining 58.3% of the social mothers had educational levels between secondary and university education. These social mothers should be able to provide sound parenting practices that are beneficial to the adolescents. Educational data on the elders shows that 50% of them were illiterate, 22.2% had primary education and 27.8% had vocational or university education. The administrators running the studied children's homes were all educated up to university level. These administrators, whose degrees were all in the humanity disciplines, were therefore in a position to understand the behaviour of adolescents under their supervision.

4.1.2 Marital Status of Adult Participants

Table 4.2: Distribution of Adult Participants by Marital Status

Participants	Never Married	Married	Divorced	Widowed	Total
Administrators	4	3	0	2	9
Social Mothers	0	30	25	17	72
Biological Parents	0	18	0	0	18
Elders	0	2	2	14	18
Sub Total	4	53	27	33	117
%	3.4	45.3	23.1	28.2	100

Table 4.2 shows that some administrators (3.4%) never married because of their religious conviction. Married respondents represented 45.3% of the adult participants. These comprised 30 social mothers, 18 biological parents, 3 administrators and 2 community elders. Of the adult participants, 28.2% were widows of which 2 were administrators, 17 social mothers and 14 community elders. 23.1% of the adults were divorcees and these included 25 social mothers and 2 elders. Table 4.3 presents data on all participants by religion.

4.1.3 Religious Affiliations of Participants

Table 4.3: Frequency Distribution of all the Participants by Religion

Religion	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Methodist Church in Zimbabwe	70	25.1
Roman Catholic Church	104	37.3
Inter Denomination	35	12.5
United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe	44	15.8
African Traditional Religion	26	9.3
Total	279	100

The data in Table 4.3 indicates that a large number of the participants (37.3%) were Roman Catholics while 25.1% were Methodist, 15.8% were members of the United Church of Christ, 12.5% were Inter Denominational members and 9.3% were members of the African Traditional Religion. Although a children's home would sometimes be run by a specific denomination, adolescents in the home were given freedom to attend a denomination of their own choice. This decision by homes was in compliance with the Constitutional right of freedom of association of individuals. The data in table 4.3 shows that the overwhelming majority (90.7%) of the participants were Christians.

4.1.4 Distribution of Participants in Selected Provinces

Figure 4.1: Pie Chart Distribution of all Respondents by Province

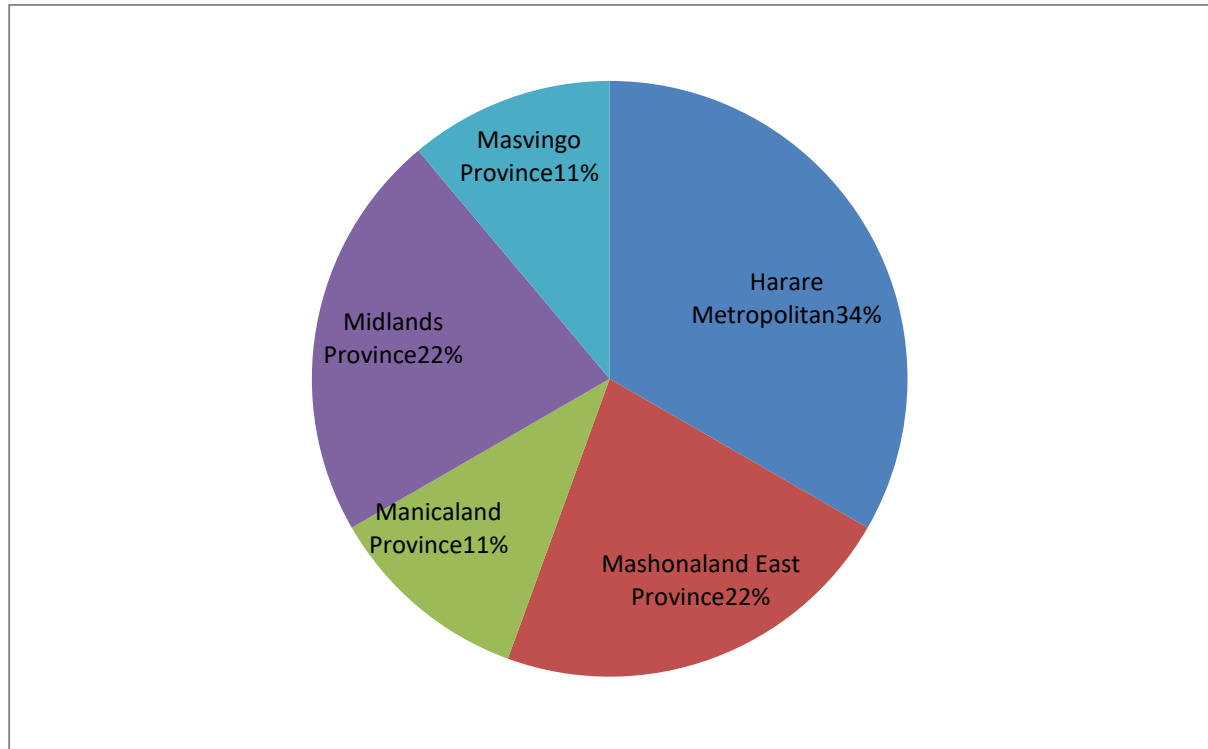


Figure 4.1 presents the distribution of all the participants by province. Harare Metropolitan Province had the highest number of participants (34%) while Midlands and Mashonaland East Provinces had 22% each, and Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces had 11% each. The distribution of participants by province is of great significant because it underscores ethnic group cultural values and practices. However, in the Harare Metropolitan Province, no ethnic group culture dominates because the province consists of individuals from different parts of Zimbabwe. Hence, the location of a children's home reflects the key elements of the socialization process of children with regards to cultural values, norms and beliefs. Section 4.2 presents the narrative data collected through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and in-depth interviews.

4.2 Presentation of Qualitative Data from Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews and In-depth Interviews

This Section presents qualitative data collected from interactions with participants. The data is organised based on the objectives of the study which are stated below.

- To establish the origins of children's homes in Zimbabwe including their structural and operational systems;
- To explore changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and their impact on parenting practices employed in children's homes;
- To establish the consequences of parenting practices of social mothers on the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes; and
- To explore the differences between parenting practices used by biological parents and those of social mothers including the views of administrators and community elders.

4.2.1 Origins of Children's Homes in Zimbabwe

To establish factors that gave birth to children's homes in Zimbabwe, the researcher interviewed administrators of the nine selected children's homes. In key informant interviews, each administrator provided historical background information highlighting factors that led to the establishment of the home.

The administrator of Home 001 was a female aged 60 years. She was a registered nurse with knowledge in counselling. During a key informant interview, she highlighted the historical origins of the home as recorded below.

The home was established by the Wesleyan Methodist Synod in 1919 following the 1918 flu epidemic and post – World War One depression. The home was originally established to care for white children who were left homeless by World War One, depression and influenza. Later on, the home adopted black abused and abandoned children, children of mentally ill parents, children of prisoners and alcoholics. The main objective of this home was to provide a place of safety for vulnerable children. All children were referred to the home through the Department of Social Welfare and Services as a statutory requirement. The home looks after girls from the newly born to the age of 18 years. On the other hand, the home looks after boys only up to the age of 10 years after which they are relocated to other homes.

The administrator of Home 002 was a female aged 63 years. During a key informant interview she narrated that:

The home was established in 1994 as a direct response to the catastrophic HIV/AIDS pandemic facing Zimbabwe and Sub-Saharan Africa. The name of the home signified the founders' love and devotion to Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus and was passed to them by Mrs Jones (pseudonym). The home takes care of the disabled, the aged, terminally ill, spiritually ill and orphans. The home looks after both boys and girls from newly born babies to 18 years, especially abandoned children. Children are referred to the home by the Department of Social Welfare and Services.

The administrator of Home 003 was a female aged 63 years. She is a social worker by profession. During a key informant interview she related that:

The home was established in 1924 by the missionaries. The orphanage was established as a way to care for the children whose parents had died, and no one

was there to take care of them. It cares for orphaned, neglected and abandoned children as well as children of single mothers who are mentally ill. Its purpose was to give them motherly love so that they grow and mature mentally, spiritually and physically. The home cares for both boys and girls aged from the newly born to 18 years. In 1937, a clinic was built next to the home to care for the orphaned new born babies. When more houses were built, more new born babies were brought directly to the orphanage.

The administrator of Home 004 was a male aged 51 years and a holder of a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Sociology and Gender Development Studies. In a key informant interview he explained that:

The home was established in 1950 by a local male philanthropist who had a passion to care for the orphaned and vulnerable children at his home. When the number increased, he then initiated the idea of building a children's home. The home became one of the renowned national childcare centres in the country. It operates under the auspices of Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Home 005 was managed by a male administrator aged 60 years. He possessed a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Social Work and a Diploma in Nursing. The home was established in 1970 as a result of an individual's vision and later developed into one of the largest children's homes in Zimbabwe. During a key informant interview the administrator revealed that:

The home cares for children in its residential and community-based orphan care scheme. The children cared for are abandoned children, orphaned, abused and children of mentally challenged parents. The home also supports families and children affected by HIV/AIDS. The aim is to alleviate hardship and maintain family stability so that children will be safe and protected and grow up in a loving home environment. The social centres ensure that children have access to essential health and nutritional services, as well as education. The home trains parents by providing guidance on income-generating skills and parenting practices, as well as counselling and psychological support.

The administrator of Home 006 was a male aged 60 years. He held a Diploma in Disaster and Risk Management. During a key informant interview he related that:

The home was established in 1955 by a woman philanthropist. The woman had a passion for local disadvantaged children. Her idea to take care of orphans was supported by the white priests at the mission hospital. The White missionaries, through the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ) assisted the woman to establish a proper home in 1988. Two hostels were constructed, one for the boys and the other for the girls. The Home was registered with the Department of Social Welfare in 1989.

The administrator of Home 007 was a widowed woman aged 44 years. She held a Degree in Development Studies and a Certificate in Administration. During a key informant interview she asserted that:

The home was established in 1962 as a drop-in centre for white children. Mrs X established the home as a profit-making business. For an agreed fee, the home cared for white children whose parents travelled for holidays. Soon after independence in

1980, the founder donated the home to the government after she decided to return to her country of origin. The home was later taken over by the Roman Catholic Church and then targeted vulnerable children in the community from birth to 18 years. It acquired land to construct a residential facility to accommodate weaned adolescents pursuing tertiary and vocational education. These weaned adolescents would leave the residential facility after securing employment.

Home 008 was managed by a female administrator aged 52 years. She had a Certificate in Administration and Counselling. During a key informant interview, she narrated that:

The home was established in 1968 as a residential care facility that provided long term services to children from birth to 20 years. It admitted children who had experienced abuse, neglect, violence, abandonment and were in need of supervised care. The priests who were stationed at the mission conducted outreach preaching programmes in the neighbouring communities during which they identify vulnerable children who deserved care in the home. The home has a hospital which is one of the training centres for nurses in the country.

Home 009 was managed by a male administrator aged 32 years. He was a Social Worker by profession who had a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Work. In a key informant interview, he highlighted that:

The home was established in 2001 as a result of the ever-increasing needs of orphans and vulnerable children. It took in all children including unaccompanied minors including those found at bus termini, abandoned children as well as victims of abuse and sexual violence. The dormitory facility was used as a halfway home by weaned adolescents who were attending colleges. During their stay, the home prepared the young adults for community re-integration.

The evidence above indicates that children's homes in Zimbabwe were established due to several factors that include wars, depression, pandemics (e.g. influenza and HIV/AIDS), negligence and abandonment of children, sexual abuse, unstable families especially those with mentally challenged parents and increasing number of orphans in the community.

4.2.2 Parenting Practices in Zimbabwe and Their Impact on the Development of Adolescents in Children's Homes

Interviews conducted with administrators and social mothers revealed a number of issues relating to the development of adolescents. First, the administrators confirmed that the development of adolescents was governed by Christian values and principles with minimal reference to traditional culture. Second, administrators were of the view that the development of adolescents was a process of preparing them to enter society when weaned from the homes. However, some of the administrators reported that the preparation of adolescents to enter society after the age of 18 years was not achievable for all adolescents. Some adolescents took much longer to complete secondary education and others lacked confidence to be released into the society. This section present data collected from specific children's homes.

The administrator at Home 001, during a key informant interview remarked that:

The parenting practices employed in children's homes are as outlined in government policy documents. The controls by the government made it difficult for social mothers to employee recommended parenting practices mainly due to prohibition to discipline children. Reprimanding adolescents for bad behaviour is a way of implementing norms and values but is difficult since the adolescents would regard it as abuse. For an example, they can just interrupt adults who are in the middle of a conversation without seeking any excuse. The concern by the administrator at Home 001 was the limitation imposed by government laws governing the running of children's homes.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the data below was captured. One social mother reported that:

I appreciate that our adolescents are taught sex and health issues in schools as a way to empower them with knowledge. In this way they become aware of their sexual behaviour and also on hygienic matters at the onset of puberty. The challenge is that they may want to practice some of the things they learn at school such as having sex and the use of condoms.

The other mother lamented:

I wish my adolescents a bright future if only they can closely follow my orders and remove the element of thinking that I abuse them. I teach them the real life experiences just in the same manner I do with my biological adolescents so that they grow to know the good and bad behaviour. I demonstrate to them how things are done in normal homes some of which are how to welcome and greet visitors, to love one another, respect and personal hygiene (bathing, washing, cleaning rooms and clothes, ironing among others). My adolescents so to speak alluded that they should learn to say thank you after being given something or help by anyone.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following remarks, issues and concerns were highlighted:

- Children are taken care of properly when there is adequate supply of food and clothing including health facilities. We have taught our adolescents on how to do basic house chores on their own so that they have independent skills and knowledge.
- There are times when these adolescents get frustrated, as their social mothers, we talk to them in a mature and polite way so that they understand that we have their interest at heart. We also create time to talk to them and encourage them to engage in prayers. This is a way of cheering them up so that they will think positively and accept their situation.
- The adolescents under our care came here due to numerous reasons and problems. There are lots of people who love them including us their social mothers but they don't appreciate the efforts we put to try and make them think positively about their future. We care for them hence we try our best to impart them with life skills, cultural values and good morals.

- We have openly and frankly told our adolescents that they are mature people and should take charge of their behaviour. We also remind them that if they become playful (especially the adolescent girls) with men and boys they would get pregnant, STIs, HIV/AIDS and spoil their future. We have also taught our adolescents not to accept gifts and other favours from strangers, especially men.

The administrator at Home 002, during a key informant interview reported that:

Since socialisation of adolescents is regarded as a critical area, the home recruited married mothers who were mature, had children and came from the surrounding community. These social mothers received training on the spiritual, social, educational, mental and physical wellbeing of the children. The assumption was that there would be continuity of societal values and norms since they were reinforced by somebody who was cognizant of them. The children could fit in the community easily by the time they were weaned from the home. The social mothers were also cleared by police. Adolescents were taught to observe the norms and values expected in the society. For example, greeting all elders and visitors with their hands clenched and in a polite manner and for girls to be on their knees when serving food to elders.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the following data was recorded. One social mother reported that:

When I talk to adolescents under my care, they start laughing at me or walk away and leave the place or go outside if they were inside the house. These adolescents differ from my biological children on whom I use a whip to discipline them whenever they misbehave, whereas I cannot do the same to institutionalised adolescents.

The other mother submitted that:

We also teach our adolescents on menstrual hygienic practices. We give them plastic bags and sanitary wear to carry with them when they go to school in which they store the used pads so as to bring them back home for incineration.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following issues and concerns were highlighted:

- We all come from different backgrounds and are expected to socialise adolescents from varying cultures and backgrounds. Because of this, a common ground on parenting has to be found. The common ground is established through the mission statement. The home's mission statements are derived from Christian values. In other words, the parenting that takes place in this home is Christian parenting, where the Bible is used.
- In this home, we are trained to care for orphans and vulnerable children. Only minors can respond to my eye cues and not the adolescents. I feel that adolescent boys and girls should also attend workshops on how to communicate and to respect us as their social mothers.

- At this home we have a senior mother who plays the role of aunt and our gardener also plays the role of uncle. Since the Department of Social Welfare and Services is not providing us with counsellors to deal with psychosocial issues of children, the aunt also plays the role of a counsellor. I feel that to respond to the challenges we are currently facing as social mothers, government should allow us to discipline these children in the same manner we do with our biological children.
- Since these adolescents come from different backgrounds, some of them knew about sexual practices from their homes. These are the perpetrators and would want to insinuate others to do the same.

The administrator at Home 003, during a key informant interview asserted that:

This children's home recruited the social mothers and other employees based on merit. The home recruited those with 5 Ordinary Levels to commensurate with the social abilities of the social mothers and replaced the retired mothers with the Ordinary Level graduates. The new selection criteria were meant to have social mothers who were able to deal with the psychological issues of adolescents. These professional mothers were guided by the welfare policies whereby they were expected to look at how best to deal with the child professionally as a way of helping them to move forward.

The administrator added that:

Some social mothers may be cruel, rough and may not handle these adolescents with care. It is possible that they will not equip them with all the necessary morals and values expected by the society. Our adolescents at this home attend churches of their own choice, though they are mainly affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church. At this home, social mothers plan for the needs of children, which include visiting them at school to check on their performance and progress. They assist children with homework and make sure they go to bed early ready for school the following morning. They also prepare lunch boxes for the children to take with them to school.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the following data was presented. One social mother stated that:

I look forward to raising individuals who are well-behaved to avert criticisms by the society. For example, I have a son who was given to me when he was four days old and is now at university and I feel proud. I raised him, taught him manners, practical work and this brought about his success. The property you are seeing in this house was bought out of project funds. I advise my adolescents to work hard in acquiring life skills so that if they fail to obtain academic qualifications, their families will not suffer.

The other mother reported that:

I just don't give instructions to a child to undertake a task, but to perform it together. I involve my children in decision-making such as consulting with them before

purchasing of household equipment. Each time, I teach my children the bible, I always say, those with ears to hear, let them hear).

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following remarks, issues and concerns were stressed:

- The laws enacted by the government to protect children are wrongly interpreted by adolescents who fail to separate the good from the bad. It is surprising that children have the right to sue their parents and teachers and yet these people mould them. While the government requires adolescents to be weaned at the age of 18 years, this home continues to look after them subject to good behaviour and untenable situation.
- These adolescents mislead each other and the notorious ones can only comply with orders under some physical punishment. Disciplining these adolescents change nothing since their behaviours seem to be hereditary.
- I am happy that this home has an aunt and an uncle who monitor the behaviours of our adolescents like is done in normal homes. The aunt caught them young and teaches them the development of their body before the onset of menarche.
- Adolescents at this home are well taught about how to live in the society. The aunt teaches adolescent girls how to hold on to their dresses when they sit down, to fear playing with men, and how to handle their husbands when they get married. On the other hand, the uncle teaches adolescent boys to work hard as the society expects a man to fend for his family.

The following comment on the data captured from Home 003 deserves recognition. The submissions above by the administrator and social mothers at Home 003 compels the researcher to conjecture that this home is a good example of what might be termed a model of best practices. The performance of social mothers at this home should be emulated by other children's homes.

The administrator at Home 004, during a key informant interview highlighted that:

A children's home is not really good for raising adolescents because of the stigma attached to it. That alone affects children's self-esteem and their status, hence it subtracts from being a whole person. I urged the social mothers to appraise those adolescents who pursued various responsibilities in the home as a way of motivating them. At this home, we hold group discussions on HIV and AIDS, and STIs. Staff and visitors from churches teach moral behaviour to adolescents. There is a stipulated time for study, sports, and social gatherings.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was documented. One social mother reported that:

At this home, the social worker provides psychosocial support and is assisted by the administrator in providing counselling services to the adolescents. Church members also provide reproductive health lessons to our adolescents. Adolescents in the surrounding community are permitted to visit the home to play with their

peers. Our adolescents at this home have true love for each other and they have always shared their background information amongst themselves.

