

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
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A STUDY OF SOCIO- CULTURAL FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO
CHILD MARRIAGES IN KARIBA RURAL DISTRICT OF NYAMINYAMI

BY

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE MASTERS DEGREE IN PUBLIC
POLICY AND GOVERNANCE IN THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, PEACE,
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

2017

Abstract

This study investigated socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages in Nyaminyami with a view to identify and reduce socio cultural factors that cause child marriages and influence reduction of gaps that exist among child protection

policies. In the study, one CAMFED Director, two Ministry of Health Officials, one Education officer, three school heads, one National Aids Council Officer, one Nyaminyami Rural District Councilor, two traditional leaders, two Pastors, two Victim Friendly Unit officers, two girl club mentors and 48 women were participants. The study used qualitative approach while focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews were used as tools to collect data. The study showed that poverty, little education, lack of good models, minimal opportunities for jobs, lack of professional and technical education were associated with incidences of child marriage in Nyaminyami. Also, the study showed that, traditional practices including lobola influence child marriage practices in the community studied. The study indicated that little knowledge and non-harmonisation of child protection guidelines and lack of confidence in law enforcement agents contribute to child marriages too. In addition, the study showed that insufficient knowledge and provision of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights and services among community members limit community mechanism to address the problem. The study concludes that poverty, lack of higher education and employment opportunities, harmful traditional practices influence child marriages. Further, the study concludes that bad models, little knowledge and lack of harmonisation of child protection policies and inadequate SRHR information and services contribute to child marriages. The study recommends for empowerment of vulnerable girls with formal and vocational education and livelihood projects. Again, the study recommends for harmonisation of child protection policies, sensitisation of communities on harmful traditional practices and provision of more youth friendly SRH services. Also, future studies should investigate effects of child marriages in the community studied.

key words: socio - cultural, factors, contribute, child marriages, child protection policies, gender, sexual reproductive health rights, human rights

Declaration

This work dissertation is my original work except where sources have been acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be, to another University in the awarding of a degree.

Student:

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Signature

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Acknowledgements

The author is greatly indebted to the following people for the assistance rendered: my dissertation supervisor Dr Pindai Sithole, who tirelessly guided me in conducting and compiling this dissertation, my wife and four children, who gave me utmost courage and patience throughout the research work even during situations when most of my time was committed to the study.

I also thank Kariba District Administrator, Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) staff, Ministry of Health and Child Care, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education National Aids Council, Nyaminyami Rural District Council, Traditional leaders, Pastors, and women for their participation and valuable views they contributed. To all, I want to say, most sincerely, thank you!

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my loving wife Reriya and children, Ngonidzashe, Matidaishe, Munesuishe and Tapiwanashe.

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List of abbreviations

ACRWC	African Convention on the Rights and Welfare of Children
AU	African Union
CAMFED	Campaign for Female Education
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination against Women
CSO	Community Service Organisations
DFID	Department of International Development
FGDs	Focussed group discussions
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
ICRW	International Commission on the Rights of Women
IJSA	International Journal of sociology and Anthropology
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoHCW	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
MPPG	Masters' in Public Policy and Governance

nd	Not Dated
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NRDC	Nyaminyami Rural District Council
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PI	Plan International
RAU	Research Advocacy Unit
SAVE	an organisation that supports children's rights, education, health, and food .
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SJAS	Scholars Journal of Applied Sciences
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UKAID	United Kingdom Aid for International
Development	
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of
Children	
UNFPA	United Nations Population Agent
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNO	United Nations Organisation

WHO

World Health organization

ZDHS

Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Back ground to the study

Child marriage is a global practice with different levels of intensity in various regions and countries of the world. The practice affects more girls than boys and has serious social and health risks. Despite efforts to stop early marriages, progress is slow and varied across regions and countries. International Convention on the Rights of Women (ICRW), (2006, 2010, p. 2).

According to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), (2014,p. 1), United Nations For Population Agency (UNFPA), (2012,p. 10), African Union AU, (2014p. 2) about 1/3 of the 700 million women worldwide marry before reaching 18 years respectively. Again, UNICEF,(2014,p. 2) and AU, (2014,p. 2) reported that in 2012 alone 14 million women between the ages 20-49 years were married before the age of 18. .

Similarly, Population Institute , (2010) adds that 25000 child marriages are recorded daily while UNFPA, (2012,p. 22) concurs that 67 million which translates to 34% under 18 girls were married in the 20-24 year age group globally.

According to, Svanemyr (2012,p. 1) and AU, (2014) Asia contributes ½ of the global child marriages of which 1/5 comes from Africa. Child marriages affect girls more than boys.

According to UNICEF, (2014, p. 1) and ICRW, (2010, p. 2) child marriages affect girls more than boys. A study in Niger showed that 77% and 5% girls and boys respectively got married before the age of 18. Similarly, Moldova had 15% and 2% women and men who married before the age of 15 (Singh and Samara, 1996, p. 151).

Child marriages affect women in many ways that include gender based violence, HIV and child delivery related deaths (Lafralere, 2005 and UNFPA, 2013). Likewise, UNICEF, (2005, p. 1) adds that, "...child marriages deny girls the right to enjoy childhood and take away girls from family, social networks and support of friends and relatives too early in life." In fact, child marriages reduce opportunities for girls to receive education and better employment resulting in low incomes and poverty. Consequently, the world community took steps to raise the legal age at which girls marry to 18 years and support access and retention of the girl child in school.

Accordingly, to mark child marriages as an issue that requires urgent attention, "...in 2012 the United Nations General Assembly designated 11 October of each year as International Day of the Girl Child with the theme "Ending Child Marriages." (UNICEF, 2014). In addition to this, World Health Organization (WHO), in 2012 isolated child marriages as a fundamental human rights issue and banned the practice (UNICEF, 2015, p. 1) and (Singh et al, 1996, p 149). In the same way, in 2007, respected elders that includes Nelson Mandela spoke against child marriages and initiated, "A Girls not Brides...." Campaign. (Svanemr et al., 2012, p. 2) while, in 1991 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) launched

International Day of the African Child largely to protect the interests of the girl child. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Day_of_the_African_Child).

According to UNICEF, (2014,p. 8) and Population Institute, (2010), from 1985 to 2010, small decreases in child marriages of 33% to 26 % were realised. However, despite these achievements, more work still needs to be done especially in countries such as Niger and Bangladesh. Ultimately, the preceding discussion necessitated the undertaking of this study.

a. Geographical political structure of Mashonaland and Kariba rural (Nyaminyami)

Figure 1. and 2. below illustrate the geographical position of Mashonaland West province and Kariba District (highlighted in red) in relation to other provinces and districts in Zimbabwe.

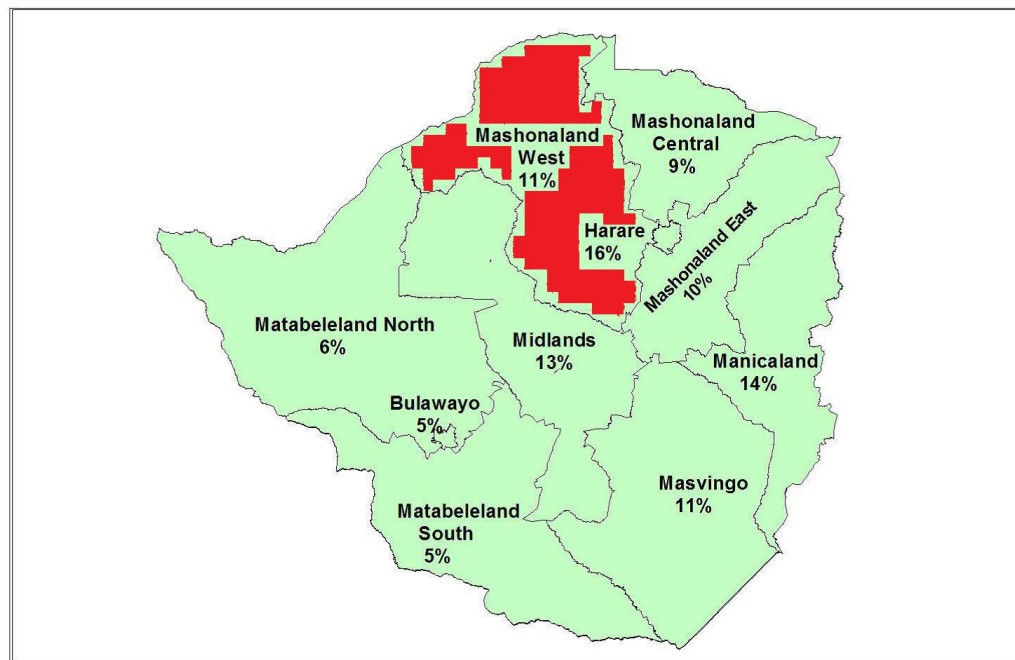


Figure 1 . Zimbabwe map showing provinces

Source: Zimstat, (2012,p. 9)

Zimbabwe comprises of 10 provinces as shown in figure 1. (Above). The province which the study focuses on is Mashonaland West which lies to the North West of the country and borders Zambia.