The other mother related that:

At this home we receive in-house training through workshops that are organised by non-governmental organisations. We are taught how to interact with adolescents under our care and importantly to show love and guidance so that they become responsible individuals. This home does not allow us or any other employee to use corporal punishment.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following concerns were stressed:

- At this home when we receive a new comer he/she is attached to another adolescent within the household. The good thing I love about this home is that, no siblings are separated except under unforeseen challenges like shortage of accommodation especially where it involves children of the opposite sex. When our adolescents are weaned from this home they are sent to the youth camps to acquire various vocational skills as preparations for their future.
- I get discouraged when adolescents classify us as domestic workers which reflects lack of respect for us. Some adolescent girls openly refuse to do chores saying it was our duty to do the work. There are some adolescents who are well behaved and will help out with house chores without forcing them to do the work and such adolescents have a promising future.
- I feel sorry for those adolescents who have been brain washed by their rights. They don't realise that time is running out and they need to fully prepare themselves for their adulthood life especially when they refuse to adopt the life skills that we impart to them. One would wonder how they are going to manage taking care of themselves and even their families in the future when they are weaned from the home. I will still insist that, disciplining a child does not mean aversion but to mould them to become better citizens.
- I have always involved adolescents under my care in decision making and responsibilities such as the distribution of clothes in the household. I ask them to take turns to share the clothes among themselves. To my surprise they fight and accuse each other of being biased because some would favour their close friends. When I ask about the unfairness they respond with anger as a sign that they did not want my intervention.

The administrator at Home 005, during a key informant interview reported that:

Raising adolescents in children's homes was the worst thing and it has to be used as the last resort. Adolescents came from various backgrounds and their social experiences cannot fit in the children's home so as to mould a whole person. Some of them come from the Christian backgrounds, others from the African Traditional Religious backgrounds and some from the street life. Therefore, it becomes very difficult for them to adopt or merge the diverse cultures. It was mandatory that every

adolescent including children have to be medically examined after every six months to ascertain their health status.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was documented. One social mother reported that:

At this home we have adolescents who are very naughty that no matter the unconditional love we demonstrate to them they don't appreciate it. I personally strive to help my adolescents by sharing life experiences and even enjoy assisting them with their school work.

The other mother elaborated that:

At this home, if an adolescent misbehaves more than four times repeating the same maladaptive behaviour, I report him/her to the administrator for disciplinary action.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following remarks, issues and concerns were stressed:

- I am happy that we have a family housing setup and most of my adolescents participate in house chores on their own such as cooking, sweeping, washing and ironing clothes. There are challenges that I encounter from a few adolescents who do not follow or take orders because I was not their biological mother. The home authorities have setup a disciplinary committee which deals with the notorious adolescents. When the behaviour of an adolescent gets to the extreme, he/she is sent back to government for correction at a probation centre.
- I sympathize with these adolescents because their hearts are wounded and they need our love and care. My wish is to see them progressing in life, so punishing them is a strategy to guide them to meet the expectations of the society. Eventually, we want to be proud of their success in life.
- Love heals all wounds and God miraculously helps us maintain wonderful relationships with our adolescents in the home. I endeavour to ensure that members of society do not find blemishes on our adolescents when they interact with them.
- Adolescents do not socialize well among themselves because of attitudes such as being moody and withdrawn. As a mother, I respond to these challenges through teaching them biblical verses that God loves people who are free, happy, faithful and honest. I also ask them to pray for guidance and protection from God.

The administrator at Home 006, during a key informant interview reported that:

The children lack parental love and bonding which is strengthened through breast-feeding when the child makes eye contact with its biological mother. They also lack proper parental guidance. As social mothers are mere workers, they may not bother to teach children cultural values. Furthermore, I feel that the set-up in the children's

homes is not proper in that there is no father figure. I feel that raising children in the community is better compared to raising them in children's homes. The home had embarked on the reunification process for some of the children who have surviving relatives in different parts of Zimbabwe but due to the collapse of our economy, we have suspended the programme.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother stated that:

The adolescents we raise have their own way of life as some of them were brought into the home while they were very young. At that time, they knew the social mother as their only parent and they respected and complied with every instruction given to them. I feel that adolescents influence bad behaviour to their young brothers and sisters that they should not listen to us because we are mere workers. All the same, we have not looked back but to carry on with the good work. We love these adolescents and we will not stop helping them with their school work and also to follow up with the schools to check on their progress.

The other mother expounded that:

Child rearing in the home is a difficult task because you deal with children with different backgrounds. Children's homes are not as effective as normal homes in raising a whole person. The community is better than a children's home in raising adolescents mainly because they are exposed to various cultural and socioeconomic tasks.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following issues and concerns were stated:

- The home has some projects it runs and our adolescents learn the life skills from them. These include raising cattle, pigs, chickens, and crops. Such skills and knowledge will help them when they are weaned from the home. Some lazy adolescents complain about these manual activities.
- We love our adolescents and have always planned for their needs. Each one of us, visits her adolescents at their school to check on their performance and progress. We also consult with the school authorities on their behaviour and if any issues are raised then we come up with joint solutions to resolve them.
- The problem we are currently faced with is when it comes to disciplinary issues. The adolescents can be very naughty at times but we cannot employ effective disciplinary measures because of the government restrictive policies.

The administrator at Home 007, during a key informant interview elaborated that:

Children's homes are not effective in raising a whole person because it is difficult to make all of them adopt one culture. For an abandoned person, a home is good for saving the life of that person and not for grooming the individual to meet societal expectations. Such children are assured of shelter, clothing, education, food and medication. The selection of social mothers was conducted by a home committee that included representatives from the church, social welfare services and a school.

The home employed married couples so that there was a father and mother figures, a setup that resembled a normal home. The senior care mother and father were part of the interviewing panel. Though the home used the dormitory system, the working couples had accommodation allocated in the home.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother stated that:

At this home we make combined efforts on the care of adolescents. Our home uses the dormitory system and we do not have a resident counsellor. The matron who has a certificate in Child Care and Protection offers counselling services to adolescents. Regarding discipline, social mothers deal with issues of adolescent girls while the social fathers deal with those of boys.

The other mother explained that:

We took in children to provide them with care and comfort, so whipping them would be an abuse. Using corporal punishment makes the adolescents arrogant and they will not appreciate the efforts we are making to mould them. If an adolescent does not do his/her duty as per instructions, we withdraw the things he/she likes most. I personally support the abolishment of corporal punishment.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following remarks, issues and concerns were reported:

- Long back, it was taboo to put children in children's homes because extended family members took care of them in cases where both parents had died. It was also rare for mothers to abandon their biological children.
- I have constantly reminded my adolescent boys and girls that life is not as easy as they see it now. I have told them that there shall come a time when they would be weaned from the home, so they should practice to work for themselves in preparation for the future. I have also reminded them to concentrate on their education because it is a prerequisite for good jobs. Furthermore, they need to respect each other as brother and sister.
- At this home we had an incident involving one of the male adolescent. He was very aggressive and each time I asked him to perform a task he would demand payment. If I did not give him money, he would sneak in my room and get anything valuable such as clothes then sell them, a situation reported to me by his peers. The case was reported to the home administrator who then reprimanded the adolescent.
- This home has internet services including two computers for use by adolescents. In addition, they are allowed to have mobile phones after completing Ordinary Level studies. However, if adolescents committed offences their privileges such as riding bicycles and use of computers would be withdrawn.

The administrator at Home 008, during a key informant interview postulated that:

The adolescents that we care for at this home have mixed feelings because of their backgrounds. They have been rejected or abused by their relatives following the death of their parents. This home provides them with spiritual aspects such as bible readings and prayers. Traumatized adolescents always grow up with bitterness and lack self-respect and find it difficult to interact or to love the next person. A child

who lacks biological parent care or closeness becomes egocentric and will not easily accept criticisms or even share information.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother elaborated that:

Adolescents delayed to report home from school as it was suspected that they were misbehaving and having love relationships resulting in one of the girls becoming pregnant.

The other mother lamented that:

Our adolescents model bad behaviour from the social media. As a result, they sexually and physically abuse each other in the home. So far, four adolescent boys have been taken to a reformatory home for bad behaviour. For example, adolescent boys broke and stole from tuck shops and burnt other children with magnifying lenses.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following concerns were raised:

- The adolescents under my care, hate it when I take days off duty because of the bonding between us. One of the days, I travelled to the city for a weekend and when I returned, the social mother who stood in for me was asked by one of my children saying; Are you our mother in this house? and when she said yes, one of the children said, it is a lie our mother went to buy us sweets and bread from town.
- I am usually very patient with my adolescents when it comes to discipline their bad behaviour. For example, I emphasize that failure to be home at the stipulated time is a high security risk which might result in being raped or enticed into crime.
- I encounter challenges in the upbringing of adolescents because of the differences between their wishes and what we offer. In these modern times they expect to live a life where they have the latest mobile phones and fashionable clothes. Furthermore, they want freedom to go out on their own without an adult. One of the adolescents under my care openly told me that it was my duty to do the chores because I was paid to do the work.

The administrator at Home 009, during a key informant interview proclaimed that:

The community is the best for the total development of the child. This home prefers to support orphans while they stay with their relatives in the community. We are aware of the limitations of Children's Homes in raising adolescents. One of them is that they will grow up as aliens in the community since homes have their own cultures which might be contrary to the mainstream society. The dormitory structure in town is now being used as a halfway house by weaned adolescents while they undergo training.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother elaborated that:

The living conditions of adolescents including other children in this home are appalling. I strongly believe that the community can do a better job than children's homes in raising orphans and vulnerable children.

The other mother narrated that:

- The law should allow caring institutions to play a role in naming of abandoned children instead of giving them humiliating and dehumanizing names such as 'Railway', 'Bus stop' or 'Sugarcane'.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home, the following issues and concerns were reported:

- At this home, our motto is to do our best to teach these adolescents life skills that will support them in future. In addition, we instil in them values of honesty, hard work, team work and love among others.
- I have always asked my adolescents to find solace in Christ through prayers. I have reminded them that correcting their bad behaviour was because of the love I have for them and my desire for them to be successful in the future. In addition, I conduct prayers with my children every evening before going to bed and they love it.

The data presented in Section 4.2.2 highlighted a number of issues relating to the development of adolescents in children's homes. The issues include lack of respect of social mothers by adolescents, the stigma about orphans and vulnerable children generated by the society, constraints from government laws governing the operations of children's homes, different backgrounds of adolescents and effects of modernisation on adolescent behaviour. The data also emphasizes the importance of spiritual development as a source of comfort for adolescents.

4.2.3 Consequences of Parenting Practices of Social Mothers as Measured Through Their Relationships with Adolescents

Data from Home 001 (This home consisted of female children only).

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care were highlighted: One social mother reported that:

- I have always explained to the naughty adolescents that; I know I am not your biological mother but it's me who has the responsibility to take care of you in the absence of your non-existent biological mothers. They react by exhibiting frowning faces but I remind them to obey my instructions and guidance.

The other mother narrated that:

- These adolescents lack respect as they can say whatever they want to us. When we counsel them not to have intimate relationships with boys, they respond mockingly saying you wish us to dedicate ourselves to your religious sect.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- Adolescents think they are more mature with more knowledge, experiences, and wisdom than us.
- Adolescents under the same social mother are concerned about the absence of a common surname and totem as is the case in a nuclear family.
- At 12 years of age, adolescents realise that we are not their biological mothers leading to negative attitudes towards us. For example, they refuse to take orders from us as they believe that we are abusing them.
- Adolescents pretend to show good behaviour only for a few days after counselling thereafter revert back to misdemeanour.
- These adolescents report us to the home administrator when we punish them for misdemeanour often leading to us being reprimanded with a possibility of losing our jobs. As a result, we simply watch them violate home rules.
- Adolescents at tertiary institutions are allowed to have phones for communication and research purposes. This is done to give them room for maturity and responsibility but they will not appreciate the service.
- If you ask these adolescents to perform a task they will take their time or do it grudgingly. At times they just mumble as a way of showing their discontent.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were captured:

- Some social mothers in the home used discourteous words to dehumanize and humiliate us. Typical impolite words such as “children of prostitutes are difficult to raise and also lack knowledge of your extended family members”.
- Some social mothers are very cruel. They expect us to be indoors by 5pm every day, when we still want to collaborate on school work with friends in other households.
- We have no access to internet services as they were disconnected for no apparent reasons. Imagine, I am a lower sixth student and I find it very difficult to do my school assignments.
- I hate it when my social mother controls my dressing in this contemporary time and she expects me to dress like an old woman.
- Our social mother will always ask us to take care of the minors in the home and yet we are also children to be taken care of, and I have always refused to do it.
- I don't trust my social mother and cannot share any sensitive issues with her because at one time I told her that I was menstruating and everyone in the house including those from other households knew about it as result, I prefer to share sensitive issues with Jesus Christ only through prayers.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion, raised the following issues about their social mothers:

- I always have conflicts with the relieving mothers because they think we are slaves and that we should do the house chores even cooking for ourselves while they watched us.

- The relief mothers reduce our food portions and we have seen them hiding some of the food to take it to their homes.
- It is frustrating when the relief mothers introduce their own rules which are different from the ones our permanent social mothers employ. For example, we are awakened up as early as 3 am to do the house chores some of which are cleaning, sweeping, and preparing breakfast. It means when we go to school we are already exhausted and this affect our academic performance.
- Our social mothers overwhelm us with responsibilities, especially when there are few adolescents and more minors in the household who need attention. It becomes stressful.
- It pains me that after we have done the chores our social mother will do a thorough inspection of the work and when not done to her satisfaction, she will scold us using nebulous words.
- Some of the social mothers at this home are biased as they favour other adolescents which is very unfair. For example, calling an adolescent to her room and giving her more sanitary wear than what she gave others.
- I feel bad when my social mother does not appreciate me when I perform well at school. This demoralizes me especially when I put more effort to get a good result.
- I suggest that thorough duties such as sweeping the yards and cleaning cupboards and drawers should be done on Saturdays when we have ample time and not during school days.
- I was hurt one of the days when I had a conflict with my social mother and she said to me, *“I am not your biological mother so you should comply with my instructions”*.

Data from Home 002

During in-depth interviews, two social mothers highlighted the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care: One social mother asserted that:

- When my personal children misbehave, I spank them. However, I cannot do the same with children in the home but only strongly warning them of the withdrawal of privileges and benefits.
- My heart bleeds to see adolescents resisting to acquire life skills that are essential for their future life.

The other mother asserted that:

- Adolescents are very rude but there are times when I am strict with them to show my authority but once we are done we get along together.
- At this home, adolescents are allowed to watch television mostly during weekends under our supervision.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- At this home, adolescents are not allowed to possess mobile phones but some of them illegally smuggle the phones into the home. Such phones get confiscated by the administrator and normally leads to the punishment of offenders.

- Our adolescents may not want to follow instructions but we strive to ensure that members of society do not see blemishes on them.
- Some religious organisations visit the home and assist our adolescents in the development of emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence including respect for elders.
- The maladaptive behaviour of adolescents is a result of negative peer pressure within and outside the home.
- Adolescents mislead young children in the home not to obey us because we are not their biological mothers.
- We encounter resistance from adolescents when we enforce hygienic standards such as bathing before going to school.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were captured:

- Social mothers scolded us using labels such as, “*useless dog*” whenever we made silly mistakes in the home like spilling water on the floor.
- Social mothers frequently tell us to grow and leave the home to fend for ourselves.
- We feel that social mothers should rotate across households to enable all adolescents in the home to benefit from the good ones.

During a focus group discussion with six male and six female adolescents, the following concerns about their social mothers were highlighted:

- There are no televisions and radios in the home which are essential for entertainment and for acquiring general knowledge.
- Some of the social mothers scolded us using vulgar language, such as, “*that is why you were abandoned by your biological mother*”. We get emotionally affected by such humiliating statements.
- We appreciate the efforts of the home authorities for organizing Christmas parties for us to interact with adolescents in other households.
- Social mothers rebuke us referring to our backgrounds and we are forced to exchange rough words with them.

Data from Home 003

Two social mothers expressed the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care during in-depth interviews: One social mother reported that:

- Adolescents at this home call us, “*mother worker*” which shows lack of respect for us.
- Some adolescent boys in the home steal money and mobile phones from staff which they use or sell in the surrounding community.
- Some of the adolescents stole food from the pantry during the night using duplicate keys which they illegally made.

The other mother narrated that:

- The adolescent girls at this home are very naughty when we ask them not to watch pornographic movies on their friend's phones at school they will shout at us saying we are leaving in a stone age era.
- Adolescents steal small items from each other such as writing pens and books.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- We have challenges to discipline adolescents because most of them experiment infamously.
- At times when we exchange words with adolescents, we stamp our authority and tell them we are in-charge of their upkeep. Those who think can do whatever they like because they were government children, we report them to the administrator.
- From time to time we remind adolescents that they should maintain good behavior as they will be parents of tomorrow. We usually ask them this question, "*what sort of a parent will you be if you sustain bad behaviour*".
- One of the naughty adolescent girl fell in love with a boy in the surrounding community and unfortunately fell pregnant and was dismissed from the home.
- Despite the differences we have between us and the adolescents, we soldier on and don't give up disciplining them. We always say that, "*children should never be allowed to do things at will without the control of parents*".

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views and perceptions about their social mothers were captured:

- We are always scolded by our social mothers using vulgar words saying, "*as an orphan you must be thankful for being in this home and I as your social mother*". When I asked my social mother to go very early to school, she ridiculed me saying I wanted to go and steal other people's items.
- Each time my social mother sees me moving with a male friend discussing social and academic issues, she would call me a prostitute.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion, highlighted the following issues about their social mothers:

- Some of our social mothers do not understand that we have different talents with others good in academic work and some in practical subjects.
- Some of the social mothers at this home do not treat adolescents equally and this kind of treatment compels us not to comply with their instructions.
- Some social mothers compare us to animals and openly tell us that they came for money and should not crack their heads over our malicious behaviour.
- Some of the social mothers viewed things from their own perspectives without involving adolescents into decision making and yet we can contribute progressive ideas and plans.

Data from Home 004

In-depth interviews with two social mothers highlighted the following views and perceptions

about adolescents under their care: One social mother stated that:

- As social mothers caring for these adolescents, our worry is that, if they carry on with the bad behavior of not listening to our orders would they take orders from anyone when they join the society especially the adolescent girls when they marry.
- Another serious issue is that, whenever they are given something by anyone, they don't say thank you as a sign of respect and appreciation.

The other mother narrated that:

- These adolescents influence each other in the home such that they would all have various forms of social delinquency.
- As adolescents became aware of their rights they became a problem to control in the home.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care were expressed:

- We do our best to care for these adolescents and yet they lie about us claiming that we steal their belongings, a thing which upset and demoralizes us from performing our duties.
- Adolescents in the home discuss us and this propelled bad spirit and behavior especially among the young ones who believe that we are their biological mothers.
- Adolescents do not value what they have in their possession. For example, if young children left their clothes on the floor, they will not pick them but to walk over them and they expect us to clear them and tidy the room.
- We have confrontations when we ask adolescents to prioritize their education first and not marriage.

From the in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views and perceptions about their social mothers were highlighted:

- Each time my mother gets upset, it means war and she can pick up anything closer to her and throw it at you, especially the shoes she will be wearing. She will not discipline us in a polite way using a soft voice but a high-pitched voice. We nicknamed her "the Crazy one or "the Fiery one".
- I have no peace, when I get home from school my social mother gets on my neck. Similarly, at school my school mates torment me saying, "*that is why you were abandoned by your biological mother*". This makes me cry that at times I think of committing suicide. I have reported this to my social mother who has done nothing about it alleging that these are plans to abandon education.
- The Christian values have reminded me that there was God who loved me even if my social mother scold at me, I just pray and forget about the abuse.
- These Social mothers forget that they are employees who are on salary and they are supposed to do most of the work. When they earn their salary they don't share it with us and yet we do most of the work.