MASHONALAND WEST

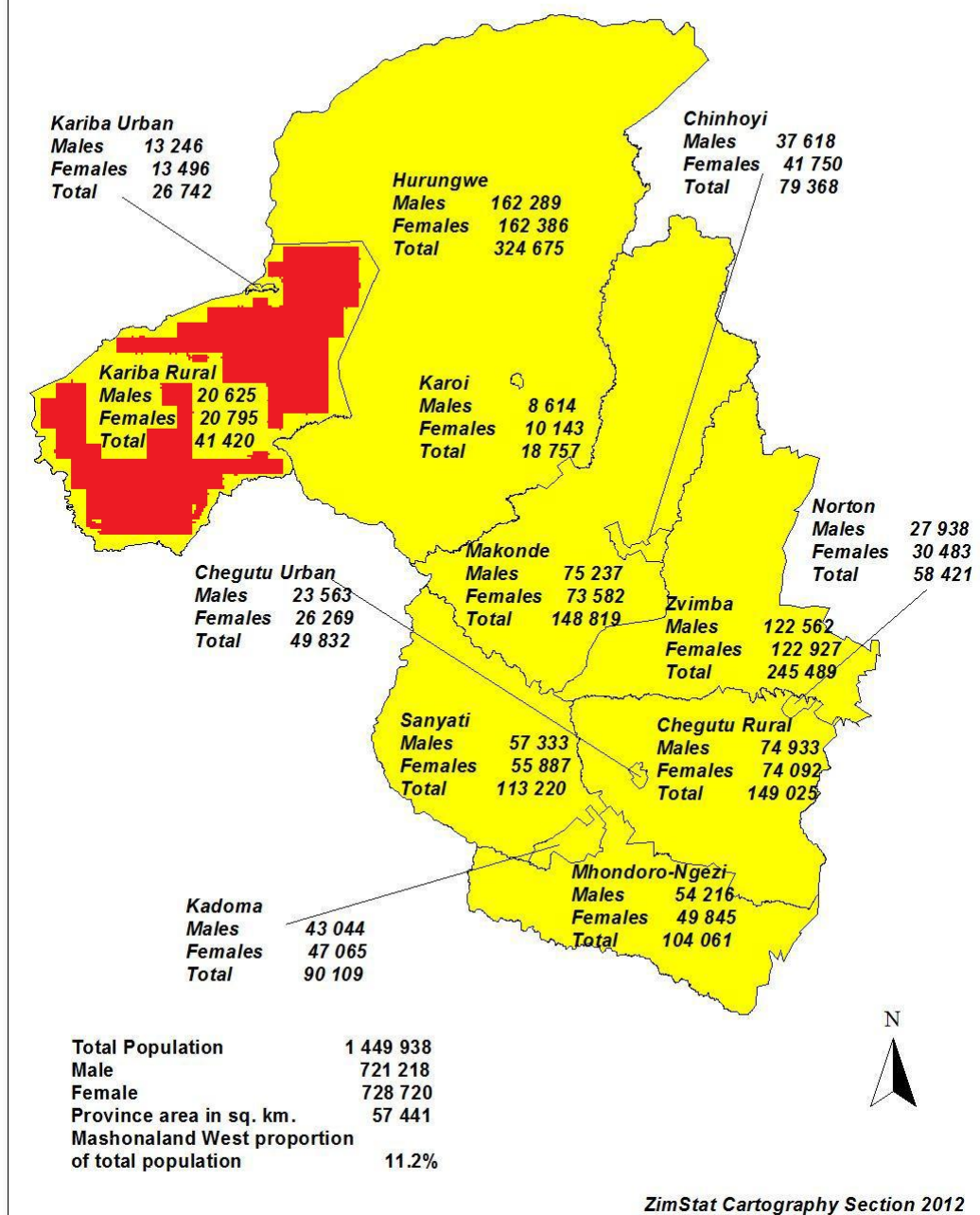


Figure 2 . Geographical map of Mashonaland West districts

Source: Zimstat, (2012,p. 49)

Likewise, fig 2. (above) shows that Kariba District is one of the 8 Districts in Mashonaland West and comprises, urban and rural areas. Kariba Rural District (Nyaminyami) stretches along the shores of Lake Kariba with numerous hard to reach informal settlements known as Fishing Camps.

In fact, the hard to reach fishing camps house fishers who generally come from Kariba rural and urban plus other provinces in Zimbabwe. Moreover, despite poor road network and difficult terrain, there is a high movement of people in and out of Nyaminyami due to lucrative fishing business in the area.

Further to this, although the generality of people in Nyaminyami practise peasant farming, household harvests are poor due to low rainfall patterns. Subsequently, Kariba rural experiences perennial droughts making survival largely possible through fishing and food hand outs.

b. Child marriages in Zimbabwe

UNFPA, (2013) asserts that Zimbabwe contributes significantly to the challenge of child marriages and ranks 42 out of 120 Countries globally. Equally, statistics show that Mashonaland West province ranks second highest in child marriages with 42% after Mashonaland Central province which is ranked at 50%. The information means that girl children in Kariba Rural District of Nyaminyami are most likely affected by child marriages.

c. Motivation to study child marriages in Nyaminyami

The researcher was motivated to study child marriages in Nyaminyami through a global and national discourse on child marriage that got wide coverage in the media and in various public gatherings around 2013. Further, the researcher had first-hand experience with child marriages during his community work in health and education

programmes in Kariba rural Nyaminyami in the period 2013 to 2015. The researcher noted that girl children dropped out of school earlier than boys largely due to early marriages. The practice was more rampant in Mola, Siakobvu, Negande and Musampakaruma communities of Nyaminyami. The experience motivated the researcher to investigate the subject.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Global , regional and in Zimbabwe, research on socio cultural factors and trends on child marriages and their effects on affected groups are largely known but what is little known is why Nyaminyami community continues with the practice.

1.3. Research objectives

Three objectives guided the study which were to:

1. I identify socio - cultural factors and practices that influence child marriages in Nyaminyami District
2. Evaluate gaps on existing national policies on child protection and sexual reproductive health rights

1.4 Research questions

The study focused on three questions as follows:

1. What are the socio cultural factors and practices that cause child marriages in Nyaminyami?

2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of current national child protection policies and sexual reproduction health rights for young people in Nyaminyami?

1.5. Assumptions of the study

There are socio-cultural factors and practices that influence child marriages in Nyaminyami which in turn negatively affect development and welfare of affected individuals and households.

1.6. Significance of the study

This study is important in that it will assist in the achievement of the following:

- a. Improvement in the appreciation of how socio – cultural factors and practices that encourage child marriages in Nyaminyami and the challenges they present to affected households and communities
- b. Influence strengthening and enforcement of current child protection policies against girl child marriages in Nyaminyami.
- c. Help to mitigate against socio-cultural values and practices that contribute to child marriages thereby allowing the girl child to develop and realise her full potential.
- d. Further, the study is being conducted in fulfilment of a study towards a Masters' Degree in Public Policy and Governance (MPPG).

1.7. Delimitations of the study

The study is limited to girl child marriages in Kariba Rural District of Nyaminyami in Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe. The study participants were women and men aged 18 years and above. The participants included traditional and

religious leaders and government officials from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Health and Child Welfare, Victim Friendly Unit, Department of Social Welfare and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED). The study focused on the period 2010 - 2015.

1.8. Limitations of the study.

Some health facilities did not have complete delivery records for some of the months as such the researcher resorted to use of estimates of data from the available months. Also, the data at the District education offices were not disaggregated by age and it did not show whether it was from rural or urban areas. Most importantly, data on child marriages is not centrally managed but scattered among various development players that work on child protection. Also, Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) only tracks teenage pregnancies. To minimize the challenge, the researcher, used information and data from different sources to establish trends and fill in gaps that were identified.

1.9. Definition of terms

The following definitions were informed by Zimbabwe Constitution, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRC), Criminal and Codification Act, Civil Marriage Act, Customary Marriage Act, ICRW, UNICEF and UNFPA.

Child. any person who is under the age of 18

Child marriage: it is when anyone who is under the age of 18 gets into marriage

Civil marriage: marriage that recognizes one marriage partner to one man

Civil society groups: non-governmental development partners who complement Government development efforts

Consent: being agreeable to freely participant in an activity

Contraceptives: materials that are used to regulate fertility

Constitution: a book that contains regulations on how citizens should conduct themselves in various situations

Contribute: influencing events to take a specific course

Culture: a peoples' way of life that is passed on from generation to generation and changes over time

Customary marriage: marriage that recognizes more than one wife to one man

Education: formal or non-formal ways of imparting new knowledge to someone

Exposure: coming into contact with something

Factors: individual aspects that are interconnected

Gatekeepers: people who are entrusted to ensure that things are done according to expectations

Gender: has to do with socio-cultural roles that are ascribed to individuals in society by virtue of them being male or female

Harmonise: a systematic way of ensuring that separate documents that seek to achieve one thing are in agreement

Law: official guidelines to behaviour

Law enforcing agents: government officials who are responsible for maintaining law and order

Lobola: monetary and non-monetary value or bride price charged son in law by father in law

Models: someone who serves as a good example of the conduct that society expects

Opportunities: a special chance to benefit from something

Policies: official guidelines to behaviour

Poverty: a state of serious lack or deprivation

Pregnancy: a state where a woman conceives following sexual contact with a male partner

Sexual Reproductive Health Rights: stipulations that point to what one must be accorded in matters of sexual health services

Socio: has to do with how people relate among themselves

Stigma and Discrimination: being treated as an outsider who is less equal to others

Tradition: an established way of doing things that a given people follow

Trends: the general direction that events follow over time

1.10 Summary

The chapter discussed the background to the research study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions and assumptions of the study, delimitations of the study, definition of terms and abbreviations in the study. The chapter ended with a summary.

Chapter two reviews related literature. Chapter three deals with the research methodology. Chapter four presents, analyses, interprets and discusses data. Chapter five gives a summary of the whole project, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Firstly, the chapter presents the theories that guided the study. Secondly, the author looks at various related concepts which are: (a) child marriages; (b) child marriages as a rights issue; (c) global and local views to child marriages; (d) socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages; (e) child marriages and the law; (f) and Sexual reproductive health rights.

2.2 Theoretical frame work

The study is anchored on Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977) and Social Constructivism Theory by Vygotsky 1962.

Social learning theory emphasizes that people learn child marriages by observing, imitating and modelling peers, parents, and influential community leaders. People observe models of child marriages and conduct a cost benefit analysis. If the benefits are good they imitate the behaviour of models. In other words, the community reinforces or punishes the practice resulting in increase or decrease of the practice (Mcleod, 2016, Bandura, 1925). Admittedly the theories place importance on continuous reciprocal interaction between individuals and the environment (Kasayira, 2006, Mberi, 2002).

On the other hand Social constructivism postulates that people construct their own social reality.

As such, communities decide their destiny in relation to many issues including marriage. Open Education Resources, (2017) adds that social constructivism is based in history, culture and context with adults acting as conduits.

In other words, child marriages are commonly created, defined, owned and managed by communities through institutions such as family, church and school (Kasayira, 2006, Mberi, 2002, Mwatengahama, 2004).

Both theories largely agree that communities contribute to the existence of socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages and that the same communities can reinforce or stop the practice using tools such as policy guidelines.

2.3 Relevance of the theories to the study.

The theories are relevant to the study in that they provide a framework for understanding where and how socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages in Nyaminyami originated and are sustained. Further, the theories illustrate that the concept of marriage is a social issue that is constructed by the people undertaking it. Consequently, the theories help to explain the roles different social groups play in creating and perpetuating child marriages. Again the theories provide explanations on how adoption and implementation of international, regional and national child protection guidelines can be made possible.

In addition to this, the theories inform the researcher on the research design which is most suitable for the study which are quantitative and qualitative.

2.4. The concept of child marriage

The concept of child marriage is defined slightly differently in Africa, Asia, and Europe partly due to varied socio-cultural factors in different regions of the world. Thus, the net effect of the different views on child marriages are different policies on minimum age of marriages (ICRW, 2006).

From a Eurocentric perspective, child marriage is viewed as a customary, religious or legal marriage of anyone below the age of 18 years (Forward, 2005). WHO, (2014) concurs when it states that child marriage involves a union of two people with one or both of them below 18 years. Afrocentric, definition of child marriage is similar to Forward and WHO except that it adds the dimension of parental consent (Research and Advocacy Unit (RAU), 2013, p. 5).

The Eurocentric definition appears to capture modern values while disregarding traditional and civil law provisions from other parts of the world such as India which allows girls below the age of 18 years to marry with parental consent.

In short, most African and Asiatic countries provide no specific age limit for girls to marry but use puberty stage as a guide and that parental consent is vital. To sum up, Eurocentric views argue that; “.....an under 18 is not physically and psychologically mature as such cannot freely consent to marriages... “(RAU, 2013, p. 5, Forward, 2005).

a. Global trends in child marriages

Child marriage is an old human practice that is found in many cultures and religions across the world. Accordingly, in 1533, George the Pious age 48 married Emilia of Saxony aged 16 (wikipedia, n/d)

Also, Plan International UK, (2011), Singh (1998,p. 151), UNICEF, (2014, p. 2) and UNFPA, (2012,p. 26) agree that child marriage is a global problem that varies in intensity as follows: Western and Sub-Sahara Africa 41%, Central African Republic, Latin America and South Asian countries with 46% and is lower in Europe where about 2.2 million underage girls are married yearly (RAU, 2011,p. 2).

ACRW, (2010,p. 2) and UNFPA, (2012,p. 24) add that $\frac{1}{2}$ of child marriages are found in Asia with Niger and Mali contributing the highest rates of 71% - 78%. This could be due to poverty and religious beliefs that encourage the practice. In addition, Harper et al. (2014, p. 2), notes that $\frac{1}{3}$ of under 15 girls marry in Niger and Bangladesh while about $\frac{1}{2}$ under 18 girls marry in Burkina Faso.

Further, according to ACRW, (2010,p. 2) and UNFPA, (2012,p. 29) in country statistics in India show that, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have child marriage rates of 53% and 60% compared to 15% for Kerala and Goa states.

The Figure below shows countries that widely practice child marriages.

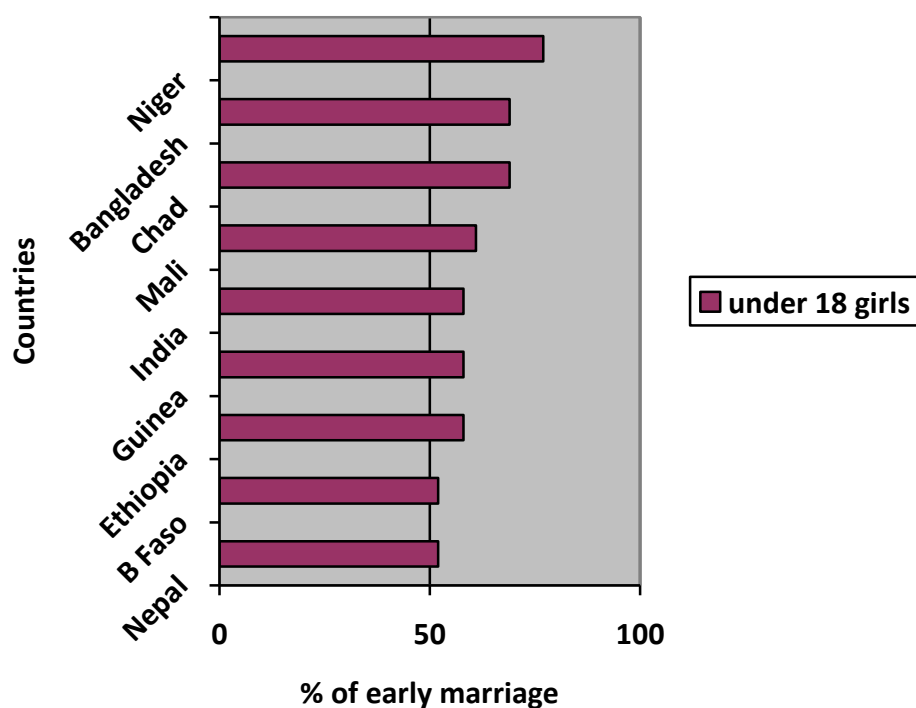


Figure 3. Countries with high rates of child marriages

Source: UNICEF, 2014.

Figure 3. (above) illustrates the extent to which child marriages are generally practiced in some countries in the world. Accordingly, child marriages are high with Bangladesh and Niger leading at over 70%. The least child marriages are practiced in Nepal and Burkina Faso at 52%. The narrative shows that child marriage is practiced at differently levels, globally regionally and within countries and districts like Nyaminyami.

b. Global reduction in child marriages

UNICEF, (2014, p. 6) posits that despite some reductions, child marriages remain high especially in countries like Zimbabwe, Cameroon and Uganda. Similarly, Singh et al (1996, p. 148) and UNFPA, (2012, p. 24), add that worldwide, declines in child marriages are not only slow but different within and among countries. UNICEF, (2014, p. 3) analyses that from 1985 to 2010, child marriages declined from 33% to 26% and 12% to 8% for under 18 and 15 girls respectively.

The declines are attributed in part to child protection campaigns and advocacy work that resulted in some changes in legislative, cultural values and beliefs and attitudes in most countries. For instance, the Girls not Brides and Education for All campaigns assisted girls to enroll and remain in school longer, thereby reducing incidences of child marriages. Accordingly, UNICEF, (2005) notes that, South Asia, West and Central Africa contributed the most to the reductions in child marriages while Middle East, North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean contributed the least as shown below.

Region	Percentage (%) of women who were married before the age of 18
India	35
East Asia and the Pacific	25
South Asia	9
West and Central Africa	7
Eastern and Southern Africa	6
Middle East and North Africa	5
Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	4
Industrialised Countries	2

Table 1 : Distribution of women who were married before the age of 18

Source: UNICEF, report (2014, p. 5)

Figure 2.1 (above) illustrates that regionally, India had the highest number of girls who married before 18 years at 35% followed by East Asia and the Pacific at 25%. Likewise, Industrialised countries were ranked lowest at 2%.

In fact, UNICEF, (2014,p. 6) and UNFPA, (2012,p. 6) conclude that under 15 girls had the highest declines of 12 % – 8% than under 18 girls resulting in the global average reduction from 1/3 in the 1980s to around ¼ by 2010 .

In the case of Zimbabwe, UNFPA Profiles, (nd) notes that from 2005 to 2011 a 9% decline was recorded from 34% to 26%. To the contrary, Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey, (2015) and Newsday Zimbabwe, (2016) argue that child marriages for urban girls rose to 16.4% in 2015 from 10.3% in 2010 while for rural areas, it rose to 28% from 27.2% during the same period.