During a focus group discussion with six male and six female adolescents, the following issues concerning their social mothers were documented:

- We are people like anyone else and it was not our wish or liking to be orphans only God knows why he punished our mothers who put us into this situation (*cried for a moment*). We should be viewed as part of the family in our housing units and be empowered for future life.
- Social mothers allocated to themselves the donations that we received from well-wishers.
- I feel that house chores such as cooking and cleaning the dishes should be done by adolescent girls and not boys and yet at this home the social mothers expect us to perform those tasks. I desire to herd cattle or do some gardening.
- When I was eight years old, the social mother who took care of me used to pinch my bums whenever I bed wetted and she could forcibly ask me to wash the blankets each time I had the accident. Since then, I have always told myself that God loves me to get to this age while alive.
- I used to like my social mother not until when she started assigning lighter tasks to those adolescents whom she favoured.
- I really feel disgusted when my social mother assigns me a task to accomplish soon after arrival from school before I even change my clothes. If I don't complete the task, she will withhold my food.
- This home used to have a committee that observed the interaction between us and our social mothers. At least the relationship between us was not as wicked as it is today. I feel that the home authorities should reconsider the formation of such a committee.

Data from Home 005

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care were recorded:

- Adolescents get upset when we ask them to use the resources wisely as we no longer get more donors coming forth with donations due to our poor economy.
- The disobedient adolescents are assigned to perform a task for a week as punishment such as cleaning the piggery shelter as a way of making them change their bad behaviour.
- The ban on corporal punishment has instigated more mischief in adolescents who no longer pay attention to us when we try to control their bad behaviour.

The other mother narrated that:

- I feel that these adolescents when they are weaned from this home to the society will not sustain their relationships with others because of their bad behavior. Regrettably, they would become a bunch of ruthless citizens and adults who could not transmit the cultural values to the next generation.
- One of the weaned adolescents under my care who is now married visits me from time to time as a way of appreciating how I brought her up.

- The adolescents I care for in my household are very naughty. I asked one of my adolescent girls to perform a task and she refused saying that, “*you are not my mother because my real mother is dead*”.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following issues about adolescents in the home were captured:

- At this home we do our best to attend to the plights of adolescents under our care. We spend much of our time inculcating the social skills to our adolescents preparing them for the future but to no avail as they will not listen and always think that we are aggressive.
- Adolescents bully younger children and when we discourage them from that bad behaviour they will shout at us.
- Our relationship with adolescents is like that of a child and step mother whereby both would never see anything good from each other as it would be always a game of blaming, hating and frustrating each other.
- As social mothers caring for these adolescents, we worry that when they are weaned from the home to join the community, they would find it tough to adopt the norms, values and beliefs of the society because everything is done for them in the home.
- The government regarded corporal punishment as an abuse and we have refrained from using it even though we apply it to our biological adolescents and find it effective.
- At this home we follow a family house system set up where each social mother cares for a number of adolescents and young children. Our adolescents do most of the house chores on their own such as cooking, sweeping, washing and ironing clothes. We do this to help them prepare for their future.
- Our wish is to have a good recognition of our home from the society. If a child does something wrong or bad, the community will be interested to know the home responsible for raising the individual.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were recorded:

- I appreciate the staff at this home including my social mother who took care of me from two months old to the age of 15 years. I was devastated when she passed on in 2021 due to Covid 19. The new social mother is very cruel as she mocks me saying, “*when you look at me do I look like your late social mother*” who handled you like an egg or a banana in a tray? This hurts me and I have no one to share with the stressful feelings in my heart.
- When my social mother calls me I know there is trouble. She will start shouting at me before I even reach her and will always refer to my background information.
- I hate it when my social mother force me to perform house chores when it was not my turn.
- My social mother will make us eat food which has expired such as baked beans and she will not report this to the home authorities. I am scared of getting food poisoning and lose my life. I have since stopped eating any processed foods because I don’t trust my social mother.

- I find it appalling when my social mother doesn't allow us to interact with any social mothers from other households. I desire the freedom to debate my sensitive personal issues with other mothers I trust.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion, highlighted the following issues about their social mothers:

- Our mothers do not communicate our grievances to the authorities such as the need to celebrate our academic achievements.
- I hate my social mother when she forces me to perform house chores very early in the morning before going to school and during classes I usually fall asleep due to fatigue.
- I feel free to share my sensitive issues with a mother of a different household.
- We are not allocated adequate sanitary wear by the social mothers and we have raised this issue to them but nothing is being done about it.
- We are dumbfounded that the social mothers take us for slaves and not children. They overwork us as we are not given time to rest and be children. This has resulted in little time for school work and also little time to prepare for examinations.
- We feel that these social mothers are cruel to us because we are not their offspring.

Data from Home 006

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the following views and perceptions about adolescents under their care were highlighted: One social mother reported that:

- When I ask adolescent girls to care for minors, such as bathing them, washing their clothes and cooking for them, they refused saying these are not my biological siblings.
- Adolescents are not honest in whatever they say or do, they survive on lies.
- This home allows adolescents to watch television at stipulated times with parental controls. They are also allowed to use mobile phones bought for them by their foster parents.

The other mother expressed that:

- Adolescents exchanged words with us and we keep a record of those who misbehave which we hand over to the administrator for disciplinary action every month end.
- In this home we consider ourselves as employees guided by government policies, hence we are not allowed to discipline children.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- We condemn the dormitory system used at this home. It encourages peer pressure and becomes difficult to control the adolescents and we end up having clashes with them.

- Our adolescents are ridiculed by others at school saying, “*children from children’s homes are misguided and think that they are coming from their real parent’s homes*).
- Our adolescents don’t appreciate the support we give them including our visits to their schools to check on their academic progress.
- Our hands are tied up when it comes to disciplining adolescents because of government policies which banned physical punishment. However, we have come up with some other ways of punishing these adolescents such as withdrawing privileges and incentives.
- Adolescents don’t like it when we ask them to take turns in doing the house chores as part of teaching them life skills.
- Adolescents dislike it when we force them to attend the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe so that they had the same church values and beliefs.
- Our adolescents call us old fashioned social mothers each time we ask them not to watch or download pornographic and obscene pictures.
- Some adolescents feel that they are mature enough to do whatever they like such as sneaking out of the home without permission.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were captured:

- I get distressed when my social mother favours other adolescents when distributing clothes or food in the home.
- I observed that our social mothers show little worry about our welfare as children, especially when we make mistakes we expect to be corrected in a motherly love and constructive manner that motivates us to improve on our performances and to move forward.
- It is not fair for my social mother to punish everyone when something was stolen from the kitchen or refrigerator such as fruits or ice cream.
- My social mother will reprimand us when a disobedient adolescent removes the duty roaster from the wall to cause confusion in the household.
- I dislike it when my social mother prevents us from playing at the playgrounds with others during the day or weekends.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion highlighted the following issues about their social mothers:

- We feel sad that we spend more time working on the farm than on our studies.
- Our social mother expects us to be indoors by 5:00pm failure to that she will not leave any food for us.
- I hate social mothers who use high pitched voices when correcting our mistakes and they forget that we are children.
- Some of our social mothers are very cruel to us that they would pick anything close to them and hit you if you misbehave and the younger ones get a pinch in the ear.
- If you are arrogant and stubborn, the social mother will hold on to your food until you complete the assigned task.

- The social mothers at this home scold at us including abusing our biological mothers who dumped us.
- It is disgusting that in this era of technology, mobile phones were only allowed to adolescents at tertiary education for academic purposes.
- We are pleased that we found solace at church by establishing God parents whom we attached to and adopted their totems.
- We are frustrated that we have no direct contact with the Social Welfare Officers so that we could seek their intervention to address the pressing issues between us and our social mothers, especially those of having our gifts taken by management.
- I hate some of the social mothers at this home and I don't want to share my sensitive issues with them. My best friend shared her secrets with her social mother and they were exposed to his house mates.

Data from Home 007

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the data below was recorded. One social mother highlighted the following issues:

- These adolescents frustrate us because they are delinquents. I was raised under an environment of physical punishment by my parents for wrongdoings which is not employed at this home because of government policies. The adolescents openly ask us not to interfere with their freedom because they claim that they are children of the government. I have always said, *"when you are weaned from this home you shall not be recognised as a child of the government"*.
- This home uses the dormitory system whereby the children shared food from the same kitchen. The adolescents were selective of the social mothers to trust since they were eight of us in the home. It became a challenge for the mothers to speak with one voice on the same adolescents since some mothers had good relations with the child.
- In case of misunderstandings, adolescents will answer back when we are correcting them as if we were of the same age.

The other mother posited that:

- The authorities at this home usually involve the police and religious leaders to address adolescents on good behaviour including abstaining from prostitution, theft and drug abuse.
- Adolescents will develop complications at the age of 12 years when they start questioning about their identity. They want to know why they were in such a big family especially when they are on their own and then finally come to us perpetrating confrontations.
- Adolescents had so much love for each other that if one cries they will comfort each other and yet when it comes to us the relationship is bitter.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion reported that:

- We noted that adolescents who came to the home at a tender age of five years and below had a strong attachment and were free to share their problems with us.
- At this home we discipline naughty adolescents by withholding privileges or interesting things they like most such as going out during the weekends.
- Adolescents are allowed to watch television the whole day during weekends and we monitor the programmes they watch.
- Lack of corporal punishment lead the children to become irresponsible and go out of control because they know that they will not be castigated due to government policies.
- I find it very difficult and challenging to care for adolescents coming from different backgrounds, cultural values, norms, beliefs as well as peer pressure.
- Adolescents expect us to do everything for them because they say we are mother workers and are paid to do the work.
- I personally worry about the future of these adolescents because very soon they will leave the home and yet they need a push when performing a task and close monitoring all the time.
- Some of the adolescents at this home prefer to identify themselves with our surnames. Usually this is done only by those adolescents who were abandoned by their mothers at birth.
- My adolescent girls refuse to accompany me to church because they want to misbehave playing with boys when they are on their own. When I try to deter the behaviour they take it for abuse.
- One of our adolescents told us that, they make their intimate love in the Blair-toilets during the night. Such adolescents developed weird behaviours and could not respect us. When we ask them to do their homework, they will say, “*you are not our teacher, mind your own business*”.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were captured:

- I personally feel demoralised when my social mother shouts at me for no apparent reason and not also appreciating me or rewarding me for good behaviour.
- Our social mothers do not understand that scolding us every day perpetuates bad behaviour as we will end up just ignoring them or answering back.
- I appreciate my social mother for educating and also warning us against early pregnancies before marriage. She said that it will lead to expulsion from school and contracting of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS.
- The social mothers you are seeing around pretend to be good mothers in the presence of visitors. These social mothers use vulgar language to scold us referring to our mothers who we do not know as prostitutes.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion highlighted the following issues about their social mothers:

- We always have skirmishes with our social mothers who lie against us and report us to the administrator who will punish us for no apparent reasons. In many cases, the administrator will just ask us to apologise to our social mothers for misbehaving.

- I get so upset when my social mother scolds me saying, “you are possessed by your mother’s demons that made her abandon you, do not stir at me”.
- It perplexes me when the social mothers compare us to their biological children as social deprivation is not due to our own making.
- Sometimes we wonder why our social mothers are so harsh especially when they come back after taking days off. We note that they will be highly emotional such that there will be no peace in the home but shouting at us using vulgar words.
- I will not forget this other day when I was 11 years of age and was scolded by my social mother whom I had believed to be my biological mother and it made me wonder who my real parents were. I asked one of my elder sisters why my mother scolded me. She laughed and said to me, she is not our biological mother, she is mother worker.

Data from Home 008

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the data below was documented. One social mother reported that:

- It is not easy to raise a traumatized and rejected child who is growing up with bitterness and no self-respect. Such adolescents are difficult to discipline or to form relationships with others.
- The adolescents you are seeing here are very rude. For example, when asked to do house chores, they will say, “*we have no children here who require our services*”.

The other mother posited that:

- Adolescents expect us to do everything for them including flushing toilets and making their beds because they say we are paid and have to work for them.
- We have adolescent boys who are very naughty to the extent of making duplicate keys so as to steal food from the storeroom at night. Also adolescent girls search our bags and steal from us things like phones and money and such behaviour is not tolerated in this home.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- This home uses a dormitory system which makes it difficult for adolescents to attach themselves to social mothers. They will end up choosing who to and who not to respect.
- There were rampant issues of intimacy in the home.
- Absence of corporal punishment makes parenting more difficult.
- Our adolescents are allowed to watch television under supervision every day after doing their homework. On another issue, mobile phones are only allowed to those adolescents in tertiary institutions.
- There were many adolescent boys who sodomised each other which was confirmed through the investigations done by the authorities.
- These adolescents react violently when we are correcting their unacceptable behaviour.

- Adolescents influence each other that we are not their biological parents but house workers to serve them.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were documented:

- My academic performance is bad because I have so many things going through my mind. The most hurting one is the scolding by the social mothers using derogatory words.
- My mother personally brought me here and she visited me once before she died of HIV/AIDS. She is the one who told me that the social mothers were not my biological parents.
- There is no unity at this home between us and the social mothers. In the past, a social worker used to visit the home and it was very helpful in resolving conflicts and cases of abuse.
- I bemoaned that I always started school late because fees were not paid on time.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion, highlighted the following issues about their social mothers:

- Most conflicts resulted from some adolescents who do not want to take orders from the social mothers.
- Some of the social mothers used high pitched voices as if to threaten us when correcting our mistakes. I always interrogated myself why I had many mothers in the home and yet others just had one from each sex.
- I appreciate our social mothers who have taught us to be respectful to each other in the home as we are brothers and sisters. They have advised us to delay thinking about marriage until we had acquired a professional qualification.
- The social mothers at this home have disadvantaged a number of adolescents who have been expelled from the home under unfounded allegations.
- I attend church and trust in God as my saviour because there is no information about the whereabouts of my relatives and God will guide and lead me.

Data from Home 009

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the data below was captured. One social mother reported that:

- At this home, we have said no to prostitution. We wish to mould trustworthy mothers for future generations of the society.
- Both adolescent boys and girls are not honest.
- There was no gender discrimination with regard to performance of duties in the household.

The other mother lamented about the following policies:

- I feel that the law on corporal punishment is vague and should be clarified on what we should do or should not do.

- I feel that child rights organizations such as Child Line in Zimbabwe were also worsening the behaviour of adolescents who believe that they should not be controlled in any way by the social mothers.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion raised the following issues about adolescents in the home:

- Adolescent girls were impolite than the boys as they sometimes influence the younger ones not to obey us because we were not their biological mothers.
- These adolescents accuse us of favouring others, but the fact is that there are some children who are hardworking and more responsible who we reward so that others may emulate their good behaviour.
- Adolescents at this home are very rude such that when we ask where they have been, they simply reply saying; “am I a prisoner who is not allowed to go out”.
- Some of the adolescents refuse to go to church and instead want to meet with their friends in the neighbourhood during our absence and consider going to church as an abuse.
- It was only when I came to work at this home that I realised that looking after children is a hard task which requires patience and endurance.
- We have better relationships with the children when they are younger before they start questioning about their identity and their rights.

During in-depth interviews with three male and three female adolescents, the following views about their social mothers were captured:

- I get distressed when some of these social mothers and other employees in the home rebuke us using mocking names such as *street kid* when we have done nothing wrong.
- I personally thank all the mothers and the staff at this home for taking care me. I am told that I was brought to this home when I was two months old and I am now a big girl. May the Lord add on to their days of living on this earth.
- Our food rations should be improved. Each time we complain through our social mother she is resentful. We used to get three meals a day but now get two meals which is not enough, especially the breakfast which is totally inadequate.
- Our social mother is not fair as she does not allow us adequate time to do our school work and not even to socialize with other children in other households.

On the other hand, six male and six female adolescents participating in the focus group discussion, highlighted the following views and issues about their social mothers:

- These social mothers you are seeing here are heartless. Imagine calling us, “*useless and worthless dogs*” whenever we made silly mistakes in the household such as spilling water on the floor.
- Our social mother locks us outside during the night if we fail to comply with her instructions and we have to seek alternative accommodation from other household mothers.

- We are denied food by the social mothers if we refuse to do certain tasks allocated to us. For example, caring for the minors and washing their clothes when we are supposed to do our school work.
- At times social mothers help themselves on things donated for use in children's homes.
- We should have lockable boxes for safekeeping of our belongings to prevent social mothers who we suspect that they steal our things.
- We expect our social mothers to do the challenging tasks in the household such as preparing breakfast and dinner and then we would wash the dishes and clean the house.

Data presented in Section 4.2.3 on the relationship between social mothers and adolescents have several social dynamics. On one hand, social mothers appear to be constrained by several factors. Some social mothers strongly felt that adolescents were too rude to be treated and talked to politely. Other social mothers were insensitive to the needs of adolescents, especially needs arising from biological changes in their bodies. Some social mothers lacked visible interest in the education of adolescents, an issue viewed by the latter as demotivating with regards to putting maximum effort in their school work. However, in some homes, adolescents appreciated the wonderful work their social mothers were performing including visits to schools to check on their performance and assisting them with homework. On the other hand, adolescents expressed a number of reasons why a good relationship with social mothers was difficult to attain. Some adolescents felt that the social mothers were not their biological mothers and viewed them as mother workers. Adolescents in some of the homes emphasised that there was poor communication between them and their social mothers who usually used derogatory language which is unpleasant and demeaning. Another factor preventing the development of good relations between social mothers and adolescents is the strong feeling of some adolescents that social mothers were merely there to grab donations given to the children's homes. In addition, the data underscores the existence of mistrust between adolescents and social mothers.

4.2.4 Parenting Differences Between Biological Parents and Social Mothers

Unique differences and similarities between parenting practices of biological parents and social mothers were captured during data collection. This section presents this unique data.

Data from Home 001

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were highlighted:

I feel that adolescents brought up in children's homes are not well behaved compared to those raised in normal homes. Our adolescents lack attachment with their social mothers compared to those in normal homes. This has caused instability in the social mother and adolescent relationships. It has also caused major adolescent behavioural problems which include guilt consciousness and always putting blame on social mothers when they themselves are wrong.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother elaborated that:

I allow my adolescents to watch news on television and also use their mobile phones similar to those in normal homes while the young children watch cartoons. When school examinations get closer, I politely ask them to surrender their phones to me so that they could concentrate on their studies and watch television only during the weekends.

The other mother reported that:

Adolescents in children's homes and those in normal homes tend to consider the pursuit of pleasure as an important objective in life without thinking of their future. These adolescents no longer listen or want to be guided by parents because internet has replaced the roles of parents, uncles and aunts.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion highlighted the following views:

- We feel that adolescents in both children's homes and normal homes behave the same towards sexual developments. The use of condoms and social media has greatly influenced the behaviour of adolescents globally to engage in early sexual practice.
- Love relationships among adolescent boys and girls are similar in both children's homes and normal homes. The difference is that, adolescents in children's homes would keep it a secret because it is not allowed while those in normal homes in a way would do the same but are free to share with the aunt or uncle.
- Disciplinary action by biological parents help to mould a whole person compared to the inability of social mothers to do the same.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the wife explained that:

We train our adolescent boys and girls in domestic chores and life skills from an early age before they start thinking that they know it all. Our adolescents in the communities are different from those raised in children's homes because they carryout tasks without complaining.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were expressed. The male elder lamented that:

I stay with my son and his wife and their children. My adolescent grandchildren emulate their parents who concentrate on their mobile phones that has now become a vehicle for raising children. This has made it difficult for my grandchildren to learn our social and cultural values. The socialization of adolescents in children's homes is even a matter of serious concern since there are no committed mother and father to raise the children.

Data from Home 002

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were narrated:

The parenting practices employed in children's homes were legalised by the Government through the Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy (2010) and the Government of Zimbabwe Ministry of Labour Social Services (2010). The controls by the Government made it difficult for the social mothers to use expected and effective parental practices or even to discipline the children but there is no such control in homes of biological parents.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the data below was recorded. One social mother expounded that:

I have always prayed for my adolescents just in the same manner most parents do in normal homes. I also pray asking God to give me a kind heart to become a good mother to the adolescents under my care.

The other mother stated that:

These adolescents in both normal homes and children's homes are similar in their ways of thinking such as giving us nicknames. I came to know my nickname in 2011 when one of the boys shouted, boys the fat mother is here, please make sure that you have made your bed and also that you have bathed. They all ran inside the dormitory to put the place in order. They call me fat mother due to my body structure. As a mother, I know such things happen even in normal homes where our own children would do the same if you are a firm mother.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion highlighted the following views:

- This home attempts to approximate the structure of a normal family by appointing an aunt and uncle to guide and counsel our adolescents.
- Parenting practices today have taken a new twist as children are being protected from any form of punishment. Since the introduction of child protection rights, adolescents in both normal homes and children's homes no longer comply with given instructions.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were expressed. The female elder lamented that:

These adolescents behave in the same manner like those in the children's homes because they no longer pay attention to elders saying that they are modern and parents are still living in the past. They adolescents are quite different from their parents who we raised properly but they themselves are failing to instil the same good behaviour to their own children.

Data from Home 003

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were highlighted:

There are numerous changes in parenting practices not only in the normal homes but also in children's homes because of the impact of social media and the global village cultures which people are adopting. These influence the behaviour of adolescents as their parents have little quality time left to talk and discuss life issues with them. They don't respect us especially when they answer back when we discipline them. The teachings from the bible are the same with those in the society such as honour your parents, do not steal, love one another among others.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the views below were highlighted. One social mother explained that:

I have love for my adolescents under my care, hence I decided to routinely take them with me at my matrimonial home during my off days so that they experience life in a normal home. I have done this before with their brothers and sisters and it worked very well for preparing them for their entry into the community after being weaned from the home.

The other mother reported that:

I involve my adolescents in decision-making in the same way I do with my biological children. The involvement of adolescents in decision making indicates the respect for my adolescents and also creates a strong bonding between me and them similar to what happens with biological parents.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion highlighted the following views:

- When disciplining my adolescents, I stand firm in the same manner I do with my biological children. Those who report home late, alleging that they participated in sports, I make a follow up with the school. If they lie to me, I report them to the administrator for disciplinary action. I have told my children that if a mother disciplines you, it means she loves you and wants you to be a better person.
- I am kind with these adolescents because they are already traumatized. In normal homes, adolescents listen to their parents and comply with orders for fear of being punished but the situation in children's homes is different because of government policy prohibiting punishment of children. As parents, we wish to see our children succeeding in life, so punishing them is a way of constantly guiding them to meet the expectations of the society and at the end of the day, we want to be proud of them.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the wife explained that:

We raise the child from day one when it is born up to when the individual secures employment and becomes independent, a practice legally untenable in children's homes. This creates a strong attachment between us and our adolescents compared to those brought up by social mothers who are merely domestic workers. We understand and know the strengths and weaknesses of every child in the family in

terms of their health and social problems compared to those adolescents raised by social mothers.

On the other hand, the husband stated that:

There are no hustles when we train our adolescents in life skills and to do house chores in the family. They don't complain as compared to those in children's homes and our adolescents in normal homes help out in terms of caring for the minors such as bathing them and washing their clothes. We do not ill-treat or use vulgar words when we discipline our adolescents but we focus on correcting bad behaviours.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were reported. The male elder lamented that:

There is nothing called "majority age" when taking care of my own children as is legally required in children's homes who forsake adolescents when they reach the age of 18 years. My children are detached from me when they secure employment.

On the other hand, the female elder highlighted the following views:

In the villages we still value the extended family safe net though in towns it is dying slowly. I always care about the whereabouts of my grandchildren and also assessing the behaviours of their friends whom they interact with and to teach them good cultural values. They don't complain when I give them tasks to perform as compared to those adolescents raised in children's homes. They work in the fields and do most of the domestic chores in the family and they don't take it as an abuse as is done by their peers in children's homes.

Data from Home 004

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were highlighted:

In normal homes, there are siblings and cousins from extended families and if they are doing really well, they serve as role models unlike in children's homes where there are very few members who are ambitious. In terms of socializing our adolescents in social and moral skills, at this home we use sports, television and social gatherings to motivate them. I feel that games allow our adolescents to interact with others and entertainment will divert their attention from negative thoughts thereby promoting positive behaviour.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers at the same home, the views below were highlighted. One social mother explained that:

There are challenges in raising adolescents in children's homes because when you teach them practical life skills, they take it for abuse while others would refuse to participate and we end up exchanging nasty words whereas those children raised in normal homes comply with instructions immediately.

The other mother reported that:

Children in a normal home are different from those under institutional care in a number of ways. For example, parenting practices used are different leading to different adolescent outcomes.

On the other hand, six social mothers participating in the focus group discussion stressed the following views:

- When we ask our adolescents to work in the field, they refuse saying they were being abused whereas those in normal homes would join their parents to do the work.
- In normal homes, children are also as naughty as our adolescents in children's homes but are disciplined by their parents whereas no disciplinary action is taken in children's homes.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the husband explained that:

Some adolescents in our communities went to the extent of reporting us to the police for making them work at home to acquire skills they need for their future.

On the other hand, the wife stated that:

Long back a child belonged to every community member who would freely reprimand its bad behaviour. This scenario does not apply in children's homes.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were reported. The male elder reported that:

Some of the behaviours that warranted physical punishment included: crying without being beaten or even when beaten, standing while elders were seated, loitering where elders are seated, answering back when elders are speaking, ignoring questions from an elder, singing after being reprimanded by an elder, failing to greet visitors or elders, eating food prepared for visitors even if invited by the visitors and crying to accompany visitors when they depart. Most of these expected behaviours are not observed in children's homes.

Data from Home 005

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were put across:

Children who are raised up in a normal home are involved in family programmes and problems. They would also be role models who become stamping figures in the society and families unlike in children's homes where there are only a few adults to emulate their behaviour.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the views below were highlighted. One social mother explained that:

In normal homes when adolescents misbehave they are punished or sent to the aunt or uncle who would resolve the matter unlike those in children's homes where the government prohibits the use of punishment. However, in this home we have different ways of disciplining our children, including adolescents. For example, asking a disobedient adolescent to write 100 words repeatedly in good handwriting.

The other mother reported that:

Adolescents raised by their biological parents endure difficult situations such as financial constraints whereas those raised in children's homes would make a noise if there was a shortage of anything.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers at the same home the following issues were put across:

- The so-called children's rights are affecting our parenting practices both in children's homes and in normal homes. Some adolescents, no matter in the children's homes or normal homes, say they have rights and the former believe they are government children. We sometimes fail to control them when they refuse to do the house chores. At times, those adolescents who fail to comply with our instructions are served meals with vegetables only while others will be enjoying meat.
- Biological parents treat their children fairly with love and compassion in comparison to some of us. Something of significance is the fact that adolescent behaviour reflects the cultural and social values of their parents in the community.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the husband explained that:

Long ago when a child misbehaved in the presence of visitors, the mother stared at him or her as a strong warning of the unacceptable behaviour. If one continued misbehaving, he or she faced the consequences soon after the departure of visitors.

On the other hand, the wife stated that:

We are disturbed and embarrassed because children are walking half naked these days which is shameful indeed. If you asked the child to dress decently, she or he will accuse you of violating his or her rights and report you to the police.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were noted. The female elder reported that:

The Government should allow us including those social mothers in children's homes to revert to our cultural practice of disciplining adolescents. I was very disappointed to hear that teachers in schools make friendships with students, going out drinking beer together and abusing drugs. We do not know who is supposed to respect who. The senior boys at school are also falling in love with young female teachers especially in boarding schools.

On the other hand, the male elder asserted that:

I have heard my grandchildren especially adolescents talk about majority age of 18 years and that they are old enough to think for themselves and do what they like. The difference between us and the children's homes is that, we do not follow those laws put by the government. When I raised my children they followed the morals from me and members the extended family only. Unfortunately, no such family structure exists in children's homes.

Data from Home 006

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were recorded:

Adolescents raised in children's homes lack proper parental guidance because social mothers are mere workers, they may not bother to teach children cultural values. The community is better than a children's home in raising adolescents mainly because adolescents in children's homes have many psychosocial challenges unlike those in the normal homes. I personally envy the nuclear family system which I believe is effective in raising a whole person. Unfortunately, children's homes cannot function as a normal home because they hardly approximate a nuclear family.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the views below were highlighted. One social mother explained that:

Adolescents growing up in children's homes desire to know their biological parents, relatives and their totems similar to those in normal homes.

The other mother expressed the following views:

I constantly speak to the stubborn adolescents and tell them that, you only have support and care from me unlike children in normal homes who have both parents to look after them.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following views were captured:

- Authorities at this home do not allow children to own mobile phones. This policy limits access to educational resources for our adolescents compared to those in normal homes.
- Our adolescents have many social mothers who they refer to as mother figures unlike in normal homes. In this home, adolescents don't have the knowledge of how kin relationships work compared to those in normal homes who interact with different family members.
- I really feel sorry for our adolescents who do not have national identification cards or even birth certificates to participate at Olympic Games just like other adolescents in normal homes would do.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the husband explained that:

In the communities, our adolescents have been brain washed by social media which has destroyed the social fabric between us and them. They just concentrate on televisions, mobile phones, and have no time for interacting with their parents.

On the other hand, the wife stated that:

Parents should create time to be with their children so as to observe their behaviours and teach them good manners and life skills for future use. Let us teach our children good morals and respect for other people.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were noted. The female elder reported that:

We have a serious problem of early marriages in our communities. I think it is because of illiterate parents who do not value the education of the girl child. Such parents also hide behind religious principles that discourage the education of the girl child. As a consequence, the adolescent girls are no longer jealously and proudly guarding against the loss of their virginity which during our youthful days was very important.

On the other hand, the male elder asserted that:

Whenever adolescents showed some physiological changes (breasts and bums in girls, and thick voices and beards in boys), we then start teaching them how to take care of themselves including hygiene, bedroom issues and their roles before marriage.

Data from Home 007

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were recorded:

Children raised in children's homes lack commitment to their social mothers than those who grow up in normal homes. Their social relationships with others are affected as they lack social skills (norms, values and beliefs). They also have a tendency of not working towards their goals and they do not become hopeful of their future life. The biological parents pay enough attention to their children since they were few to manage compared to those raised in children's homes.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the views below were highlighted. One social mother explained that:

The adolescents we raise in children's homes, some may be equipped with the knowledge and skills of how to run businesses but they lack the financial support base when they are weaned from children's homes as opposed to those children who grow up with their biological parents.

The other mother reported that:

We teach our adolescents to greet visitors while on their knees and clapping their hands in a similar manner done by those in normal homes. We do not allow our children to sit in the room where elders are having conversations with visitors as is the practice in a normal home.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following views were recorded:

- In normal homes parents are firm and demand observance of laid down rules, a situation which is untenable in children's homes.
- Adolescents in a normal home obeys instructions to avoid punishment while those in children's homes become harsh and emotional as a reaction to resist instructions.
- The adolescents in normal homes have a sense of ownership as compared to those in children's homes who have nothing to inherit.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the wife explained that:

We feel that the government is in control of the upbringing of our children unlike in the previous decades where we educated our children on their responsibilities. As parents, we should be in the forefront of controlling our children and teaching them good manners instead of the government enacting laws to stop parents from disciplining their children. In particular, this situation has worsened the control of adolescents in children's homes.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were noted. The male elder reported that:

Long time ago, we raised our children with the support of members of the extended family. However, because of social competition and allegations of witchcraft and sorcery, extended family members are now divided. The apparent collapse of the extended family has become an equalizer in the development of adolescents in both normal homes and in children's homes.

On the other hand, the female elder asserted that:

I teach my granddaughters not to be in secluded places with boys or even allowing a boy to touch their breasts or walking in the streets or moving alone at night. I also teach them the onset and management of menstruation including how to change their sanitary wear, disposing them and the importance of hygiene. The issues of self-discipline and hygiene deserve equal emphasis in children's homes.

Data from Home 008

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were documented:

Adolescents raised in children's homes often present with a number of challenges such as regression compared to those in normal homes. They take long to accept

their situation, they grieve over the loss or rejection by their relatives, loss of their identity and take longer to orient themselves with the institution.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the views below were captured. One social mother explained that:

At this home, the adolescents have no freedom of selecting the church of their choice like others do in normal homes. Some adolescent girls sneak out and attend the Apostolic Faith Church which have their own values and these are in conflict with those of the Roman Catholic Church and this creates problems with the authorities.

The other mother asserted that:

I can proudly say, I take good care of my adolescents just like I do with my biological children. When there are serious problems, I report them to the administrator or to the nearby police who are also part of the disciplinary committee at this home.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following views were documented:

- I tried to ask for permission to take some of my adolescents to my home to interact with my biological children but the administrator does not allow us to do so.
- The parenting practices I use on my biological children are not different from what I use in the children's home. For example, the emphasis I put on education with my biological children is the same with my adolescents in the children's home. I have always emphasized to both that education is a prerequisite of their success in future.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the wife narrated that:

Migration also affected most families as people crossed borders to look for greener pastures in neighbouring countries. Truly speaking, a female maid will not teach my child our cultural morals, beliefs and values. As a parent, I am a model of my own children, I share the wisdom I have and wish to see my children growing up to become better citizens. I don't believe that hired social mothers in children's homes can develop adolescents to meet the expectations of the society.

On the other hand, the husband reported that:

We always sent our children to our parents where they are closely monitored by both grandparents. The grandmother monitored the behaviour of the girl child while the grandfather monitored the behaviour of the boy child. We benefit from this practice because of the feedback we get from our parents on the behaviour of our children. On the other hand, extended family members used to complement the roles of biological parents but this practice is slowly vanishing.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following issues were raised. The female elder reported that:

I saw my granddaughter putting clothes in her school bag. When I asked her, she ignored me, I then realised that adolescent girls carried extra clothes to wear after school which exposed parts of their bodies to the public in the absence of their parents.

Data from Home 009

During a key informant interview with the administrator, the following views were documented:

We recruit social mothers from diverse provinces and each one of them employs different parenting practices which may negatively affect the development of adolescents. Social mothers have their own families who they give priority to in terms of discipline and morals, a parental practice observable in a normal home. In the children's home, they consider themselves as employees who are guided by Government policies, which impede their parental roles.

During in-depth interviews with two social mothers, the views below were captured. One social mother reported that:

Biological parents will always explain real life experiences to their adolescents. They also have adequate time to discuss with their adolescents as a family whereas children's homes follow setup rules that govern the home. In normal homes adolescents are taught love, respect and care among family members unlike in children's homes where adolescents are not bonded with their social mothers.

The other mother stated that:

The behaviour of adolescents raised in normal homes and our adolescents here is the same. I feel bad watching children do what they like without controlling their maladaptive behaviour. The way I discipline my children in the normal home is what I do with children under my care.

During a focus group discussion with six social mothers, the following views were recorded:

- After I observed the changes in the behaviour of adolescents in Zimbabwe, I became very strict with both my biological children and the children under my care. The behaviour of adolescents raised in normal homes compared to those raised in children's homes is the same. These adolescents are not honest as they can lie about things or refuse to accept their mistakes. For example, they can pretend to be sick to avoid carrying out their duties.
- This home allows adolescents from the surrounding community to come and interact with their peers to expose them to life practices in the community.

- Some children had a habit of stealing from the age of five years. Regarding the same issue, biological parents emphasized that they punished their children for such unacceptable behaviour.

During a key informant interview with biological parents at the same home, the husband bemoaned the abandonment of useful cultural practices by highlighting the following:

The disintegration of the extended family has led to the loss of folk stories which were used to educate children on various aspects of life.

On the other hand, the wife reported that:

Adolescents in normal homes and children's homes behave in the same manner. They are all very stubborn that they don't listen to us when we advise them. For example, my adolescent girl aged 17 years eloped with a man resulting in her failure to complete her ordinary level studies. My son violated school rules which forced the head master to punish and reprimand him.

During key informant interviews with two elders, the following views were noted. The female elder reported that:

In my home, I live with my son, his wife and three school-going grandchildren. I do not have quality time with my grandchildren because they are addicted to their mobile phones. When we are together, the children and their parents will be on their mobile phones except me. I do not know what they will be watching but each one of them breaks into laughter.

On the other hand, the male elder stated that:

These adolescents no longer pay attention to us because they say we are too old to match their living standards. I have watched how my grandchildren interact with their parents and noted that they have no respect at all. The adolescents are quite different from their parents whom we raised properly but their parents are failing to instil good values in them.

Data presented in section 4.2.4 has highlighted a number of similarities and differences in parenting practices of biological parents and social mothers. With regards to similarities, adolescents have been equally affected by social media and by Children's Rights. Adolescents in both homes disregard instructions given by biological parents and social mothers arguing that the instructions were violating their rights. Both biological parents and social mothers confirmed negative behaviour of adolescents such as stealing. Furthermore, adolescents in both homes reacted equally the same to the death of a parent. Regarding differences between normal homes and children's homes, the absence of a father figure in children's homes represented a major deficiency in the moulding of adolescents. Another major difference between normal homes and children's homes is lack of a defined family name and totem for the children in care homes. Furthermore, children's homes are strictly run under government laws and regulations. Some adolescents in children's homes are disenfranchised due to the inability to acquire a birth certificate and a national identity card, a situation which does not exist in normal homes.

4.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data on characteristics of participants, focusing on gender, age, educational level and religion. It presented qualitative data based on the objectives of the study. Interesting narratives on issues raised during interviews and discussions were provided by the participants. These narratives presented deeper insights into the operations of children's homes in Zimbabwe. Key points were summarized at the end of each section. Chapter 5 is devoted to the discussion of the results presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 5

Discussion of Results

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses results presented in Chapter 4. The main aim of the study was to critically analyse the impact of parenting practices on the development and behaviour of adolescents residing in children's homes in Zimbabwe. The results are based on data collected from nine children's homes selected for the study. The results are discussed below based on the research objectives.

5.1 Emergence of Children's Homes in Zimbabwe

The results of this study established that institutionalisation of orphaned and vulnerable children was not an ideology that originated from Zimbabwe or Africa but was a borrowed idea from Europe and North America. Buttressing the above sentiment, UNICEF, CASS and Government of Zimbabwe (2011) added that child institutionalisation is not an African concept as it undermines traditions relating to child-care, in the process alienating children from their support systems centred around extended families and the communities. The ideology spread in Africa through various circumstances but mostly through missionaries. The research results presented in Chapter 4 indicated that children's homes in Zimbabwe were established due to several factors that include wars, depression, pandemics such as influenza and HIV/AIDS, negligence and abandonment of children, sexual abuse, and unstable families especially with mentally challenged mothers. The ideology of institutional child-care is traced back to Plato's philosophical thinking in the early 10th century as evidenced in his writings "Plato Laws of 927 AD" as cited in McKenna (1911) below:

Orphans should be placed under the care of public guardians. Men should have a fear of the loneliness of orphans and of their departed parents. A man should love the unfortunate orphan of whom he is guardian as if he were his own child.

The results in this study revealed that the emergence of war, particularly the 1896/7 Chimurenga war in Zimbabwe, resulted in heads of families dying leaving behind orphaned, abandoned and vulnerable children. This resulted in the birth of Chishawasha Mission Children's Home which housed children of the Shona people who died in the war. Noteworthy is that after Mbuya Nehanda and Sekuru Kaguvi's executions by the settler military forces on 27 April 1898, their children became part of the first group of orphans kept at Chishawasha Mission. Solusi Mission provided another home for the orphaned and abandoned children (Schmidt, (1992); Zvobgo, (1991).

The early establishment of children's homes in Africa including Zimbabwe was viewed not as an acceptable practice for a people who believed in family care over stranger input. However, the erosion of the extended family system left African communities with no option but to adopt the alternative parenting practice of institutional care. The demand for children's homes in Zimbabwe is continually rising due to the effects of abject poverty, divorce, HIV/AIDS, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and physical abuse, poor economic performance,

natural disasters such as Cyclone Idai, war conflicts and civil unrest and the collapse of government support systems to society. The same causes are also reported in Rwanda, Malawi and Ethiopia (Abebe & Aase, 2007). The above factors on the emergence of children's homes can be tackled if societies were to be guided by the Afrocentricity theory which embraces the sharing of resources and responsibilities among people. The theory asserts that all people have a specific culture and history that becomes the focal point from which they derive a sense of past and future (Asante, 1980). The study results including the literature review emphasised the view that children's homes in Zimbabwe emerged due to colonisation and the coming in of missionaries. Narratives from administrators of children's homes concurred that the homes must be considered as a last resort for raising orphans and vulnerable children.