Svanemyr (2012, p 1) concurs that child marriages are falling especially among rich households. However, Harper (2014, p. 3) argues that decline at global level are still low and slow at 32.7% from 41.2% in the last 10 years.

The implications of the findings are that more still needs to be done to mitigate against child marriages everywhere it occurs in order to guarantee the girl child a better future. Again, the same trend that is emerging above is expected to be true for Nyaminyami. Child marriages should be declining but at a slow rate as illustrated in the table below.

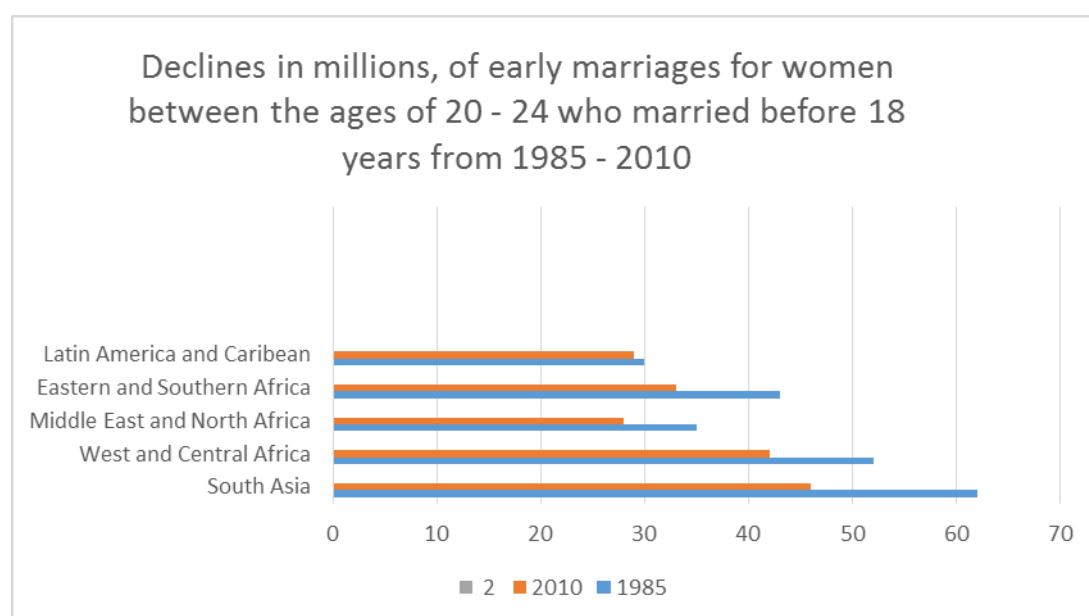


Figure 4 . Global declines in child marriages

Source: UNICEF, (2014 p 5)

Figure 4. (above) shows that there were 28 m child marriages in 2010 as opposed to 30m in Latin America and the Caribbean. In contrast, in South Asia the ratio of child marriages in 1985 and 2010 respectively were as high as 62m and 47m. In

any case, the data illustrates that global marriages for under 18 girls were slowly declining but remained high in some regions of the world.

2.5. Socio – cultural factors that drive child marriages

According to Singh et al. (1996, p. 148), UNICEF, (2005, p. 6 and 2014) Socio cultural practices contribute the most to child marriages. Likewise, ICRW, (2010, p. 2) adds that the practice of child marriage is largely anchored in traditional and religious customs.

Hence, some of the major socio cultural factors that generally contribute to child marriages are listed and explained below.

a. The dimension of age and education

According to, Singh et al. (1996, p 148), UNICEF, (2005, p. 1), ACRW, (2010, p. 4) education is largely linked to age at first marriage in several ways. Furthermore, DFID/UKAID (2011), argues that, “girls are protected from child marriages if they enrol early and stay longer in school and attend secondary education.” In addition, access to education especially for girls in vulnerable households cuts the cycle of poverty as it provides them with critical life skills and more employment opportunities (United Nations Organisation (U.N.O., (nd). For this reason, child marriages for girls result in lost chances to enrol for primary and secondary education. Also access to education assist girls to avoid child marriage through providing them with new ideas and values such as use of contraceptives to delay marriage and avoid unplanned pregnancies. In the same way, DFID/UKAID, (2011) adds that, “...education delays child marriages, gives girls more life options, increases their view of the world and gives them more time to choose potential

marriage partners...” Essentially, educated girls have fewer potential partners since they are expected to marry men who are equally educated or better. Most significantly, girls with better education or higher education and good jobs have less economic need to get married early.

Also, Harper (2014,p. 3) adds that uneducated girls are 5 times more likely to marry as children than girls with secondary education at a ratio of 66% to 13%. In Tanzania for instance 36% of the girls who did not attend primary education had married by age 18 in comparison to 20 % of girls who had attended school. Girls who attended secondary education in Tanzania delayed marriage by 92%.

A study in Ethiopia also showed that girls with primary education were twice more vulnerable to marry earlier than girls with tertiary education while girls with no education were 3 times more vulnerable to child marriages than those in colleges (UNFPA, 2012, p. 34 and AU, 2014, p. 5). To the contrary, in Zimbabwe the trend of child marriages follow a slightly different pattern.

According to UNICEF, (2014, p. 4) 4% of girls with primary as opposed to 40% with no education in Zimbabwe, married by the age of 18. Moreover, the study showed that, generally, 16% of girls with secondary education married before 18 compared to 4% of girls with primary education.

Consequently, ACRW, (2010, p. 5) concludes that, one key determinant to child marriages is education as illustrated in the table below.

Level of Education	Year : 2006	Year : 2010
No education	61	33
Primary Education	61	55
Higher Education	25	23

Table 2 : The link between level of education and child marriage

Source: UNFPA, (nd)

Table 2. (above) shows that the less education one has the higher the chances to marry as a child (61%) as opposed to 25% for girls with higher education. What this means is that, enrolment and retention of girls in school in Nyaminyami reduces cases of child marriages. To the contrary, if the girls lack adequate opportunities to continue with school they are likely to marry as children.

b The role of rural settings on timing of marriage

According to Singh et al. (1996, p. 149) area of residence influences child marriages. The notion posits that increase of girls in urban areas depress their demand and reduce child marriages. Also, girls in urban areas avoid pregnancy and delay marriages through use of contraceptives. Similarly, low cultural control in urban areas creates more room for the girls to choose marriage partners at their own time resulting in less child marriages. The trend is different for rural girls who may not have the same exposure (Singh Etal., 1996,p. 149). According to Harper

etal. (2014,p. 2), more rural girls than urban girls marry as children at the rate of 44% to 22%.

UNICEF, (2005,p. 12) further observes that in Chad child marriages in urban areas were 65% against 74% rural. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, the trend of child marriages follow a rural to urban pattern. According to (Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS), (2015) and Newsday Zimbabwe, (2016) child marriages in urban areas were at 10.3% and 16.4% in 2015 and 2016 respectively while those for rural areas were 27.2% and 28% . Nonetheless, the trends can be different for some countries. In Senegal and Peru less rural than urban girls between the ages of 20 to 24 married as children at the ratio of 15% - 53% and 12% to 35% respectively. In Botswana, the ratio was 22% to 17% for urban and rural areas respectively.

The above trend is believed to hold true for Nyaminyami which is both remote and marginalized as evidenced by inadequate infrastructural development and service delivery system. The remoteness and marginalization of Nyaminyami suggest that the community remains strong on socio cultural values which cause child marriages.

c. Poverty and its association to child marriage

According to U.N.O. (n/d) there are plans to eliminate poverty especially for women. This is because, poverty results from and causes more social exclusion and unemployment. According to Journal of Medical Sciences, (2014) Svanemyr (2012,p. 2) and ICRW, (2010,p. 3) poverty is a major driver of child marriages since economic freedom for girls and women can delay child marriages especially in Africa and Asia. UNICEF, (2015), concurs that child marriages are closely linked

to poverty and orphan hood which are more prevalent in divorced, separated and widowed households.

Similarly, girls from backgrounds that provide less life choices in education and employment which enable economic empowerment are more vulnerable to child marriages. Again, girls from poor households lack basic needs such as food, clothing, and tuition support forcing them to marry as children. This is confirmed by Maslow (1970) who argues that humans have prioritised needs that start with food and end with self-actualisation (Mataruse and Mwatengahama, 2004, p. 218). In addition, ICRW, (2010,p. 3) notes that inability to pay school fees by some parents force under 18 girls to get sugar daddies to support them resulting in many of them marrying as children.

A study in Peru on women aged 20-24 years, who married as children, showed that economic needs were among the key causes. The study further showed that less girls from richer than poorer households were affected by child marriages at a ratio of 5% to 45% (UNICEF, 2005,p. 12).

In addition, AU, (2013), UNFPA, (nd), Field and Ambrus, (2008) and AU, (2014, p. 2), further link poverty to child marriages and note that, generally, girls from poor households are 3 to 4 times likely to marry before 18 than those from rich households. However, the association of child marriages to poverty has some exceptions.

In Chad for instance 46 % of girls from richest household compared to 35% from poorest households were married before 18.

Further, (AU, 2014, p. 2) notes that the influence of wealth on child marriage is also influenced by level of education for the girls and their guardians and area of residence

To sum up, poverty is among key determinants to child marriages especially in poor households. The table below illustrates how household wealth is linked to child marriages in Zimbabwe.