5.2 Changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe and their impact on parenting practices employed in children's homes

This study sought to identify the parenting practices, their influence on adolescents and factors influencing their changes. The study established that parenting practices in Zimbabwe have continuously changed due to factors such as urbanisation, globalisation, religious influence, cultural infusion, and information and communication technology advancement as claimed by Currie (2014) and Powell (2006). Such changes also negatively affected the development and behaviour of adolescents. Corroborating results by Powell (*ibid*), the current study established that the authoritarian style of parenting dominates in children's homes in Zimbabwe. What is salient in this study is the authoritarian parenting style which is undergirded by different factors which include, *inter alia*, the need to preserve Christian principles and values as well as enacted laws and regulations.

In both normal homes and children's homes, biological parents and social mothers strive to raise physically and psychologically healthy children. The type of a parent, parenting practices and the home environment are the main drivers of adolescent behaviour. Within children's homes, the most important factor is the calibre of the social mother and the interactions she establishes with the children under her care. The study established that a significant number of social mothers (25%) were illiterate. This level of education hinders the development of mutual relationship between the social mothers and adolescents. The quality of parenting these mothers provide suffers from lack of knowledge of adolescent development, lack of appreciation of the influence of social media and information technology and the inability to participate in the educational activities of children under their care. The study also established that illiterate social mothers found it difficult to enforce good behaviour among adolescents under their care partly due to the rejection by the children who viewed them as living in the pre-information technology era. Parenting practices employed by social mothers depend on many factors that include the number of children cared for, the attributes of both the parent and child background, parents' attitudes to parenting and the structure of the family (Murray, 2011). The study established that each social mother had at least 10 children of different ages under her care. This scenario will demand a highly versatile social mother with the capacity to deal with adolescents and children.

Khanday (2016) claims that parental care can exhibit enormous influence on children, both morally and socially. Children always perceive the attitudes of their parents towards themselves. Khanday (*ibid*) concluded that parents dynamically and effectively modulate the behaviour of their children. On the other hand, Caplan (1974) outlined basic sources of parental

social support to children which include emotional support, tangible support and informational support. Emotional support includes parent providing love, affection, empathy and sympathy to children. Lippold & Jensen (2017) stated that tangible support involves provision of financial assistance and basic material aid, such as food, shelter and clothing to children while informational support includes guidance, advice and suggestions for problem solving to children. Furthermore, Khanday (ibid) suggested that parents have a religious duty to provide a right atmosphere for the effective upbringing of their children within the realm of society.

In this study, it was established that children's homes were under missionary churches and children got adequate religious guidance. Narratives from adolescents actually indicated that they enjoyed religious teachings from chaplains, which was a positive arrangement for the development of adolescent good behaviour. The study established that religious organisations involved in children's homes had contributed in the development of both emotional and spiritual intelligence of adolescents. It was amazing to discover that some adolescents had found solace by putting their trust in God. However, some religious authorities barred adolescents from attending other church meetings. This action violated the constitutional right of freedom of association.

Parenting skills and roles among social mothers were not well-defined as most of them were merely doing routine institutional care duties as revealed from the results of this study. Ballantine (2001), Baumrind (1966) and Khanday (ibid) observed that authoritative parents will guide and bind their children to good morals, social ethics and work towards creating obedient children. On the other hand, Mutambara (2015), and Thwala (2013) noted that failure by child institutions to offer psychosocial support created attachment problems such as social impairment; making it difficult for adolescents to build positive relationships in adulthood. Research in Russia has shown that one in three children leaving residential care becomes homeless; one in five ends up with a criminal record; and one in ten commits suicide (Tobis, 2000). As such, countries with a history of institutional care have registered developmental problems faced by children who grow into young adults and later experience difficulty re-integrating into society because they lack parental care and guidance (ibid). Institutionalised adolescents face negative consequences from the society as their development and adulthood productivity get affected (Tobis, ibid).

Tandon *et al.* (2009) assert that maladaptive behaviours by children and adolescents with high level of anxiety and depression were a result of negligent parents who do not communicate well and understand their children's needs. Social mothers in this study indicated that parenting practices they apply to discipline children emanate from their own experiences and how they themselves were socialised by their own parents. There is no consistency in the use of these parenting practices as different social mothers use different skills to discipline children. The use of different skills of parenting are not supported by Murray *et al.* (2011) and Tingvold *et al.* (2012) who argue that in parenting, it is not the skills alone which matter but also aiming to raise a psychologically healthy adolescent with socially accepted behaviour.

The issue of social mothers regarding themselves as workers, and being regarded as such by adolescents, means that the attachment processes are compromised at children's homes. In this study, social mothers themselves indicated that they were stressed by their overwhelming duties making it difficult to attend to each and every child under their care. Belsky (2005) and McKeown *et al.* (2016) argue that the well-being of good parents results in greater well-being of their children. Belsky (ibid) further proclaims that parent's attitudes towards emotions can have a big impact on the way children learn to cope with feelings. Children whose parents

respond to their emotions with patience and empathy do better in lots of ways, including academic achievement, better overall health and stronger relationships.

Save the Children, U. K (2010) reported that lack of parental roles might be based on lack of training of care-givers. Given the potential influence that social mothers have on adolescent behaviour, their actions could possibly affect adolescents' well-being and mental health. In order for adolescents to integrate with society, social mothers should equip them with developmental skills milestones that will help them to acquire survival capabilities. In this study, social mothers revealed that they exchanged un-friendly words with adolescents and, as a result, did not have affection for them. Khanday (ibid) also recommends that parents should have quality time to talk and listen to their children and play with them as a way of strengthening their confidence and improving on attachment. This study established that adolescents in children's homes lacked parental support in the form of love, affection, care, and quality time which is necessary for proper growth and development. Social mothers in this study affirmed that they found it difficult to provide adequate parental care to children due to shortages of resources, especially from the government due to a collapsed economy.

From published research, Bornstein (2012) claims that society often assumes that parenting practices are natural and parents just know what to do about discipline, nurture, toilet training and esteem to train their children. Unfortunately, this is not true in all cases because the educational level of the parents is a critical factor in choosing parenting practices. The good thing is that this perception is being altered because of the impact of globalization, migration, information and communication technology, and social media. In as much as children's homes try to imitate natural nuclear families in terms of parenting, their parenting practices have shifted significantly from the traditional African practices as a result of the blending of traditional African and modern cultures. Administrators were emphatic that parenting practices adopted in children's homes were not suitable for the development of the whole person. The common explanation was that the country's laws had given too many rights to children such that some useful traditional African parenting practices such as use of corporal punishment were considered to be abusive.

It emerged from the study that while social mothers might be good mothers to their biological children, their emotions and attitudes were different when caring for institutionalised children. They considered themselves as employees and this impacted on their social relationships with adolescents. The majority of social mothers interviewed complained that it was difficult to look after a child who is not your own, especially when it comes to enforcement of good behaviour. Some adolescents frankly told them that they are not their biological mothers but only '*mother workers*'. The study observed that even though social mothers regularly received counselling on how to handle and understand children better, they at times could not cope with adolescent misbehaviour.

The study found out that parents, especially biological ones, believed that corporal punishment was still a desired form of parental practice as it instilled discipline whenever adolescents deviated from the expected behaviour. This confirmed Chirozva & Mukamuri's (2014) argument that the government is 'misleading' the children by banning and criminalising the administration of corporal punishment. It was further revealed that there were challenges in raising children, especially when they reached age 12 and were aware that the social mothers were not their biological parents. Social mothers occasionally reminded the adolescents that they would face the consequences of their behaviours when they are weaned from the children's homes. There were times when the social mothers would threaten the children with a whip and

only the young ones felt deterred and not the adolescents. According to Gershoff (2002), although the merits and demerits of parents using corporal punishment to discipline children have been argued for decades, a thorough understanding of whether and how corporal punishment affects children has not been reached. However, although the government of Zimbabwe has outlawed corporal punishment against children at schools or homes because the practice violates the provisions of the constitution.

The study showed that there are parameters set by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Services to be observed by social mothers when punishing children, such as reporting to the Social Welfare Officer who will then determine the form of punishment to be administered. It was also observed from the study that, while the intentions of the law against child abuse are noble, biological parents expressed the view that such a law was in danger of creating a morally-decadent society. They maintained that they only exercised corporal punishment to enforce good behaviour.

It emerged from the study that biological parents exercised full control over their biological children, despite the laws against child abuse. They opined that disciplining a child is not the same as child abuse. On the other hand, citing the law against the use of corporal punishment, social mothers argued that their control over the children under their care, especially adolescents, was very limited. Both social mothers and biological parents concurred that the law that restricts child corporal punishment is a bad law because a parent should not be afraid of disciplining his or her child. The argument by parents is that failure to instil discipline in children only creates thieves and murderers who will terrorise society in the future. The position taken by parents to condemn the enactment of the law on children's rights, in particular the ban of corporal punishment, could be due to lack of appropriate knowledge in psychology which provides various forms of non-physical punishment such as withdrawing privileges enjoyed by the adolescent. It was pleasing to note that one home condemned the use of corporal punishment because it viewed its use as worsening the predicament of children who were already traumatised by their abandonment.

The issue of child rights and strict monitoring by the social officers actually hindered social mothers from practising the authoritarian parenting style which they believed was the best. The study observed that while social mothers blamed Government and the Department of Social Welfare and Services for giving children too much freedom and rights, adolescents blamed the social mothers for neglecting them. It was noted from the study that social mothers could not punish children as part of disciplinary measures for fear of being reprimanded and the possible loss of employment, it was apparent in this study that the behaviours of adolescents at children's homes were very different from those of biological parents. Social mothers referred to institutionalised children as uncultured, compared to their own biological children. The study established that, apart from blaming the social mothers, adolescents also accused the entire management of the homes for negligence.

The study established that migration was a critical factor contributing to changes in parenting practices. Migration affects the upbringing of children who are left under the care of a relative or a worker. This result is in agreement with Kaseke (1991) who revealed that parents' 'absenteeism' in the daily lives of children resulted in children failing to grasp fundamental teachings on cultural values, morals, norms and beliefs which are key to their development. It is believed that a parent is the first model of his or her child as their physical presence will likely enhance the growth and development of the child. The study noted that the rapid pace of changes in parenting practices leaves children facing challenges which their parents never

experienced. Bornstein (2013) observed that the root cause of most of the mental health problems of children and adolescents across cultures is related to parenting practices adopted in raising them.

The result of this study make it clear that changes in parenting practices in Zimbabwe had been influenced by political, social and technological changes over the years.

5.2.1 The Absence of a Father Figure in Child Institutions

A father is an important player in raising a child. What fathers do vary with respect to social context, which in turn shapes the influence they have on their children (Gray & Anderson, 2015). While children's homes attempt to mimic the structure and functions of a normal home characterised by having a mother and a father, the situation in children's homes falls short when it comes to a father figure. The family structure in children's homes changes the dynamics of parenting practices. David & Lynskey (1996) aver that fathers are far more than just "*second adults*" in the home. They claim that fathers have a parenting style that is significantly different from that of mothers which is healthy for the development of the child.

This study observed that only women were recruited to care for children as social mothers in eight of the homes. Because of cultural issues concerning the relationship between a man and a woman, it was accepted that only women would be hired to function as mothers in children's homes. Some children, in particular adolescents, in institutions came from families where they had a chance to live with both parents but due to factors such as violence, divorce and abject poverty they had to seek shelter in a children's home. It is common practice that most children fear men more than women and in terms of discipline of children, men take centre stage in disciplining adolescents. In normal homes, the presence and voice of the father is respected by both the children and the mother. The absence of a father figure in the institutional family structure might have contributed to the maladaptive behaviours seen in some adolescents. This study established that adolescents displayed lack of respect for social mothers as they exchanged hostile words with them. In normal families, the mother would threaten to report the adolescent for bad behaviour to the father who is more aggressive, though not abusive in instilling discipline.

The absence of a father figure in children's homes can be due to the general mistrust by society on men when it comes to childcare. Men are associated with child neglect and abuse, so it would be difficult to entrust them with non-biological children. This decision is strongly supported by Tamis-LeMonda & McFadden (2010) who reported that in some families, men have raped, abused and neglected their own offspring. Buttressing the above sentiments UNICEF (2013) reported that in the year 2007, Henk Molhuysen, the founder of Hamro Jiven Orphanage in Kathmandu, Nepal, was arrested for molesting 48 of the children in his care. The report revealed that Molhuysen had previously been convicted of child rape in Spain and sentenced to eight years' incarceration in 1995.

Women spent most of their time with children while men went to work for the family. However, with economic changes in contemporary days, women now also go to work but leave their children with female maids instead of male house workers. However, the absence of a father figure in children's homes does not lessen the father's importance in the lives of the adolescents. The study observed that, in the minority of the children's homes some male and female workers

were assigned roles to act as an uncle and aunt, respectively. In homes with female administrators, social mothers would threaten to report the child to the uncle who represented a father figure. However, social mothers reported that the strategy worked well only with young children. The absence of a father figure might help to explain the hostile relationships between social mothers and adolescents. The results in this section suggest that Bowlby's assumption that the mother is the primary attachment figure creates challenges in the development of attachment in children's homes. The evidence suggests the importance of a father figure including other members like grandparents, aunts and uncles. The observed consequences due to the absence of a father figure agree with those highlighted in Bowlby's theory which include lack of respect for adults, poor self-control, poor self-concept, lack of trust in others, impaired social interactions, emotional disorders and poor eye contact. The researcher strongly believes that, the weaknesses highlighted above would have been addressed if the following key roles of a father figure had been played:

- Provision of quality leadership in the home,
- Modelling healthy relational behaviour with family members,
- Being kind, nurturing, and genuinely connecting with children without distractions,
- Expressing love in healthy ways,
- Taking good care of himself both physically and mentally and modelling appropriate behaviour for his children to emulate,
- Being understanding and forgiving,
- Not imposing or projecting his notions onto his children,
- Giving his children the space to be themselves,
- Offering acceptance and compassion,
- Teaching and modelling healthy communication skills, as well as appropriate conflict resolution skills, and
- Setting boundaries and discipline standards appropriately (no violence, no spanking, no yelling, no withholding affection, and no prolonged punishment).

5.2.2 Religious Influence in Children's Homes

Historically, religious organisations have played a leading role in providing institutionalised care of orphans and vulnerable children. The results from the study confirmed that religious organisations are still the key players in providing and running children's homes in Zimbabwe. Evidence from the study shows that churches have made significant contributions to the development of moral values, emotional and spiritual intelligence and counselling services. The study results tally with those of McKenna (1911) who pointed out that pastors and church members, including people in surrounding communities, visited children's homes to give moral support and to help manage the welfare of the adolescents. The contribution of churches to the development of emotional and spiritual intelligence is fully supported by Gibbons (2000) who claims that the coordination of spirituality with life makes people more satisfied with their lives and leads to more creativity, responsibility, productivity and profitability in the environment.

In biblical times, the fatherless, the stranger, and the widows shared the excess fruits of the harvest (Deuteronomy 24:19-21). This biblical idea suggest that churches have a moral and social responsibility to care for orphans and vulnerable children. UNICEF (2012) reported that religion can have a profound influence on children's development and socialisation and has the

potential to reinforce protective influences and promote resilience. The beliefs, practices, social networks and resources of religion can instil hope, give meaning to difficult experiences and provide emotional, physical and spiritual support to the orphaned adolescents (UNICEF *ibid*). According to Erikson (1968), the major task of adolescence is the exploration of occupational and ideological identities that will form the foundation for continuing positive psychosocial development and functioning in adulthood (in UNICEF *ibid*). On the other hand, according to Bronfenbrenner's (1986) Bio-Ecological Theory, religious organisations constitute an important institution in the larger society with an important function in the socialisation of adolescents. In particular, religious organisations should contribute to the development of morals, values, beliefs and emotional and spiritual intelligence of adolescents in children's homes. Such a contribution by religious organisations will help in the development of responsible, accountable and reliable adolescents. Religious leaders shape social values and promote responsible behaviours that respect the dignity and sanctity of all life. However, their services should be inclusive, based on what orphans and vulnerable children need than being restricted to the needs of church membership. It was encouraging to discover that some adolescents had found solace by putting their trust in God.

5.2.3 Influence of Media in Children's Homes

The information and communication technology revolution is one of the most important factors in globalisation. It has reduced the value of boundaries between countries including time and space while increasing relations between peoples, governments and cultures across the world. Through information and communication technologies, many populations are exposed to foreign cultures and ideas and feel the threat of losing their national and religious identities (Nelson *et al.*, (2007); Neyestani & McInturff, (2006). Globalisation offers clear economic opportunities and benefits but comes with significant social costs arising from migration which in developing countries like Zimbabwe separates children from their parents. It has generated a lot of controversy with regard to the rise of a global culture where modern norms and practices are gradually developed and transported across the globe as the acceptable way of behaviour (Nelson *et al.*, *ibid*). The study established that adolescents in children's homes were not spared by the impact of information and communication technology. For example, male adolescents living in a dormitory setup viewed from social media and practised sodomy among themselves. The challenges arising from the influence of information and communication technology include the generation gap between the adolescents and their social mothers.

The evidence from the study has shown that social media is both good and bad. When properly used, television and newspapers and the internet can contribute immensely to the educational, cultural, innovative and behavioural development of adolescents. For these positive benefits of social media to be achieved, adults must control and monitor access to sources of social media. However, there are serious hardware and software challenges for adults to succeed in controlling access to sources of social media. It has captured the minds and attention of adolescents, almost replacing parents and other adults such as grandparents, aunts and uncles involved in socialising them. A serious outcome of the capture by social media is that adolescents fall prey to destructive ideas through online communication, chance of befriending wrong people, joining wrong social groups and exposure to groups with criminal behaviour. The exposure of adolescents to negative influences leads to aggressive behaviour and ethical misconduct (Judi *et al.*, 2013).

According to Anderson & Bushman (2001) and Anderson (2004), it is not uncommon to see adolescents play violent games on their mobile phones, see violence-oriented films or chat with all types of people across the globe. They argue that this leads to other vices such as rape, use of condoms, drug and alcohol abuse, truancy and many forms of cybercrimes. In addition, such results agree with Mensch *et al.* (2001) and Bovill & Livingstone (2001) who argue that the internet is an activity that reduces the quality time that social mothers and adolescents spend together in socialisation activities. Unfortunately, according to Bronfenbrenner (1986) this is the environment in the global village under which we have to socialise and develop adolescents.

5.2.4 Identity Crisis in Children's Homes

Identity crisis has become one of the major factors influencing parental practices in children's homes. Erikson (1968) argues that as children reach the adolescence period, they ask critical personal questions including "Who am I? What makes me special? Why am I here?". These questions and many more are at the heart of a child's formation of self-identity or the way in which individuals views themselves and their role in the society. This temporary instability and confusion lead to distress and disorientation that results from conflicting pressures and uncertainty about one's self and one's role in society. The crisis begs answers to the following additional questions:

- Who are my biological parents?
- Who are my grandparents?
- Who are my relatives?
- What is my clan?
- What is my totem?

The study established that identity crisis was the most vexing issue among adolescents in children's homes. The crisis became the pre-occupation of adolescents which led to poor relations with their social mothers. The crisis also became a major hurdle to social mothers who were striving to prepare adolescents for entry into society. The situation was exacerbated by the failure of social mothers to provide answers to identity crisis questions raised by these adolescents. The absence of answers to these questions made adolescents lose self-esteem, self-respect and grow with a feeling of incompleteness. The identity crisis was fuelled by stigma from the society, especially from other children at the school who labelled the adolescents as street kids, orphans or abandoned children. This worrisome issue affected the adolescents psychologically, socially and developmentally.

Jones *et al.* (2018) observed that parents undervalue the power the individuals receive from the experience of identity crisis in trying to deal with the hardships in later life. This study established that social mothers were not well equipped with psychosocial skills for proper and professional counselling of adolescents battling with identity crisis. The observation by Kroger (2007) that the identity crisis was unconstructive in the execution of parenting practices by both social mothers and biological parents begs for the development of more sensitive parenting practices that are capable of addressing the vexing issue of identity crisis. The solution to the identity crisis requires the government to address the critical notion of totem which is the main parameter defining a clan.

5.3 Consequences of Parenting Practices of Social Mothers as Measured Through Their Relationships with Adolescents

Bronfenbrenner (1979) has argued that adolescent behaviour is a product of a series of events taking place in the environment in which the adolescent is raised. Such events begin with attachment of an infant to its mother. Disturbances of attachment are among the most pronounced effects of institutionalised care dating from pioneering observations in the 1940s (Burlingham & Freud, 1944). Bronfenbrenner (1986) developed the ecological systems theory to explain how different environments affect a child's development. Bronfenbrenner (*ibid*) labelled different levels of environments that influence a child's development which include the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem.

The microsystem is the immediate environment that the child lives in. For children in institutional care, their microsystems will include any immediate relationships or organisations they interact with, such as their social mothers, administrative staff and their school. How these groups or organisations interact with the child will have an effect on how the child grows; the more encouraging and nurturing these relationships and environments are, the better for the child to grow. Erikson (1968) argues that development occurs in stages and is greatly influenced by one's interactions with their environment. However, although the results revealed that a significant number of children's homes endeavour to provide fairly clean environments, stable medical care and adequate nutrition, the rotating shifts and large number of social mothers with a ratio of social mothers to adolescents of up to 1:12 limit the development of stable relationships between adolescents and their social mothers (Nelson *et al.*, 2007). By the time of their third birthday, many institutionalised children may have had as many as 50 or more different social mothers with none of them having established personal relationships with them, hence the weak attachment for the rest of their lives. The consequence of this situation is a shaky foundation of behaviour.

As children mature into young adults, there is a tremendous amount of developmental change happening and often times parents either begin to rely on adolescents as adults or continue to treat them like young children (Bowlby, 2008). The development of a secure attachment allows children to feel safe while exploring their environment. Insecurely attached adolescents avoid or distance themselves from their parents, show an unusual amount of fear toward their parents, or show ambivalence or resistance toward their parents (Keller & Chaudhary, 2017). The study established dynamic relationships between social mothers and adolescents that had significant effects on the behaviour of adolescents.

Some social mothers strongly felt that adolescents were too rude to be treated and talked to politely. Other social mothers were insensitive to the needs of adolescents, especially those arising from biological changes in their bodies such as menstruation in adolescent girls. Most social mothers lacked visible interest in the education of adolescents, an issue viewed by the latter as demotivating with regards to putting maximum effort in their school work. This situation was largely due to the fact that a significant number (43.4%) of the social mothers had less than secondary school education. However, in a few homes, adolescents appreciated the wonderful work their social mothers were performing including visits to schools to check on their performance and assisting them with their homework. On the other hand, adolescents expressed a number of reasons why a good relationship was difficult to attain with their social mothers. Some adolescents felt that the social mothers were not their biological mothers and viewed them as mother workers. Adolescents in some of the homes emphasized that there was

poor communication between them and their social mothers who usually used derogatory language which is unpleasant and demeaning. Another factor preventing the development of good relations between social mothers and adolescents was the strong feeling of some adolescents that social mothers were merely there to grab donations given to the children's homes and meant for the children.

Another finding of the study was that adolescents in children's homes endured stresses from a number of situations arising in the homes. First, the adolescents were extremely worried about lack of identity documents, loss of respect and love by some social mothers and administrative staff, absence of a common surname under the social mother, and unavailability of a totem. Second, adolescents expressed serious concerns about the names they were given such as 'Njanji' (meaning a railway line where the abandoned child was picked up) which invoked the circumstances under which they were found. Third, adolescents were stressed by restrictions that made them feel like prisoners and not just orphans and vulnerable children.

The adolescents also expressed frustration due to lack of material resources like computers to develop their information technology skills. Another worrisome issue expressed by adolescents was the unfair and unequal treatment by some social mothers and the administrative staff. For example, some social mothers exhibited favouritism which resulted in some children getting more food than others. All adolescent participants expressed a serious worry about their future after attaining the age of 18 years. This is a serious and a justified concern because the net effect is the abandonment of the emerging adults into the streets as they have no known relatives.

The study also established that adolescents were not happy with life-skills training because they strongly believed that they were being used as cheap labour. This led to confrontation and rebellious behaviour towards their social mothers. The thrust by social mothers to provide life skills training agrees with the finding of UNICEF (2013) stated that institutional care must be based on life-skills training which educates children on cultural, religious, moral, social and health issues, as well as other subjects that the formal education system excludes. However, the adolescents argued that the training was a form of abuse where social mothers neglected and passed on their workloads to the vulnerable adolescents under the guise of life-skills training. Most importantly, adolescents in this study revealed that verbal abuse was typically common during the life-skills training. This result mirrors earlier studies on child abuse in residential care institutions in Romania (Stativa & Better Care Network, 2000), in India (Kacker, et al., 2007), and in North America (Barth, (2002); UNICEF and Save the Children, (2011). It should be noted that rebellious behaviour, confrontations, and tensions due to verbal abuse not only confirm earlier studies by Barth (ibid), Baugh (2008), Keller & Chaudhary (2017) and Muguwe *et al.* (2011) who noted that children who grew up in institutionalised care centres suffer severe behavioural and emotional problems which are manifest through aggression and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

This study noted that adolescents did not feel respected as their social mothers often derided and reproached them for their past life, divulged their past and their secrets to other children in the home. The mother-child bonding in this case is disturbed and results in failed attachment. This is in line with Bowlby (2008) who postulates that insecure attachment is associated with dysfunctional attitudes, which in turn predict lower self-esteem that is related to higher depressive symptoms.

The children's home is clearly not the ideal home for children and adolescents who often prayed that they would succeed in their education and leave the homes in search of a better life. These

results are linked to Murdock (1949), cited in Haralambos & Holborn (2008) argues that; “No society has succeeded in finding an adequate substitute for the nuclear family to which it might transfer its functions”. Buttressing the above sentiments, Parsons (1951) argues that the context which provides security, mutual support and warmth to adolescents can only be created in a natural family and not in any other substitute institutions created by society or by governments to take custody of orphans and vulnerable children.

This study revealed that, despite the hardships they faced at the children’s homes, some of the adolescents had the passion to excel in their studies and achieve their goals. This was also noted by Mutambara (2015) who on analysing narratives on how orphans in Zimbabwe enhanced their psychological support, realised that; “some adolescents had a vision of a better future that propelled them to have courage and to move on even when they felt discouraged”. These results concur with Schneider *et al.* (2001) who established that securely attached young people perform better in language, social, academic and emotional functioning. This suggest that there is a significant relationship between social support and self-esteem and resilience.

Results from this research revealed that social mothers pretended to be good when there were visitors around the home as narrated by adolescents during in-depth interviews. The study further established that social mothers scolded children using vulgar words such as “*imbwa*” (meaning useless dog) or “*mwana wehure*” (meaning child of a prostitute) whenever the adolescents made silly mistakes such as spilling water on the floor. The use of such language must be avoided in order to inculcate acceptable standards of adolescent behaviour and communication.

5.3.1 Psychosocial Distress Among Adolescents in Children’s Homes

The study established that psychosocial distress in adolescents depends on many factors which include the habitat, the attitude of social mothers and administrative staff, the perceptions of the surrounding community, ill-treatment by peers, early life history, death of parent(s) and inadequate material resources. This finding is in agreement with the results of Nyamukapa *et al.* (2010) who observed that adolescent problems begin at the micro level which concerns the interaction of the adolescent with the primary care-giver. Problems at this level may include distress, trauma, being out of school, being cared for by a non-biological parent, inadequate care, child labour, physical abuse and stigma including discrimination and loneliness. Parental loss or separation and abandonment during childhood have a distressing blow to children’s social growth and development (Nyamukapa *et al.*, *ibid*) and Holahan *et al.*, (1994).

The study established that children were socially isolated and frustrated as they lacked skills of interaction and expression with the outside world. The study also established that some adolescents felt sad and depressed due to parental bereavement especially when they dreamed about their deceased parents and their stay in the children’s home. It emerged from the study that some adolescents still felt a strong sense of closeness with their deceased parents. Some adolescents reported that they communicated with their parents through dreams and others believed that their late parents helped them in making right decisions. Contrary to these results, most studies on orphans have reported that remembrance of deceased parents is failure to cope with the loss, thus anything to do with deceased parents is construed as negative and pathological (Thwala, 2013).

The study established that adolescents had feelings of abandonment and rejection by their extended families and this negatively impacted on their development. It was noted that adolescents were acutely sensitive about their status as orphans and resented taunts and comments made by social mothers and peers from the surrounding community. For example, institutionalised adolescents were called names by their peers at school insinuating that institutionalized children are thieves.

The study observed that some adolescents were keen to look for their biological parents and relatives. Nyamukapa *et al.* (ibid) observed that when social mothers understand the social contexts in which adolescents live, they may reduce the risk of subjecting adolescents to stress but rather focus on promoting positive development. The study observed that some social mothers lacked training to assist adolescents in times of difficulties. The failure by social mothers contradict the result by Iwasaki *et al.* (2014) who claim that if adolescents are helped to find their role in life and the inner strength that inspires them, they will improve their self-esteem and would positively progress with their lives.

An issue of concern centres on social mothers who had knowledge and skills to assist adolescents in difficulties but declined to do so because they were not the biological mothers of the adolescents. The attitude of these social mothers was that of distancing themselves from the adolescents by forcefully telling adolescents that, we are not your biological mothers, so you have to comply with instructions given to you.

Such conduct is against cultural practices in Zimbabwe. For example, in the Shona culture, the word “*kurasha*” means to throw away, to discard or to abandon. “*Chinhu charashwa, chinhu chisina basa, chisisadikwi*” Whatever is thrown away or abandoned, will have outlived its usefulness. It is no longer wanted. The word “*kurasha*” is not known to happen to a human being. Abandoning a baby who is a human being is inhuman, evil, criminal and abominable among the Shona people. Finally, it is important to understand the practical view in the Shona culture regarding the abandoning of a baby. In the Shona culture, a woman who delivers a baby and abandons it is considered to be possessed by demonic spirits. It must, therefore, come as a shock to anybody to learn that she or he was at one time abandoned, maybe with the intention of letting them die alone. The victim of such behaviour will have many questions including Who abandoned me, Why, and What was the motive. “*Kurasha*” may also mean to misplace something or something may accidentally drop. The owner will then look and find it. But “*kurasha mwana*” (to abandon a baby cannot be accidental). It is intentional and deliberate. One does it knowingly. Anything lost or discarded as explained above, may be picked up by somebody. In the case of an abandoned baby, the discovery of such a baby must be news.

5.4 Parenting Differences Between Biological Parents and Social Mothers

Children’s homes have become accepted alternative homes to children whose normal families have failed to take care of them for one reason or another. However, the conditions that prevail in such institutions differ markedly from those in normal families. As a result, the behaviour patterns exhibited by adolescents from these environments also differ to a large extent from those of adolescents raised in normal families. Murdock (1949), cited in Haralambos & Holborn (2008) is of the view that no institution can successfully replace a nuclear family in its function of perfect child-caring. On the other hand, Parsons (1951), argues that families are “factories” which produce human behaviour and personalities. He believes that families are essential for

this purpose since primary socialisation requires a context which provides warmth, security and mutual support.

In line with Murdock's view, Parsons (*ibid*) posits that no institution outside the normal family can provide a favourable developmental environment. These views pose serious questions regarding the capability and ability of children's homes to carry out the functions of a normal family. In the traditional African society, the family is the most basic unit from which a large society is born through the production and caring for children (Muyila, 2006). This study established that although children's homes attempt to mimic the normal homes, they have failed in some areas to perform like normal homes. The main difference is that social mothers are hired as employees whereas biological parents are genetically linked to their children.

The study established that children's homes are strictly governed by government statutory instruments, policies and regulations whilst normal homes are largely governed by cultural practices. Furthermore, children's homes are established and administered by private and voluntary organisations such as churches and philanthropists who operate under government laws whilst normal homes are run by biological parents. The research established that parenting practices of social mothers do not promote positive child behaviour or transform a child into a responsible emerging adult. On the other hand, the study established that biological parents provide deep care, embracing children's physical and social needs such as food, shelter, health, education, and psychosocial and spiritual care (Kandiwa, 2010). The study further observed that biological parents reinforce communal bonds and instil values and beliefs so that their children and adolescents would grow up to be better citizens. Biological parents also valued the environment in which adolescents grow up among family members and kin who are positive role models and mentors for professional success, community participation and selfless stewardship (*ibid*).

The study established that the parental practices of social mothers were very strict on sexual relationships in which they monitored and discouraged even casual friendships of the opposite sex among adolescents. On the other hand, the study established that adolescents raised by their biological parents generally developed casual friendships of the opposite sex. This is because they exist in a larger community where they can interact with neighbours, peers at school and church members. Research results by Amos (2013) confirms that the biological parents constantly monitor these relationships so that they do not go beyond the socialisation level. This is because the development of moral values in adolescents is an important socialisation function of parents. However, the biological parents perform this function with the assistance of members of the extended family, especially grandparents.

The interactions between grandparents and adolescents usually took place when children visited them during school holidays. Grandmothers would teach girls things that were expected of them such as preserving virginity until marriage while grandfathers would teach boys the transition from boyhood to manhood. At the end of the visitation, grandparents would give feedback to their biological parents. With regard to adolescents raised in children's homes, the study established that social mothers had a restricted psychosocial support system guided by rigid laws and regulations. On the other hand, some children's homes mimic the extended family set-up by involving church chaplains and counsellors and appointing individuals who would play the roles of aunts and uncles to provide moral and advisory support to adolescents. This research result on moral development is in agreement with the results of Seymour (2013) who reported that normal families have the added support from extended family members such as grandparents, uncles, aunts and the community in supporting moral development of children.

Financial resources constitute a critical parameter that helps to create a functional environment in which to raise adolescents. Both normal homes and children's homes need financial resources to adequately meet their daily requirements for survival. The study established that children's homes were funded through diminishing grants from government, donations from well-wishers, philanthropic organisations and bequeathed resources while normal families were financially responsible for their needs. The study discovered that the diminishing resources given to children's homes by government were seriously constraining the parenting practices of social mothers. The bid of social mothers to meet the needs of adolescents who desired to have access to modern devices that include computers, smart mobile phones and reliable internet bandwidth was not realized. In addition, the inadequate government funding led to a decline of quality parenting which was compounded by use of adolescents as cheap labour for income generating projects run by the homes. On the other hand, biological parents with relatively small families were also experiencing financial shortages because of the collapsed of the country. Hence, it is important that if the country wishes homes to raise well moulded and psychologically stable adolescents, the government must strengthen its social support systems to its citizens.

The topical issue of corporal punishment attracted a lot of critical debate among social mothers and biological parents. Their views on corporal punishment were similar. The study established that both social mothers and biological parents condemned the ban of corporal punishment because they viewed it as an important parenting tool to discipline adolescents. The study established that whilst the banning of corporal punishment was almost well-observed in children's homes, biological parents continue to use it citing that it produced good behaviour in their children. However, their children always reminded them of their rights not to be beaten. The study established that compliance by social mothers was because use of corporal punishment had become a criminal offence which would lead to loss of a job and or imprisonment. The detailed discussion on corporal punishment is presented below in Section 5.4.1.

5.4.1 Influence of Corporal Punishment on Adolescent Behaviour

Corporal punishment is a risk factor for increased levels of aggression and antisocial behaviour in children which leads to impairment of parent-child relationships. Globalisation, social media and information technology have eroded cultural norms and values making it difficult for social mothers and biological parents to discipline adolescents. The enactment of the law on children's rights has also contributed to the difficulty of disciplining adolescents especially in children's homes. The study found that social mothers, home administrators, the elderly and biological parents were of the view that corporal punishment was an essential tool for parents to control adolescent behaviour. However, the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) emphasises the respect of children's rights and discourages the use of corporal punishment on children. This created a critical turning point in the parenting practices in Zimbabwe.

From the study, all participants, except for the adolescents themselves, concurred that corporal punishment helped to produce well-behaved children. These participants also acknowledged that they themselves were raised by their parents who used corporal punishment and that made them good adults. The study also affirmed that it takes the whole community to raise a well-behaved adolescent. Elders in the study expressed serious concerns about the bad behaviour of adolescents raised in children's homes. They argued that this bad behaviour was due to poor

disciplining as a result of the limited use of corporal punishment. However, the ban of corporal punishment was not unique to Zimbabwe as it exists in several African states like Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Namibia, South Africa and Kenya. Studies in South Africa showed higher cases of learner indiscipline (Harber et al., (2011); Naong, (2007) due to the ban on corporal punishment which has effectively disempowered parents and teachers.

Administrators, social mothers and biological parents expressed fears that adolescent behaviour might degenerate to levels that would make homes difficult to run. These fears are well supported by a study conducted in South Africa by Naong (ibid) which effectively pointed out that schools in South Africa were difficult to run due to uncontrollable behaviour of learners largely as a result of the ban of corporal punishment.

This study observed that there were cases of abuse in some children's homes studied but these were not reported because the adolescents were not given the opportunity to meet with the relevant government officers to report their grievances. The study established that adolescents were being threatened with expulsion from the home if they reported such cases of abuse to government officers. The study also established that adolescents were aware of the prohibition of the use of corporal punishment but lacked the knowledge of procedures to report the violations of the law. The debate on corporal punishment has not reached any finality in Zimbabwe.

According to Lansford, *et al.* (2010), punishment is a negative way of controlling and moulding behaviour and punished people do not repeat bad behaviour out of fear of being punished. However, the same researchers emphasise that good behaviour can still be moulded by reinforcement instead of punishment. They suggest that rewarding good behaviour through praises, giving extra food, reducing daily chores and increased trust will reinforce good behaviour in adolescents. The study established that in some children's homes, some social mothers used the strategy of withdrawing privileges and some benefits such as reducing food portions, reducing allocated house chores, reducing time for entertainment and time-out. However, adolescents viewed this type of punishment as favouritism. If this strategy is used with sufficient awareness among adolescents, it could be an effective replacement of corporal punishment. The wisdom by these distinguished psychologists must become the foundation for reflective thinking by both social mothers and biological parents on alternative forms of discipline instead of corporal punishment. While corporal punishment is a significant issue in dealing with adolescents, training should be provided to empower social mothers in children's homes including biological parents on psychologically based ways of correcting maladaptive behaviours of adolescents

5.5 Proposed contextual model of parenting practices to enhance the development and behaviour of adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe.

The analysis of the results of this study presented above has identified critical factors that are constraints in the development and nurturing of adolescents in children's homes. These factors constitute the assumptions of the proposed parenting model.