Household wealth rank	Year	Year
	2006	2010
Poorest	57	47
Second	48	45
Middle	33	38
Fourth	30	35
Richest	15	11

Table 3 Girls who were married before 18 years by household wealth

Source: UNFPA, (nd)

Table 3. (above) shows that 57% and 47% of under 18 girls from poorest households got married in 2006 and 2010 respectively against 33% and 38% of girls from households with average poverty.

The above narrative shows that many of the girls who marry before 18 years globally are victims of circumstances that include poverty. The narrative also suggest that girls in rural areas like Nyaminyami are more likely to be affected by child marriages since there are far less livelihood options and employment opportunities compared to girls in urban areas.

d. Unemployment dimension to child marriage

Primarily, young girls from poor and marginalised households are largely driven into child marriages by low employment opportunities (Singh et al., 1996, p. 149), (U.N.O, n/d). Generally, women with good education training and well-paying jobs delay marriage by 2.5 years while unskilled women are vulnerable to poverty and child marriages since they have less opportunities for well-paying jobs.

In fact, SAVE, (2014) concurs that well-paying jobs incentivise girls and their parents to postpone marriage.

To sum up, good education and employment opportunities delay marriage for under 18 girls (Singh et al., 1996, p. 149). This implies that if girls in Nyaminyami lack employment opportunities they are likely to opt for child marriage as an alternative choice.

e. Tradition and child marriages

According to ACRW, (2010, p. 5) the status of girls is closely tied to marriage and, tradition socialise children to accept values which mostly expose girls to marry before 18 years. For instance, most communities, over value child marriages and bearing of children forcing parents to give their underage daughters in marriage. Girls who marry early fail to pursue other life opportunities such as secondary education (Machmud 2003) cited in (Field and Ambrus 2008). Traditionally, it is generally believed that girls should not delay marriage because it may be difficult for them to marry later (Svanemyr, 2012, p. 2).

According to AU, (2014, p. 3), (Svanemyr, 2012, p. 2), and Sociology Journal on Anthropology and Science, (2014), culturally, girls are encouraged to marry early

to avoid premarital sex, teenage pregnancy and elopement which cause loss of virginity subjecting the affected girls to stigma and discrimination and reduced opportunities for marriage. Consequently, Harper (2014, p. 4) agrees that child marriages are meant to safeguard the girl child from immoral behaviour that brings dishonour to the family hence it is done for the good of the child. However, The Herald, (2015) counters that underage girls are not fully mature to involve themselves in marriage hence such actions are viewed as forced marriage.

The above observations implies that cultural values that normally hold strong in marginalised rural areas like Nyaminyami are among key contributors to child marriages and many girls are expected to be affected by them.

f. Gender inequalities and marriages

Gender inequality refers to socially constructed unequal treatment of men and women which is based on their being male or female and stipulates how men and women should behave in different situations (MoHCW, 2012,p 1 3). On the other hand, MoHCC, (2009) defines gender as.... ‘socially constructed women and men’s roles and responsibilities and includes expectations on how people are expected to think and act as women and men...’

Again, Zimbabwe National Gender Policy (nd) defines gender as, “Classifications of socially, politically, culturally and religious constructed identities of women and men which are not necessarily stable.”

UNICEF, (2014, p. 1), Svanemyr (2012, p. 2) and AU, (2014,p. 3) argue that child marriages are an outcrop of social and gender norms that encourage gender inequalities in favour of boys from birth especially in patriarchal society.

Further, RAU, (2011,p. 4), adds that child marriages are predominately fuelled by culture, history, traditions which continue to direct the way societies behave towards women and marriage.

Generally, society prefers to educate boys more than girl children which reduces girl child life options including economic security to child marriage. Again, it is thought that girl child education is not economical profitable since she will marry and leave the family with little return for their investment. In other words, society creates conditions that force girls to marry before 18 years.

Subsequently, Child Marriage fact sheet, (n/d), adds that families are squeezed to adopt cultural value prescriptions on child marriages or risk punishment through family shame.

To illustrate this view, Harper (2014, p. 16) posits that culturally, girls mostly derive their value through child bearing, as such society expects them to follow marriage pathway early in life. Likewise, ACRW, (2010,p. 4) , UNFPA, (2012,p. 4) and SAVE, (2014) add that the role of girls is normally seen as that of wife, mother and homemaker.

In conclusion, since men traditionally continue to preside over family and societal cultures and traditions it can be estimated that the practice of child marriage will continue for some time especially in rural areas like Nyaminyami where cultural roots are expected to remain deep and strong (Plan International, 2014, UNICEF, 2015,p. 135).

2.6. Child marriages as a legal and human rights issue

a. Child marriages and human rights

UNFPA, (2012,p. 10) argues that child marriage, is a human rights issue which is backed by Article 16 of The Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to which Zimbabwe is a signatory. The Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) stipulates that:

marriage is for mature women and should be entered into freely and with full consent....child marriages and betrothal are illegal since they involve children who are immature to decide on marriage matters and therefore cannot give informed consent

In addition, child marriages are contrary to 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and United Nations General Assembly Resolution (A/Res/66/170/9/1/31) in which member states agreed to stop child marriages and chose 11 October as the Day of the Girl child (Svanemr 2012,p. 1) .

Similarly, article 16(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that anyone who enters into marriage should do so freely and consensually. (UNFPA, 2012,p. 10) .

Although commitments, policies and legal provisions exist against child marriages, most people do not know them and on the other hand duty bearers lack adequate commitment to enforce them.

In conclusion, despite child marriage being a human right issue and Zimbabwe being a signatory to regional and international conventions on the rights of children more still needs to be done to ensure that provisions of the regulations

including CEDAW and the Zimbabwe Constitution are enforced for the full protection of children against child marriages especially in Nyaminyami.

b. Child marriage and the law in Zimbabwe

Child marriage in Zimbabwe is guided by several legal documents which are yet to be harmonised and thus lack coherence. The legal documents are primarily the new constitution of Zimbabwe, Children's Act, Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, Domestic Violence Act, Marriage Act 5.11, and Customary Marriage Act Chapter 5.07. Accordingly, The Constitution of Zimbabwe, (2013,p. 38) notes that a child is a person who is below the age of 18. More importantly, the Zimbabwe constitution," ...prohibits forced marriages, child pledging and places free consent by intending parties at the centre of every marriage..." (RAU, 2013,p. 1, The Herald, 2015).

In contrast, other Acts define a child differently. The Children's Act and Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act define a child as someone who is below the age of 16. However, the same laws do not allow sex or child pledging with girls who are younger than sixteen.

On the other hand the General Law contradicts the new constitution as it allows under 16 girls to be married if the parent or guardian consent. The customary Law marriage Act 5.07 provides for parental consent to child marriage and gives no age limit to marriage.

Subsequently, divergence on age limit for marriage among legal documents in Zimbabwe, negatively contribute to high rates of child marriages. Marriage laws expose girl children to early marriages (RAU, 2013,p. 5) consequently child marriages among nine provinces of Zimbabwe are high.

The national average for child marriages is 31% while provincial averages are as shown in the figure below.

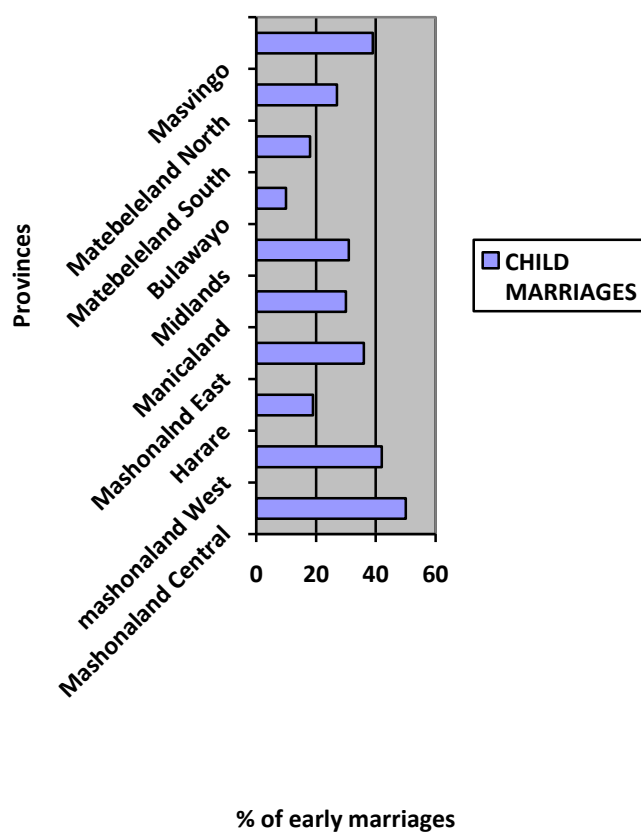


Figure 5 . Prevalence of child marriages by province

Source: UNFPA, 2013

Table 5. (above) shows that child marriages are highest in Mashonaland provinces at 44 % on average but lowest in Matabeleland region and Harare province at an average of 14% and 10% respectively. What the above observations mean is that girls in Nyaminyami have little legal protection from child marriages since the laws are yet to be harmonized among themselves.

c. Legal reforms and child marriages

Progress towards reforms of child protection laws are slow and faced with challenges that include slow domestication and harmonisation of the constitution with other local laws, Regional and International Conventions. However, the ban on child marriages and repeal of policy guidelines that provided for child marriage by a Constitutional Court ruling of 20 January 2016 (Goodnewsnetwork, n/d) complemented by current efforts to harmonise child protection policies with the new constitution, is hoped to bring an end to child marriages once it is completed. Currently, the Parliamentary portfolio committees on gender, health, justice and youth are conducting public hearings on the child marriage bill. The consultations, are expected to feed into the parliamentary debate on the bill and then realignment of various child protection policies with the constitution (Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation online, n/d). In addition, on the 13th of November 2016, a Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) 40th Plenary Assembly Session Parliamentary Forum came up with a model policy guideline aimed at eradicating child marriages and protecting girls who are already affected by it (Daily News Zimbabwe, n/d, Campaign to End Child marriages in Africa, 2013, Good News Network, n/d).