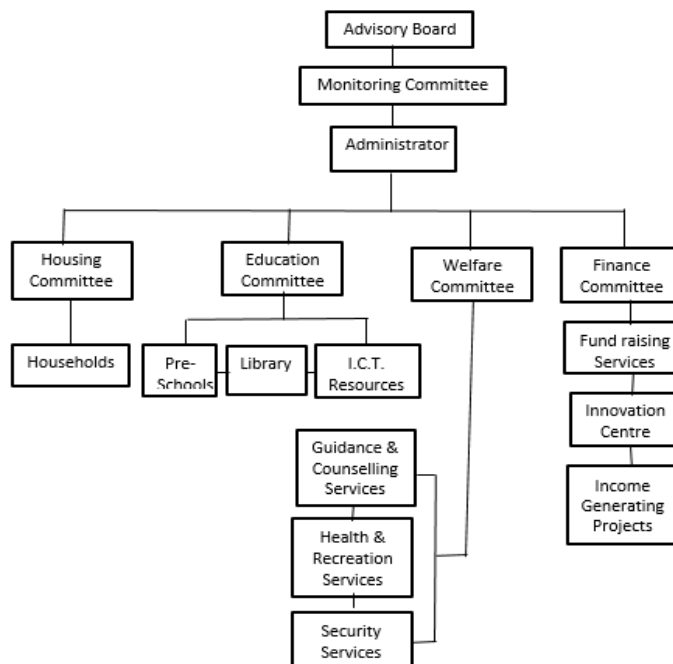
5.5.1 Assumptions of the proposed parenting model

The successful implementation of the parenting model is premised on the following assumptions:

1. Review of government policy on the establishment and operations of children's homes to institute the following policies.
 - Households shall be run by mature couples over 50 years of age with verifiable experience of raising their own children at least up to the age of 18 years and at least secondary school level education. Such couples must be of good standing in their community.
 - Adolescents shall not be sent away from a children's home on attaining the age of 18 years unless such an adolescent has acquired employable skills and employment.
 - A children's home should establish a holding facility for adolescents who have attained the age of 18 years to enable them to undertake vocational training or pursue tertiary education after career guidance by a qualified counsellor. After obtaining the pursued qualification and securement of employment, then the emerging adult should be weaned from the holding facility.
2. Government should make an unquestionable political, financial and constitutional commitment to support the raising of orphans and vulnerable children in children's homes because it is the right of such citizens to be cared for by their own government. The observed political, financial and constitutional failure by the government led to shocking living conditions in children's homes. In this regard, government should undertake the following:
 - Review monthly stipends given to children in children's homes and release them at the prescribed times. Because the needs of adolescents are greater than for the younger children, stipends for adolescents should be at a higher rate, for example USD25,00 per month as opposed to USD15,00 per month.
 - Government should provide grants, bursaries and scholarships to support the education of the children and that of emerging adults when they pursue vocational training or tertiary education.
 - Government should provide wages for individuals employed in children's homes just as it pays teachers in private and church schools. This should enhance the commitment and degree of responsibility of these individuals providing critical services to the children.
3. Government should assist children's homes financially and technically in the establishment of holding facilities or youth centres to house emerging adults to enable them to pursue vocational training or tertiary education.
4. Monitoring and supervision should be done regularly to check compliance with applicable laws and policy guidelines, and to assess the quality of life of the children.
5. Regular training in critical areas highlighted in the proposed comprehensive model of parenting should be provided for all front employees providing services to the children.

6. Government should provide a legal solution to the identity crisis that created irreconcilable tensions between the children's homes especially between social mothers and adolescents. The crisis centres on the cultural tradition of family surnames, family totems, persons to attend to marriage issues of the emerging adults and problems of acquiring birth certificates, national identity cards and passports. The absence of a legal solution amounted to a total exclusion of those emerging adults from all activities that require proof of personal identification. The legal solution would be an important vehicle for empowerment of both children's homes and the adolescents.
7. The proposed parenting model (Figure 5.3) preceded by the proposed operational management structure (Figure 5.1) and the inferred parenting model employed in children's homes (Figure 5.2) are presented below). The implementation of the structures should be initiated by the relevant government departments which then include them into policy guidelines for children's homes. The proposed operational management structure for children's homes is presented below.

Figure 5.1: Proposed Operational Management Structure



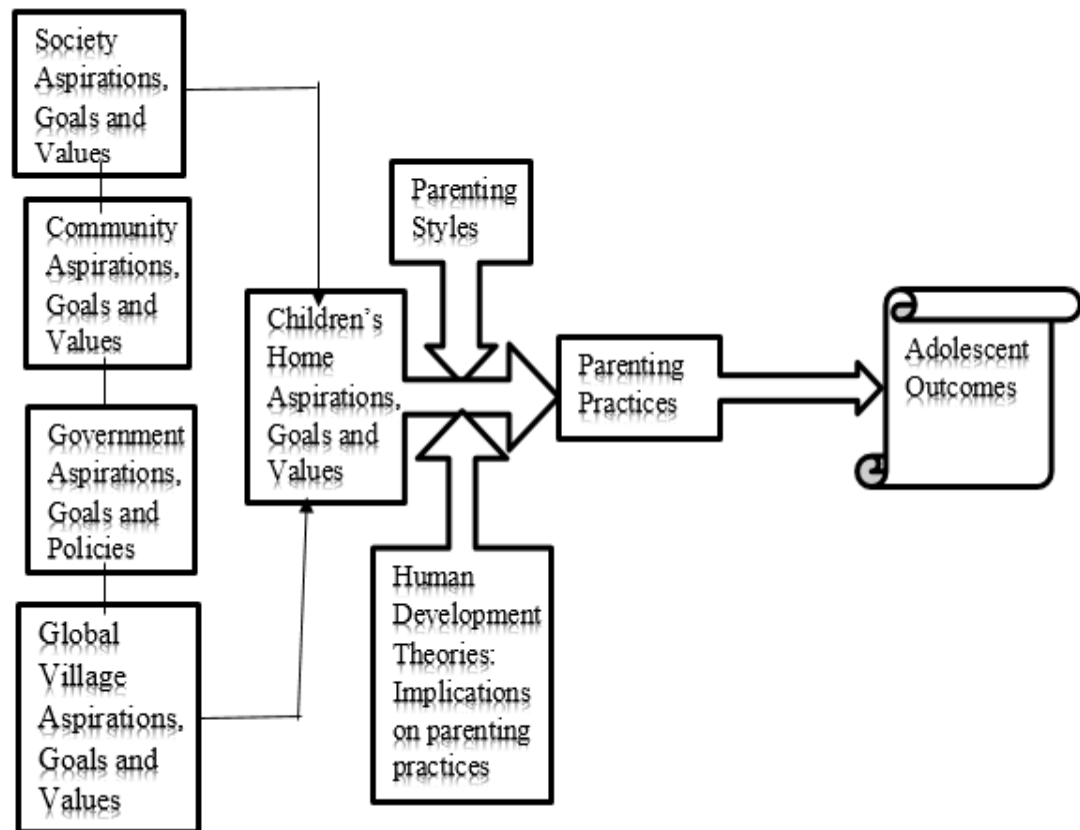
The success of the parenting model will largely depend on the creation of a conducive environment in the children's home to attain the desired adolescent outcomes. The advisory board will be responsible for developing sound policies to enable the smooth running of the home. It is critical for the various activities taking place in the home to be regularly monitored and evaluated so as to improve the quality of various services offered in the home. Key committees as specified in figure 5.4 are necessary so as to assist the administrator in the day to day running of the home and to facilitate the implementation of government policies and those of the advisory board. The critical examination of the models employed in children's homes suggested the following inferred contextual model of parenting presented in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2: Inferred Parenting Model Employed in Children's Homes



The results of this study have revealed some serious shortcomings of this inferred model of parenting. First, the model ignores the aspirations, goals and values of the society including the aspirations, goals and values of the immediate surrounding community in which the children's home is situated. Furthermore, the model is insensitive to the global village aspirations, goals and values which now have a profound effect on parenting. Second, the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) and other enacted laws particularly the Majority Age Act (1982) legalize the abandonment of orphans and vulnerable children once they reach the age of 18 years. Except for only three homes, the rest of the children's homes abandon the adolescents as soon as they reach the age of 18 years. The sad thing is that these young adults have not yet acquired any vocational skills and have no family to depend on for their survival. Furthermore, because of the collapsed economy, government was failing to comply with its own policies regarding financing and monitoring of children's homes. Third, no attention was paid to what is known regarding human development including the critical roles of both father and mother figures. The policy stipulation of only hiring mother figures to run households with children exceeding 10 reflected unjustified ignorance of the critical roles played by the father figure in the parenting process. Fourth, there is no clear understanding of the complexity inherent in parenting practices. The identified characteristics of social mothers and administrators suggest that age, level of education, social experience of raising adolescents, family background and marital status were not taken into account during the process of recruiting social mothers and administrators. These factors greatly influence choices of parenting styles and parenting practices. Lastly, the absence of articulated targeted adolescent outcomes resulted in the production of ill-equipped and socially unacceptable adolescents. In order for children's homes to produce well groomed, well equipped and socially acceptable adolescents, a comprehensive model of parenting should be developed. The development of such a model is the major enterprise of this study. Figure 5.3 below presents the proposed comprehensive parenting model.

Figure 5.3: Proposed Contextual Parenting Model



The results of this study revealed several factors that influence the choice of specific activities which social mothers engage in while raising children under their responsibility. First, at the individual level age, level of education, marital status, knowledge about human development and related challenges, and experience in raising children up to the adolescent age played a critical role in the delivery of expected services. Social mothers were constrained by government policies and laws that include the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013), the Majority Age Act (1982) and the Zimbabwe Children Protection Act (2002). As a consequence of these laws, children's homes found it difficult to come up with publicly declared behaviour schedules, rules, expectations, punishments and rewards for fear of violating the laws. No evidence was identified to show that social mothers had knowledge of human development theories, especially the identity crisis issue which was a major concern of adolescents. There was also no evidence that social mothers had well informed knowledge of parenting styles which are broader patterns of parenting practices. Second, the surrounding communities to the children's homes expressed dissatisfaction with the behaviour of children raised in the homes. The results revealed that the emerging adults weaned from children's homes were a misfit in the society. There was very little evidence that children's homes consciously planned to instill in children human values that include honesty, truthfulness, loyalty, love, respect, peace, consideration, appreciation, affection, empathy, sincerity, non-violence, tolerance, cooperation, sense of responsibility, secularism and internationalism. It was not therefore, surprising to observe hostility among some adolescents.

Third, the influence of information and communication technologies in raising children featured prominently. The internet, social media (Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, etc.) and the television were powerful contextual factors complicating parenting practices. These factors are part of the culture and values of the global village.

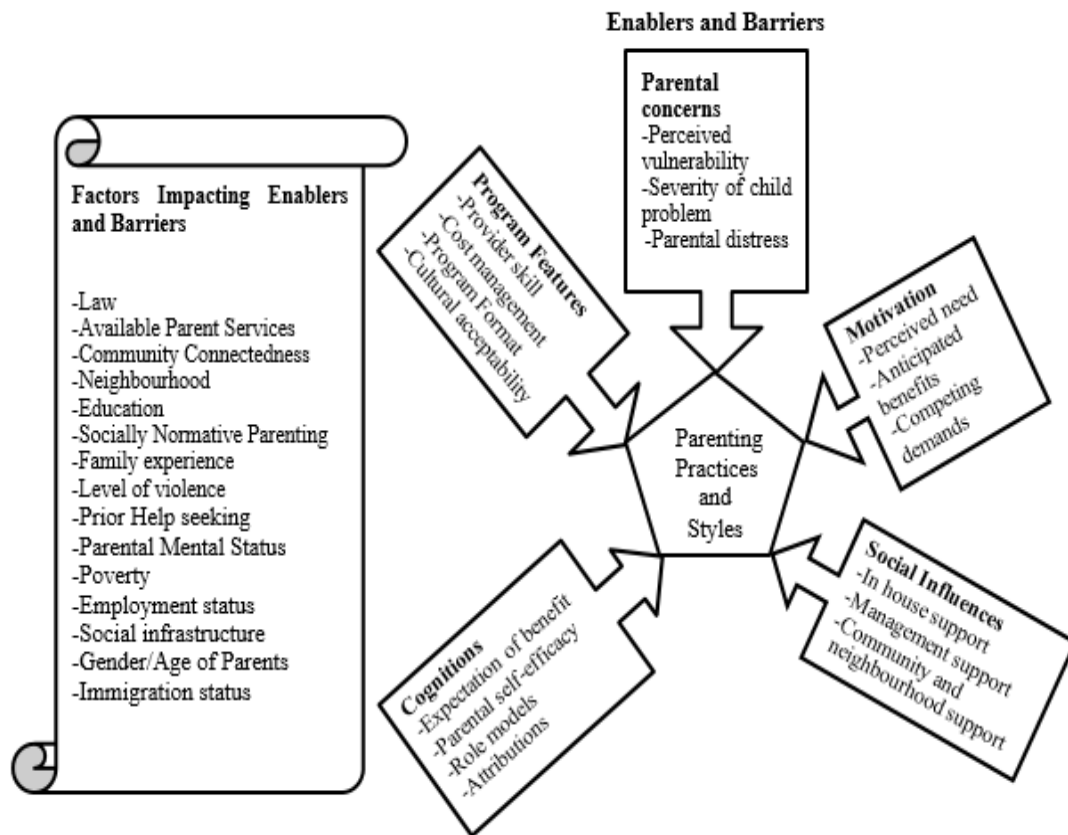
Fourth, a parenting model should be clear in terms of the targeted adolescent outcomes. Four areas of outcomes stand out motivated by four major areas of human development, namely Physical Intelligence (PQ), Cognitive Intelligence (IQ), Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Spiritual or Strategic Intelligence (SQ). Only some aspects of outcomes under Physical Intelligence were observed, namely life skills. However, a well-groomed individual should be adequately developed and nurtured in the four areas.

The results of this study point to the need to have a comprehensive contextual model of parenting where knowledge of human development theories should be required, factors influencing parenting practices are identified and taken seriously, expected adolescent outcomes are well articulated, and aspirations and goals and values of key contextual sectors are taken seriously. The proposed contextual parenting model in Figure 5.3 above attempts to address all these identified issues. The next subsection examines enablers and barriers to parenting practices.

5.5.2 Factors Influencing Parenting Practices

It is important to closely examine the factors that influence the choice of specific actions that social mothers take when raising children under their care. Figure 5.4 summarizes the various factors and how they are related to parenting practices

Figure 5.4: Factors Influencing Parenting Practices



The importance of personal factors that include age, gender, level of education, employment record and positive experience in raising children at least up to the age of 18 years has already been emphasized. However, during the recruitment period of social mothers and other staff who manage the children's homes, their mental health, history of violence and abuse, family standing in the community and family poverty level should be taken into account before hiring the individuals. All these factors are likely to impinge on the performance of these key individuals entrusted with the heavy responsibility of raising orphans and vulnerable children.

The neighborhood in which the children's home is located plays a very significant role. Its sociocultural, socioeconomic and sociopolitical aspirations and goals and values are most probably used for benchmarking the practices and quality of life in the children's homes. The neighborhood factor is heavily correlated to the community and society connectedness factors. Children are being raised to live in a community which is part of the larger society.

Laws and government policies should be positive enablers in the raising of orphans and vulnerable children. If a law is enacted to purely respond to political concerns but completely ignores the practicalities of real life, it becomes a serious barrier in raising orphans and vulnerable children in homes. Unfortunately, this is the obtaining situation with the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) and the Majority Age Act (1982) which both legalize the weaning of adolescents from children's homes once the children attain the age of 18 years. The practicality of real life is that these emerging adults have nowhere to go and hence they experience a more

traumatic abandonment. At the age of 18 years, these emerging adults have no vocational or professional qualifications. A more worrying issue is that they have no family or relatives to fall back on.

A similar situation was observed with government policy that deals with the establishment and management of children's homes. The policy advocates for the establishment of single parent households. This is a structural barrier which trivializes the importance of a father figure in child rearing. The unfortunate consequence is that children's homes consider this as a directive that must be complied with.

Lastly, the socially normative parenting factor refers to the joint roles played by the family, the school and the society in raising children. The aspirations, goals and values of the school should reflect those of the society which are also instilled in children by the family. Children's homes should be aware of the school goals and values in order to reinforce them at home. Parents should be actively involved in the education of their children. This is a realistic expectation on social mothers regarding the education of children under their care.

The factors discussed above generate both enablers and barriers for parents as they consider various permutations of what to do in the process of interacting with a child or children. Social mothers were immersed in this complex maze of factors and demands. Two barriers distinctly stand out. These are parental concerns and children's home program features. Parental concerns are related to the perceived vulnerability conditions and the severity of problems of the children. Also of concern is distress arising from rejection by adolescents who by then realize that the social mother is only a mother worker. Inadequate material resources in the home is also a major source of worry for social mothers.

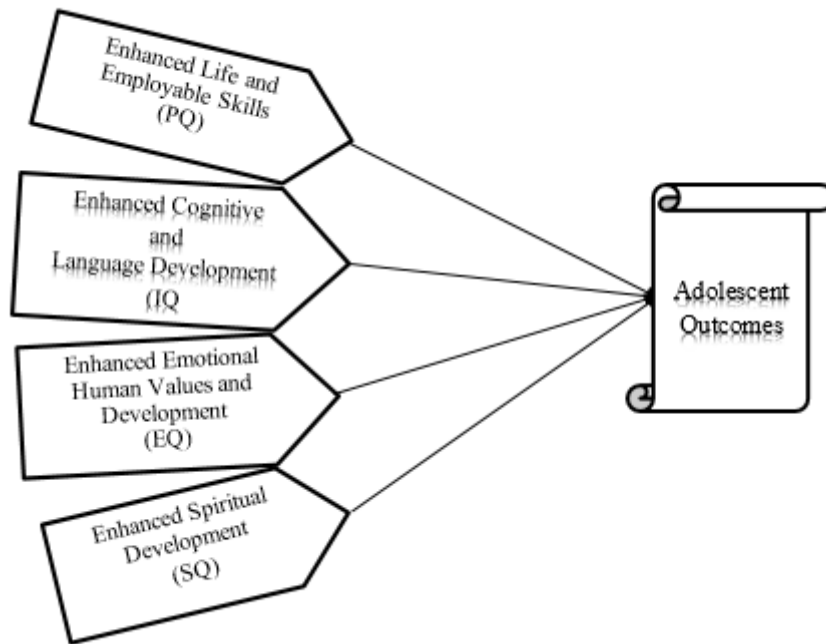
The children's home operational program can enhance or frustrate the performance of social mothers. The management team should have the requisite knowledge, wisdom and understanding of the challenges, problems and legal requirements of raising orphans and vulnerable children. Social mothers rely on the leadership given by the management team. Social mothers would be greatly concerned by the management team's failure to create a conducive environment for the effective running of households in the children's home. Poor management of financial resources by the team would be a major barrier to the successful running of the children's home. Enablers for parenting practices include motivation, attractive benefits, addressing deficiencies of social mothers, accepting contributions of the social mothers, imposing achievable and realistic demands; cognitions (that is fulfilling expectations of benefits, improving self-efficacy of social mothers, identifying role models for imitation, in-house and external training of social mothers to develop desired attributes), and social influences (that is strong in-house support, strong management team support, and strong community and neighborhood support). The discussion of factors, enablers and barriers demonstrate that parenting practices is the most important and complex component of the contextual parenting model. What is done under parenting practices contributes to the adolescent outcomes. It is important to critically examine the nature and range of expected adolescent outcomes.

5.5.3 Adolescent Outcomes

Adolescent outcomes constitute the end result of the parenting process. The society judges the

work of children's homes by determining whether the emerging adults are fit for the society. A responsive parenting model will nurture children in the four key areas of human development, namely Physical Intelligence (PQ), Cognitive Intelligence (IQ), Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Spiritual Intelligence (SQ). Figure 5.5 summarizes the expected adolescent outcomes under these four areas.

Figure 5.5: Expected Adolescent Outcomes



Attainment of the targeted adolescent outcomes requires connectedness with the society, community, schools, religious organizations, vocational training institutions and tertiary education institutions. It also requires the extension of the period of stay for emerging adults in children's homes up to the age of 24 years to allow them to pursue vocational training or tertiary education. In addition, it requires government commitment to provide grants and scholarships to support the extended stay and training of the emerging adults. Development of life skills is largely the responsibility of the home and the school while the development of enhanced employable skills is the responsibility of vocational training institutions, technical colleges and universities.

Cognitive and language development begins at home and then enhanced by schools and other educational institutions through the introduction of mathematics language, science language, social media language, information communication and technology language, etc. On the other hand, emotional development begins at home and influenced by the neighbourhood. The school plays some role in this development but the larger share is done by religious organizations. Spiritual development begins in the home through participation in church activities. Some schools significantly add to the spiritual development. More work should be done to promote emotional and spiritual development in training institutions.

Desired Outcomes of Enhanced Spiritual Development

Currently, spiritual intelligence is considered to be the highest level of human intelligence superseding emotional intelligence, cognitive intelligence and physical intelligence in that descending order. Its development is very critical to empower the individual to benefit from all the lower levels of human intelligence.