For this reason, the policy shifts are expected to provide for more domesticated, harmonized and coherent child protection policies in Zimbabwe and in the region. In the same way policy shifts are expected to increase respect for human rights for girls. Also, the ban on child marriages is expected to allow under 18 girls to fully

enjoy their childhood, through more access to education and development of life skills as well as reduction in health risks that are associated with child marriages.

To sum up, Zimbabwe is still reforming its child protection laws and guidelines. In the meantime there is no clear policy direction on how issues of child marriages in Nyaminyami should be handled in a court of law. However, child protection laws do not influence child marriages in isolation but are aided by SRHR and service provision issues among others.

2.7. Sexual reproductive health rights and child marriages

According to MoHCW, (2009), Reproductive Health is, "... a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being of an individual in all matters of reproductive system and its processes and functions..."

According to UNICEF, (2015) 48% of girls marry before 18 largely due to inadequate SRHR knowledge and service provision. MoHCW, (2012p 163-173), adds that various policy guidelines on SRHR urge authorities to provide: Information, choice on marriage matters, and protection from harmful traditional practices. Further, governments should, improve public view of the girl child, reduce poverty and improve access to youth friendly reproductive health services.

Accordingly, hindrances to meeting SRHR policy provisions are mostly cultural, economic, social and legal (MoHCW, (2012). In addition youths lack adequate SRHR information because social values and norms, that are patriarchal in nature, exclude them from acquiring it before marriage (MoHCW, 2009). Svanemyr (2012, p. 2) and AU, (2014,p. 3) add that culturally, men largely control women's sexual and reproductive life and their bodies resulting in child marriages. Zimstat,

(2014.p 145) observes that, adolescents in rural areas like Nyaminyami are 49% less likely to use contraception in comparison to other groups and that level of education and household wealth are linked to uptake of contraception that favours the educated and the rich at a ratio of 78% – 48% . Also studies show a low use of contraception among girls of 40% and little support of conveniently located, furnished and visible SRHR service provision at community level. Further, in contradiction to provision of quality reproductive services and increased welfare for girls, Ministry of education and Culture, some churches and parents discourage young people from using contraceptives and encourage abstinence, delayed sex and faithfulness exposing sexual active girls to teenage pregnancies and child marriages (MoHCW, 2009).

In summary, the above narrative, means that girls in rural areas of Nyaminyami are expected to have low access to SRH information and services which further exposes them to teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

2.8. Summary

This chapter looked at definition of child marriages, early marriages as a rights issue, Global and local views to child marriages, socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages, child marriages and the law, and Sexual reproductive health rights and early marriages. The following chapter discusses the research methodology used to collect data in this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

.3.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with research methodology which includes research design, population and sampling techniques, Data collection instruments, Pilot Study, data collection procedure, analysis and organization of data as well as ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

According to Makore-Rukumi (2001,p 54) and Resource Center, (2017), research design is a plan or structure for investigation and is the most efficient plan for gathering needed information.

The study used mixed approaches which included aspects of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data in a single study. In fact, mixed methodologies are home to researches in social science. Qualitative survey was used because of its ability to logically and systematically describe the phenomenon of child marriages and it is connected well to Social Learning Theory which emphasizes the importance of interaction with respondents to enable emersion and effective solicitation of views on child marriages. The approach also uses local stakeholders and their views in the study (Patient Centered Medical Home Resource Center, 2017). Further, the design provides descriptions and interpretations on attitudes and conditions that prevail in Nyaminyami on child marriages (Mbizvo, M 2010). Also, descriptive

survey enables the researcher to use a sample from the population which aids the researcher to discover incidences and distribution of the phenomena under study.

According to Makore-Rukuni,(2001) and Patient Centered Medical Home Resource Center, (2017) qualitative research seeks to collect data for a deeper understanding of the subject matter such as attitudes, perceptions or motivations. In this study, qualitative method was used to interrogate participants on various aspects of child marriages from the point of view of affected individuals and households.

Moreover, the approach helped the researcher to observe, describe and interpret attitudes of mothers, affected girls and key informants in relation to child marriages. In addition to qualitative methods, quantitative methods were used.

According to Makore-Rukuni quantitative method is described as, the use of numbers to insure precision in measurement. This eases summaries, comparisons and analysis of data from different responses, settings and times. Most of all, quantitative approach provided numerical data and meanings on girls who dropped out of school or eloped for marriage as well as information on women who were under 18 at the time they first delivered. In fact, quantitative data alone would not provide adequate statistical aspects to the study hence inclusion of qualitative approach for triangulation of methods, instruments and sources.

To sum up, Open Education Resource center (2017) notes that mixed methodologies increase depth and breadth of understanding and corroboration and minimize weaknesses of using one approach through triangulation of methods, data sources and researchers in the study of a single phenomenon.

3.3. Population and sampling procedures

The research population in the study was 66 and comprised of men and women as illustrated in the categories and numbers in the table below.

Category	Number of participants
Mothers between 18-48 years	48 (2 groups from 18-25 age group, 2 groups from 26-35 age group, 2 groups from 36-48 age group)
Key informants	18 (Education District office (1), headmasters (3), Ministry of Health (2), headmen (2), victim friendly Unit (2) CAMFED District Officer(1), District Aids Coordinator (1) Social Services Officers (1) religious leaders(2), traditional leaders (2) councilor(1))

Table 4. Sample size to the study

The research participants provided primary data. The study used non probability sampling to purposively and conveniently target District Education offices, CAMFED and health facility records for information on children who dropped out of school due to child marriages and those who had delivered while they were under the age of 18.

Mothers, were also conveniently and purposively (non- probability) targeted from mothers' shelters, girl club mentors and public gathering of Nyaminyami agriculture show and sport gala that coincided with the period of data collection . The purposively targeted women were grouped into desired age groups before their

coded names were randomly sampled (probability sampling) from a hat to participate in the study.

The lists of the women were identified through health facilities, agriculture show coordinators, and Family Aids Caring Trust (FACT) and CAMFED officers. The women and their categories were selected because of their potential to provide personal experiences, perceptions and attitudes on child marriages that allowed for age related analysis of trends on child marriages.

Ordinarily, purposive and convenience sampling, help in harnessing relevant information and experiences, also it ensured for fairer geographical and demographical representation among targeted women while random sampling allowed for an equal chance of participation in the study by members of each targeted group.

Key informants were purposively selected for the study because of their influential leadership positions. Key informants are both generators and custodians of community values and beliefs and government policies on child marriages as such they hold vital knowledge on why child marriages persist, where it is occurring and the social groups that are most affected by it.

Institutions, comprising 3 Health Centres and District Education Office were purposively targeted to provide data on child marriages since they work with women and keep records on deliveries by under 18 year old girls

In the same way, CAMFED was purposive targeted because it supports programmes that are aimed at increasing access to education for the girl child in Nyaminyami. As

such, CAMFED provided the study with data on enrolments trends, dropout figures due to marriage for girls who participated in their programmes.

3.4. Data collection instruments

Data was collected using focus group discussion (FGDs) guides with groups of 8-12 women between the ages of 18 and 49. FGDs assisted the researcher to get opinions, attitudes, fears, feelings, emotions and perceptions of participants on child marriages in a relaxed surrounding (Krueger, 1998). Again, in depth interviews with key informants and questionnaires guides with health facilities and schools were conducted. According to Kwesu (2004), a questionnaire guide is a document with structured, unstructured and semi structured questions for purposes of collecting data for a research. Chivandikwa (2002), notes that an in depth interview is a process of meeting someone to find out, through face to face interaction about data for a research.

The following table summarizes category of participants, number of participants, data collections methods and sampling methods that were used in the study.

Category	Number of participants	Data collection methods used	Sampling techniques employed
Mothers between 18-48 years	48 (2 groups from 18-15 age group, 2 groups from 26-35 age group, 2 groups from 36-48 age group)	Focus group discussions	Convenient , purposive and random sampling
Key informants	18 (Education District office (1) ,headmasters (3), Ministry of Health (2), girl club mentors (2), victim friendly Unit (2) CAMFED (1), District Aids Coordinator (1) Social Services Officers (1) religious leaders(2), traditional leaders (2) Councilor(1)	Key informant interviews	Convenient and purposive sampling
Institutional records	3 clinics, District education offices and CAMFED	In depth interviews	Purposive and convenient sampling

Table 5. Sample size to the study

3.5. Pilot testing

A pilot study is defined as a scientific approach that is used by researchers in soft research protocols to allow researchers to conduct a preliminary analysis of a study before committing to a full scale study (Google scholar, n/d). It is also viewed as a research study that is conducted on a small scale before an intended study. A pilot test, saves the purpose of testing the efficacy of research instruments and protocols

in order to reduce costs on resources and time (Google scholar, n/d). The researcher thus, had a pre-run of the group discussions and in depth interviews with one FGD of 10 women in the 26 – 35 age group and 2 key informants in Kariba Urban in July, 2016. The sample was small to minimize interaction between the research target groups and the pilot group. Following the pre-test some questions were found to be either ambiguous or repetitive and thus corrected accordingly. The corrections were done through deleting repeated questions and making ambiguous questions precise.