The concept of spiritual intelligence has attracted a lot of intellectual attention from many researchers. Emmons (2000) defines spiritual intelligence as the adaptive use of spiritual data to facilitate daily problem solving. Zohar & Marshall (2000) identify spiritual intelligence as a third type of intelligence that expands the construct of behaviour. King et al (2008) defines spiritual intelligence as the group of intellectual capabilities that are based on adaptation, nonmaterialistic principles and detached from reality aspects while Nasel (2004) defines it as the ability to distinguish, search for meaning and solve spiritual issues. It is clear that spiritual intelligence is extremely important because of its ability to influence change in people, societies and cultures. Consequently, improving spiritual development empowers individuals to adopt a positive outlook and to attain inner peace which should result in self-motivation.

It is hoped that by the time adolescents are weaned from children's homes, they should have been guided to develop some of the following qualities (Mayer, et al 1997):

- Being attuned to the holistic harmony of the world and surpassing self-limitation;
- Being aware of higher planes and states of spiritual thought and contemplation;
- Being conscious of the spiritual dimension of daily activities, events and relationships;
- Building awareness, which means considering daily problems in the context of ultimate life parameters; and
- Desiring to improve or elevate the self, consequently practicing forgiveness, expressing appreciation and gratitude, and practicing humility and empathy.

The outcomes of developed spiritual intelligence highlighted above show that spiritual intelligence is the integration of all other types of intelligence. Mathematically, $SQ = PQ + IQ + EQ$, i.e. Spiritual Intelligence is the sum total of Physical Intelligence, Cognitive Intelligence, and Emotional Intelligence which implies being aware of one's own thoughts, feelings and motivations, as well as the thoughts and feelings of others. Further, it connotes capacity for transcendence, ability to experience heightened states of consciousness, ability to find meaning and purpose in life, ability to behave virtuously, and ability to seek spiritual resources (Emmons, 2000).

Desired Outcomes of Enhanced Emotional Intelligence

The results of this study together with data from literature review have highlighted key areas where adolescent outcomes are expected under the development of emotional intelligence. These desired outcomes are highlighted below:

Emotional Well-being

- Develop a strong sense of self and self-esteem.
- Learn to identify and manage their emotions effectively.

- Form healthy relationships with peers and adults.
- Build resilience and coping skills to deal with challenges.

Social and Emotional Support

- Receive consistent love, care, and support from social mothers.
- Have opportunities to develop secure attachments.
- Learn to trust and feel safe in their environment.
- Feel a sense of belonging and acceptance.

Social Skills

- Develop strong social skills and the ability to interact positively with others.
- Learn to cooperate, share, and resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Build empathy and understanding for others.
- Develop a sense of social responsibility.

Community Integration

- Have opportunities to participate in community activities.
- Build connections with positive role models in the community.
- Develop a sense of belonging and connection to their community.
- Transition successfully into adulthood and independent living.

Desired Outcomes of Enhanced Cognitive Intelligence

Cognitive Development

- Achieve age-appropriate cognitive milestones.
- Develop problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.
- Have access to quality education and learning opportunities.
- Reach their full academic potential.
- Adaptability to a new environment or changes in the current environment.
- Capacity for knowledge and the ability to acquire it.
- Capacity to reason and for abstract thought.
- Ability to comprehend relationships.
- Ability to evaluate and judge.
- Capacity for original and innovative thought.

Intellectual Stimulation

- Be exposed to a stimulating environment that promotes learning.
- Have opportunities to engage in creative and intellectual activities.
- Develop a love of learning and curiosity about the world.

Desired Outcomes of Enhanced Physical Intelligence

Physical intelligence encompasses a person's ability to understand, manage, and optimize their physical well-being. It's not just about physical fitness, but also about body awareness, health habits, and the ability to use one's body effectively.

Healthy Development

- Regular access to balanced meals to promotes growth, development, and overall health.
- A secure and clean living space minimizes the risk of accidents and exposure to health hazards.
- Regular check-ups, vaccinations, and treatment for illnesses contribute to better physical health.

Physical Activity

- Opportunities to participate in sports, games, and other physical activities to promote fitness, teamwork, and social skills.
- Access to safe outdoor spaces allows for free play, which is crucial for physical and emotional development.
- Some homes may incorporate structured exercise programs to improve fitness and coordination.

Skill Development

- Learning to prepare healthy meals and understanding nutritional needs.
- Developing good hygiene habits and understanding how to care for their bodies.
- Learning skills like gardening, cleaning, or basic repairs to promote self-sufficiency and physical competence.
- Acquiring vocational and professional skills to prepare for the world of work and independent living.

Adolescents in children's homes face unique challenges that can significantly impact their physical, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual development. By understanding the expected outcomes and potential impacts across these domains of intelligence, administrators, social workers, educators, counsellors and health care professionals can provide tailored support and interventions to promote their overall well-being and resilience. If such parental strategies are adopted, they will address the concerns of adolescents where they strongly felt that their social workers were not aware that children under their care had different academic abilities, social abilities and practical abilities.

This research established that children's homes, even in the best settings, can have limitations in providing the consistent, individualized attention and nurturing environment that adolescents need to succeed in the society. Whenever possible, efforts should be made to transition adolescents into the society when they have acquired vocational or professional qualifications.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This Chapter discussed the results demonstrating how they provide answers to the research questions of the study represented by the objectives. The discussion established the relations between the results of this study and those published in Africa and beyond. The underscored message of the discussion of the results was that adolescence is a critical period of development marked by significant physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. For adolescents in children's homes, these developmental processes can be further complicated by the unique

challenges associated with their living environment. The chapter presented a proposed contextual parenting model for use in children's homes in Zimbabwe to address various factors and challenges that influence adolescent development and behaviour. Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and recommendations of this study.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

6.0 Introduction

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations on major results of the study. The purpose of this study was to critically analyse the impact of parenting practices on the development and behaviour of adolescents residing in children's homes in Zimbabwe. The assumption was that children's homes represented a proxy of a normal family because they provided a 'new' environment and 'new type' of parents called 'social mothers'. Institutional care in Zimbabwe is growing due to changes and disruptions of the traditional family setup including the impact of globalization, international migration, HIV and AIDS and the collapse of the economy. Despite an array of problems, children's homes are playing a significant role by providing care to adolescents who would have been left destitute by society.

6.1 Emergence of Children's Homes in Zimbabwe

The results of this study revealed that the emergence of children's homes in Zimbabwe was a response to the consequences of civil unrest, wars, famine and pandemics which resulted in deaths of many parents leaving behind displaced children. The first children's homes in Zimbabwe were established by missionaries and hoped to mimic a natural family. However, the evidence from the study showed that the family structure in a children's home consists only of a social mother with over ten children but without a father figure. This setup generates several challenges with regard to creating a cohesive family with shared values. To the children, the structure created cultural and social disorientation. To an inquisitive child, the home structure created the impression that the social mother was moving from one man to the other because no children in the same home shared a common surname. The erosion and decline of the extended family structure as a result of globalisation and urbanisation has also contributed to the demand for children's homes. Evidence from the study strongly suggested that communities were a better alternative than children's homes for nurturing orphans and vulnerable children, especially preparing adolescents for transition into the society. The established children's homes are a major departure from what is experienced in an extended family structure thus the moulding of children becomes more problematic. The results of the study showed that the community in which the children's home is located has profound influence on the cultural, social and socio-economic values. Such community values may not reflect the values of the society. It is important that the desired children's home ecosystem, that is the human, infrastructure, management, location site, neighbourhood and community culture and economy aspects, is critically analysed during the planning and development of the home to ensure that the targeted adolescent outcomes under the key human development areas will be achieved by the home.

6.2 Parenting Practices in Children's homes

The result of the study showed that social mothers mostly used the authoritarian parenting style

while in normal homes biological parents used both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. With regards to parenting practices, the study revealed that biological parents focussed on love and affection, religious activities, relationship skills, education and learning, life skills development, health and safety issues.

In children's homes, social mothers had several challenges including their attitudes which made it difficult to exhibit love and affection to adolescents. The position of the social mothers was one of distancing themselves from the adolescents by categorically stating that they were only employees. The study also confirmed that quality time between social mothers and adolescents did not exist partly due to the large number of children under their care. The study also noted that social mothers induced psychosocial distress among adolescents.

The evidence from the study showed that relationships between social mothers and adolescents were sour mostly due to lack of attachment, trust and respect, especially when the adolescents viewed the social mothers as mother workers. The study also found that little attention was paid to life skills training. Evidence from the biodata revealed that social mothers failed to use effective parenting practices due to poor levels of education, negative attitudes, and lack of continuous training especially in psychosocial areas of adolescent development.

6.3 Factors Influencing Changes in Parenting Practices

The results of the study confirmed that parenting practices in Zimbabwe are continuously changing due to factors such as urbanisation, globalisation, cultural infusion and advancement in information and communication technology. Children's homes are not spared by these changes. The study confirmed that the erosion of the extended family has greatly impacted on traditional parenting practices. The study noted that historically, in Africa, the extended family system was the dominant form of orphan care support. Evidence from the study emphasized that a child growing up amongst family members and friends has positive role models and mentors for career achievement, engagement in the community and selfless stewardship.

The study noted that the Zimbabwe Constitution (2013), the Majority Age Act (1982), and the Zimbabwe Children Protection Act (2002) were found to be major factors affecting choices of parenting practices in children's homes. The demands of the school, the community and the society have impacted on parenting practices used in children's homes. The study observed that the level of education of social mothers greatly affected choices of parenting practices in children's homes. The study observed that the participation of churches in some children's homes influenced choices of parenting practices. It is always necessary to create awareness among social mothers about the continually changing factors that affect parenting practices.

6.4 Parenting Practices Used by Social Mothers and Biological Parents

The study concluded that socialisation embraced several parental practices being used by both social mothers and biological parents. Parenting practices used by social mothers were legally governed by government policies on the establishment and running of children's homes. The study concluded that parenting practices of social mothers are very strict, especially on sexual

relationships, where they monitor and even discourage casual friendships with peers of the opposite sex. On the other hand, the study concluded that adolescents raised by their biological parents generally developed casual friendships with peers of the opposite sex within the community. Evidence from the study showed that adolescents raised by biological parents were more socialised than those raised by social mothers.

The study observed that social mothers' behaviour with children tends to be obligatory thus is characterised by silence, little interaction outside of routine caretaking duties and there is also the mothers' minimum responsiveness to children's individual needs. The study observed that in a number of children's homes, the turnover of social mothers was very high with serious implications for children's growth and development. The study observed that social mothers in some children's homes verbally abused children by taunting them with reference to their abandonment or to the fact that their parents died of HIV/AIDS.

The study noted that children who grow up in institutional environments with few reliable adults have difficulties forming relationships in their adult lives unlike those who grow up in normal homes. The study observed that weaning of adolescents on turning the age of 18 years, without any vocational and professional qualifications reflects a failure in parenting practices which results in a vicious traumatic experience on the emerging adults. The study noted that the children's home environment, which is a strong anchor of parenting practices can negatively affect the development and behaviour of adolescents. An important result of the study was that social mothers were unable to address the adolescents burning issue of the identity crisis. The study observed that some children's homes were sometimes overwhelmed with double the maximum carrying capacity of each home which resulted in shortages of resources to adequately provide care to the children. Based on the evidence gathered, the study concludes that parenting practices used in children's homes are inadequate to address physical and cognitive needs as well as social and emotional development of adolescents.

6.5 Recommendations

Based on the results and the conclusions of the study, the researcher is making several recommendations aimed at improving the legal framework, policies, practice and decision-making in children's homes.

- 6.5.1 There is need for initiatives to support orphans and vulnerable children in their own communities. Emphasis needs to be placed upon supporting extended families in the community and preventing rupture of stressed community coping mechanisms by utilising existing community-based organisations and encouraging the emergence of new methods of community-based support for children in need without resorting to institutional care.
- 6.5.2 There is need for the Department of Social Welfare and Services to strictly monitor children's homes to ensure compliance with the provisions of the legal framework including children's rights and especially observing the ban on corporal punishment.
- 6.5.3 There is need for reviewing laws stipulating the graduation age of adolescents from children's homes in order to avoid a more traumatic abandonment of these emerging adults into the society. The current practice literally throws adolescents into a non-de-

defined habitat in the society, a situation which has contributed to street adults who basically become criminals. The weaning age must be linked to acquisition of vocational and professional qualification around the age of 24 years. In this regard, children's homes should accommodate the emerging adults until they acquire employment after achieving their vocational or professional qualifications subject to financial support by the government.

- 6.5.4 There is need for the government to establish a well-funded programme for tracing and reuniting children with members of their extended family using modern technologies such as Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA), particularly in situations where separation was due to home areas being hit by natural disasters. Such a programme would significantly reduce demand for placement in children's homes.
- 6.5.5 There is need to resuscitate the concept of '*Zunde raMambo*' (Chief's Granary) to enable chiefs to support orphans and vulnerable children through supporting the families caring for them. This strategy would allow children to remain close to members of their extended families.
- 6.5.6 There is need for the government to move away from institutional care to family and community care alternatives. In particular, the government must promote adoption and foster care in place of children's home. The suggested alternatives eradicate the problem of identity crisis.
- 6.5.7 Where children are placed in institutional care as a last resort, every effort must be made to ensure that its use is limited and to the best interest of the child; that is, adhering to quality standards and ensuring that it provides individualised and small group care. In order to guarantee quality standards in children's homes, the following measures should be implemented as follows:
 - There is need to hire social mothers with a good educational level (secondary education and above) and of age 40 years and above. This measure will ensure that children will enjoy quality time, be supported in school activities and have mothers with a better understanding of the needs of adolescents.
 - The recruitment of administrators should take into account age and educational level. There is need to hire administrators of ages 45 years and above since in the view of adolescents, the individual qualifies to be a mother or a father. This is also likely to reduce the dangers of sexual harassment.
 - Churches responsible for children's homes should desist from evangelising children because this violates their constitutional rights of freedom of choice and freedom of association.
- 6.5.8 There is dearth of information about adolescents who graduated from children's homes thus the need to conduct a tracer study on adolescents who were weaned from children's homes at the age of 18 years. Answers to the following questions should be provided:
 - Where are these emerging adults?
 - What are they doing in the society?
 - What vocational training did they receive?
 - How have they been accepted or treated by the society?

- Have they established their own families and how are such families performing?
 - Are there any who became criminals and under what circumstances?
 - How have they dealt with the issue of identity crisis and identity documents?
- 6.5.9 It is recommended that Zimbabwe, as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999), must start to reform outdated child protection systems that focus on institutional care in order to facilitate introduction of programmes that promote reintegration of children into families and communities and that develop family strengthening programmes and family care alternatives.
- 6.5.10 Government should review policies and regulations on the establishment and running of children's homes to adequately mimic the structure of a nuclear family, that is requiring the hiring of a couple to head each household in a children's home. In addition, government should ban the concept of a dormitory systems in children's home to prevent the cropping up of social acts like sodomy. Furthermore, government should provide funding for the vocational and tertiary education of adolescents and emerging adults who continue under the care of children's homes up to the time they secure gainful employment. Based on the provisions of the constitution, the government should be responsible for the welfare of its citizens especially of orphans and vulnerable children.
- 6.5.11 It is recommended that the proposed contextual parenting model be adopted for use in children's homes so as to enhance adolescent development and behaviour including the attainment of desired outcomes under physical intelligence, cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence.

6.6 Contributions of the study

The study has made several contributions about children's homes as highlighted below:

- The study provides insights into the challenges faced by children's homes in Zimbabwe. In particular, it identifies the shortcomings of the legal instruments that govern the operations of the homes.
- Policy makers should benefit from the findings of this study in reviewing the laws and guidelines relating to children's homes.
- The study identified a range of challenges faced by adolescents which include their physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive and spiritual development. In particular, the study has contributed knowledge about the views, opinions, perceptions, perspectives, experiences, challenges, frustrations and desires of adolescents relating to their socialisation in children's homes.

- The study has provided important information on desirable characteristics of women who should be hired as social mothers and individuals who should be hired as administrators in children's homes. In particular, the study identified that educational level, age, experience, attitudes and religious orientation are important characteristics of highly performing individuals in children's homes.
- The study has provided a proposed contextual parenting model to improve the raising of children and adolescents in children's homes in Zimbabwe. In addition, the study has proposed a management structure that should help to create a conducive human development environment in children's homes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Administrator Key Informant Interview Instrument

Name of Children's Home:
Name of Administrator ((pseudonym):
Age:
Gender:
Marital Status:
Period with the home:
Educational Background:
Religion.....
Province:

Questions

1. Why was the home established?
2. When was the home established?
3. How many children do you accommodate and what are their age groups?
4. How effective are Children's homes in raising a whole person?
5. What parenting practices do you encourage in this home?
6. What factors impact on the choices of parenting practices in the home?
7. What changes in parenting practices have occurred in Zimbabwe and how have they impacted Children's Homes?
8. What are the consequences of those changes?
9. What is the influence of social media in the parenting practices employed by social mothers in the homes?
10. What are the norms and values for children raised in Children's Homes and how do you impart them?
11. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Children's Homes as places of raising adolescents to successfully transition into the society?
12. How effective are social mothers in raising adolescents compared to biological parents?
13. How do you address the issues of issue of identity crisis?
14. Does the home have Counsellors to provide psychosocial support?
15. What is the role of the surround community in raising children in this home?
16. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the effectiveness of children's homes?
17. How do the government laws and policies protecting children affect your choices of parenting practices in this home?

Appendix 2: Social Mother In-depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Instrument

Name of Children's Home:
Name of social mother (pseudonym):
Age:
Gender:
Marital Status:
Period with the home:
Number of adolescents under your care:
Level of Education:
Religion:
Province:

Questions

1. What challenges do you experience as a social mother when raising adolescents?
2. How do you respond to challenges experienced by adolescents in this homes?
3. What are the changes in parenting practices employed in Zimbabwe and how do they affect your performance in the home?
4. How do the government laws and policies protecting children affect your choices of parenting practices in this home?
5. What is the impact of social media on parenting practices in this home?
6. How effective are Children's Homes in raising a whole person?
7. How many adolescents are under your care?
8. What are the norms and values that you instil in children and how do you impart them?
9. How much emphasis do you put on education and acquisition of life skills?
10. How do you address issues of identity crisis?
11. What are the differences in terms of behaviour of adolescents raised in this home and those raised by biological parents?

Appendix 3: Adolescent In-depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion Instrument

Name of Children's Home:
Province:
Name of Adolescent (pseudonym):
Age:
Gender:
Level of Education:
Religion:

Questions

1. Who are the people responsible for your upbringing?
2. What are the challenges that you face as adolescents in the home?
3. How would you want these challenges addressed?
4. What are the norms and values instilled in you by social mothers?
5. Are you free to share sensitive issues with your social mothers?
6. If given the choice, who would you want to share your most sensitive issues with?
7. Would you like to share with me how you feel about the services offered to adolescents in this home?
8. When you feel sad or unsatisfied who do you prefer to talk to?

Appendix 4: Biological Parents Key Informant Interview Instrument

Name of Children's Home:
Name of Biological Parent (pseudonym):
Age:
Gender:
Marital Status:
Number of Children:
Number of adolescents:
Level of Education:
Religion:
Village/Community:
Province:

Questions

1. How many adolescents do you have?
2. What challenges do you encounter when raising adolescents?
3. What parenting style and practices do you use when interacting with your adolescents.
4. How do you respond to social and cultural challenges faced by your adolescents?
5. What is the impact of social media and globalization on parenting practices that you employ in your home?
6. What is the impact of your surrounding community in raising adolescents?
7. What is the contribution of your extended family members in raising your adolescents?
8. What are the norms and values that you impart to your adolescents?
9. How much emphasis do you put on education and acquisition of life skills?

Appendix 5: Community Elders Key Informant Interview Instrument

Name of Children's Home:
Name of Community Elder (pseudonym):
Age:
Gender:
Marital Status:
Level of Education:
Religion:
Village/Community:
Province:

Questions

1. What are your views about the behaviour of adolescents raised in children's homes?
2. What changes have taken place between traditional parenting practices and the current ones?
3. What has brought about these changes?
4. Do children's homes instil norms and values you cherish in the community and the larger society?
5. Do you feel that children's homes are producing emerging adults who are acceptable in the society?

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