3.6. Data collection procedure

The field study was conducted in Nyaminyami in September, 2016. The data were collected through group discussions and key informants in depth interviews, using tally sheets to indicate the number of times or number of respondents to each question. Also, participants allowed the researcher to use note books to record some of the responds from participants. The responses were coded to ensure for confidentiality of research subjects. The process faced no challenges since the participants were engaged during their free time. Also, the participants could attend the group discussions without much pressure for time because they were away from their homes for agriculture and ball games show at Siakobvu, and this aided the process to run more smoothly. The researcher, ensured for data trustworthiness through triangulation of data collection tools, methods and sources.

Data from health facilities, District education offices and CAMFED were tallied showing the number of underage girls who delivered in health facility or dropped

from school due to marriage related reasons. The data were collected from information officers in the institutions. The researcher only collected statistical data with no names of the people who were affected. This was done to further strengthen confidentiality.

3.7. Analysis and organisation of data

According to Cotler, (1994), data analysis is the extraction of meaningful information from data. Qualitative data responses were analyzed using thematic areas while quantitative responses from institutional records on child marriages were tabulated on frequency count tables and compared for convergence or divergence of views between and among the groups in the various categories of respondents. For instance, responses among groups in the category of women between ages 18 and 49 were tabulated separately on tables and graphs before being compared and contrasted against responses from the category of key informants.

Further, once identification of emerging trends were made and comparisons drawn, data was further analyzed using frequency count tables before being compared to trends from literature. Also, explanations on child marriages in Nyaminyami that either confirmed or deviated from literature were identified and explained

3.8. Ethical considerations

The participants, used Shona or Tonga language with the help of a Tonga interpreter because they were not able to speak in English. Additionally, the researcher asked non-personalizing questions on issues of child marriages in order to avoid

embarrassing participants. Again, participants were requested to participate in the research with room to quit without any punishment.

The participants signed contracts to participate in the study. The contracts had clauses that bound the research team and individual participants from divulging personal information that was shared in the research.

Also, the researcher ensured that participants responses were coded, kept under lock and key for as long as they were still needed. Also, the contract to participate in the study stated clearly how issues of conflict between the research team and participants were to be resolved if they arose.

Finally, the researcher was granted written permission to carry out the study by Africa University Research and Ethics Council, the Resident Minister and Governor of Mashonaland West, The Provincial Education Director, The Provincial Medical Director, Kariba District administrator, District Education Officer, District Medical Officer, and Nyaminyami Rural District Council .

3.9. Summary

In this chapter, research design, population sampling techniques, Data collection instruments, Pilot study, data collection procedure, analysis and organization of data and ethical considerations were discussed. The next chapter is a presentation of research findings and interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The research findings are arranged and presented in line with the objectives as discussed in Chapter One. In brief, three objectives guided the study and they are: (a) identification of socio-cultural factors and practices that influence child marriages in Nyaminyami District; (b) and examination of national policies on child protection and sexual reproductive health.

4.2 Demographic information of respondents

a. Response rate of participants.

The table below shows the category, targeted participants and the response rate that was achieved in the study.

n= 66

Category	Target respondents	Actual participants	Response % rate
Focus Group Discussions(FGDs)			
Mothers between the ages of 18 and 25 years	8 participants per group by 2 groups	16	100
Mothers between the ages of 26 and 35	8 participants per group by 2 groups	16	100
Mothers between the ages of 36 and 49	2 groups of 8 participants each	16	100
Key Informant Interviews			

School heads	2	3	150
Ministry of health	2	2	100
Social welfare	1	1	100
District Aids coordinator	1	1	100
Law enforcement agents	1	2	200
District Education Officers	1	1	100
CAMFED	1	1	100
Traditional leaders	2	2	100
Church leaders	2	2	100
Councilors	1	1	100
SRHR girl clubs mentors	2	2	100

Table 6 : Response rate of participants

Table 6. (above) shows that FGDs and key informant interviews were well attended. The 100% response rate in the interviews are attributed to the support the researcher got from Ministry of Health and Child Care, Department of Primary and Secondary Education, the Governor and Resident Minister, the District Administrator and Nyaminyami rural District Council.

Further, the response rate was a success because it coincided with Nyaminyami agriculture show and ball games where women and men including community leaders from all wards converged at Siakobvu business centre for three days. The agricultural show made it possible for the researcher to more easily access targeted

participates from areas of study at their convenient times. In addition, schools were open making it easier for school based respondents to participate in the study.

Again, the researcher was assisted by health facility staff to access mothers who were in waiting mothers' shelters for interviews. CAMFED District staff assisted the researcher to mobilize community volunteers to voluntarily participate in the research.

Additionally, various community based volunteers that include Behavior Change Facilitators and Village health workers assisted the research team with mobilization of participants and logistics during the field study. Additionally, the response rate was high partly due to the ample time the researcher had to conduct the research. The researcher spent two weeks in Kariba urban and rural.

b. Distribution of interviewees by sex

The table below illustrates the profile of participants to the study. The profile shows the sex, number of participants and the rate of achievement.

n = 66

Sex	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Male	14	21
Female	52	79
Total	66	100

Table 7 : Participants by sex

Table 7. (above) shows that 14 men and 52 women participated in the interviews. There were more women than men participants in the interviews because women were deliberately targeted through focused group discussions whereas men were only targeted through key informant interviews.

Again, gender in balance affected women participation in key informant interviews. Generally, there are more men than women in positions of authority in government, church and traditional leadership. The gender in balance among key informants was however compensated for in the focused group discussions where 32/66 (48.5%) women participated.

c. Distribution of FGD participants by age

The table below illustrates the number of participants to the study by age. This was done to ensure that differences on child marriage issues that are related to age among women come out in the study.

n = 48

Age group	Respondents by age	% responds rate
18 – 25 years	19	29
26 – 35 years	19	29
36 – 49 years	28	42
Total	66	100

Table 8 : FGDs respondents by age

Table 8. (above) indicates that 29% of the participants were in the 18-25 and 26 to 35 age groups while 42% came from the 36 – 49 age group. More elderly

mothers in the FGDs were targeted for their experience and knowledge in community issues that include child marriages.

4.3. Data presentation and analysis

4.3.1. Participants' understanding of child marriage

The graph below illustrates how participants understood what child marriage is and the legal age at which girls should be married. This was done in a bid to identify causes of child marriages and cultural values that drive the practice.

n=66

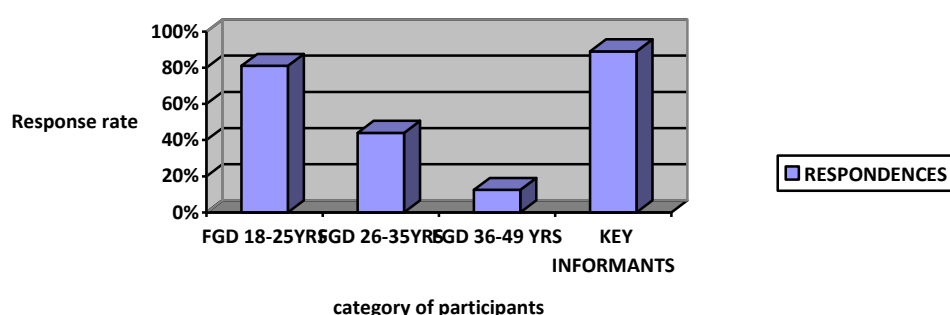


Figure 6. Rating of respondents' understanding of child marriage

Figure 6. (above) shows that key informants understood the meaning of child marriage the most with 89%. Further, among FGD participants the 18-25 age group understood the concept the most with 81% followed by the 26-35 age group at 42%. The 36-49 age group understood the concept the least with 12.5%. On average FGDs understanding of the concept at 46% while the average understanding of child marriages by all the respondents was mild at 56%.

The findings are that the concept of child marriage is understood differently by different categories of people in the Nyaminyami community. The findings show that people in leadership positions and younger people understand the concept of child marriage more than elderly people especially women.

4.3.2. Socio cultural factors that influence child marriages in Nyaminyami

a. Age at first deliveries

The researcher investigated the average age at which girls marry through collection of data from delivery records of under 18 girls for 2014 and 2015 from health facilities. The diagrams below shows the outcome of the exercise.

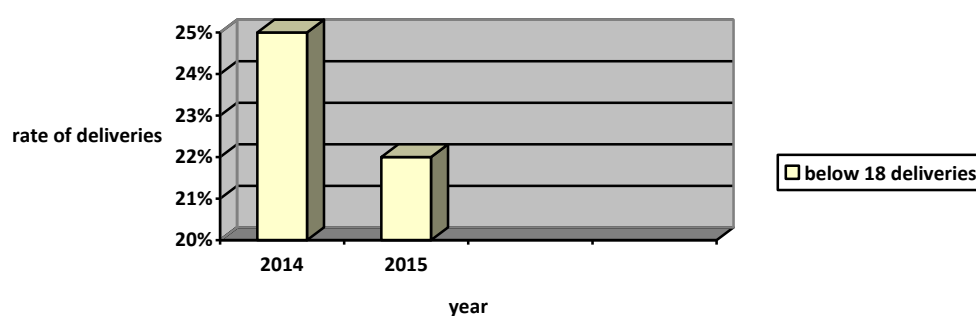


Figure 7 : Deliveries by under 18 girls in 3 health centres

Source: (Health facility delivery records, 2016)

Figure 7. (above) shows that there were 114 (25%) deliveries for under 18 mothers in 2014 compared to 111(22%) in 2015. This means that there were less deliveries for under 18 girls at 114 (25%) in 2014 compared to 111(22%) in 2015

The findings mean that child marriages, though still high, are generally decreasing. The table below illustrates trends of child marriages in secondary schools in Nyaminyami for 2014 and 2015.

Year	Child drop outs due to child marriages in secondary schools		
	Total number of teenage pregnancies and child marriages for the year.	Under 18 girls who dropped from school, due to teenage pregnancies only	Under 18 girls who dropped out of school due to child marriages
2014	80	16(20%)	64(80%)
2015	61	15(24.5%)	46(75%)
Totals	141	31(21%)	110(78%)

Table 9 : Secondary school dropouts due to pregnancy and marriage

Source: (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education/CAMFED reports, 2016)

Figure 9 (above) shows that child marriages in secondary schools, though still high, fell from 80% in 2014 to 75% in 2015. The decline may be due to change of values on child marriage among community members. The changes could also be due to girl child protection interventions that were conducted by various stakeholders that including CAMFED and Ministry of health. Another aspect is that some of the law breakers on early marriages have faced prosecution in law courts forcing others to desist from the practice.

The table below shows girls who were married in Primary schools in Nyaminyami in 2014 and 2015.

Year	Child drop outs due to child marriages in primary schools		
	Total teenage pregnancies and child marriages	Under 18 girls who dropped from school, due to teenage pregnancies only	Under 18 girls who dropped out of school due to child marriages only
2014	3	-	3
2015	18	6	12(66%)
Totals	21	6	15

Table 10 : Child marriages in primary schools

Source: Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education/CAMFED reports (2016)

Table 10. (above) shows that there were 3 child marriages in 2014 and 12 in 2015. The table indicates an increase in child marriages from 3 to 12 in 2014 and 2015 respectively. The increase can be partly attributed to gaps in the reporting system rather than a real increase in child marriages among primary school girls. In any case women and men who participated in the FGDs and in depth interviews indicated that more child marriages occur in secondary than Primary schools. It can be suggested therefore that there were gaps in the collection of data on child marriages for the period under review. On the other end, it can be noted that the ratio of child marriages between secondary and primary girls for the period under review was higher in secondary schools at 110: 15.

b. The role of education in reducing child marriages

The study sought to find how education contributes to child marriages among girls. This was done to ascertain if education plays a role in child marriages in Nyaminyami.

n=66

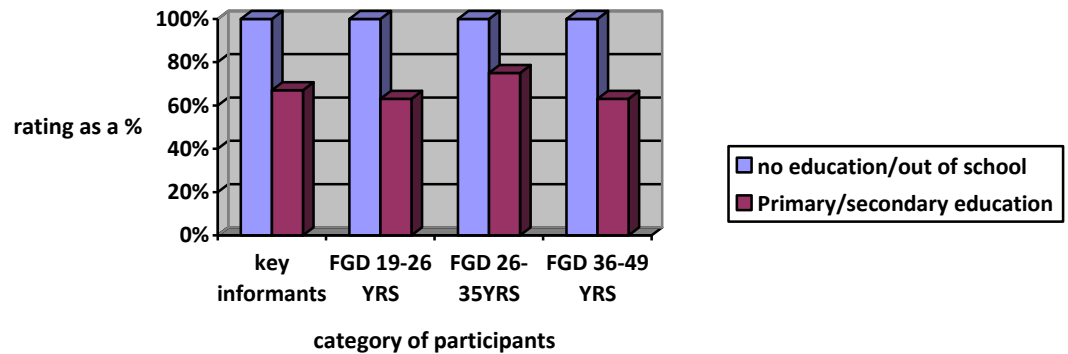


Figure 8 : Participants views on the role of education in child marriages

Figure 8. (above) shows that girls with no education or who are out of school risk child marriage by 100% while the risk of those with primary or secondary education is lower at 60%

In short the findings mean that participants generally agreed that girls with less education risk being married before 18 years than girls with more education.

c. Poverty dimension in child marriages

The researcher sought views from participants on poverty issues that influence child marriages by type. The following figure shows what the participant's responses were.

n = 66

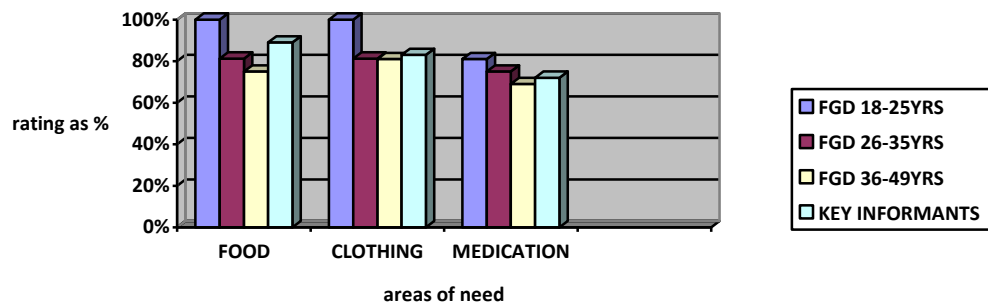


Figure 9: How food, clothing and medication contribute to child marriages

Figure 9. (above) indicates that the need for food, clothing and medication contribute to child marriages among under 18 girls at an average rate of 96%, 84% and 66%. The figure also shows that among the categories of participants the 18-25 age group had the highest rating of poverty as a contributor to child marriages followed by key informants. The least rating of poverty as a reason for early came from the 36-49 age group.

The following table illustrates the effect of poverty by household type.

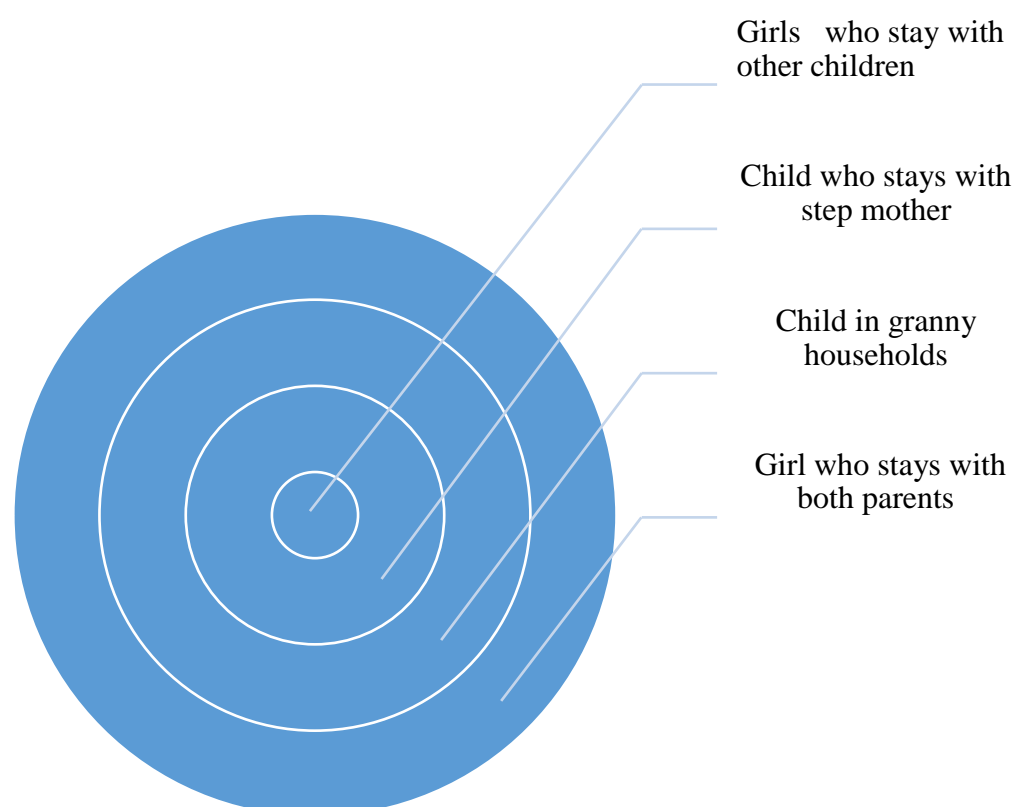


Figure 10: Vulnerability to child marriages by household type.

The findings in figure 10. (above) are that girls in child headed households , step mother households and then granny households are affected most by child marriages in that order. The findings also show that children who stay with both parents are least affected by child marriages.

In short, the findings mean that basic needs such as food and clothing are among key drivers of child marriages in Nyaminyami. Further, the findings mean that young people are affected by poverty issues more than elderly people.

d. Limited exposure to opportunities in life.

The table below illustrates how respondents linked exposure to opportunities with child marriages

Issues that explain the link between exposure, opportunities and child marriages n=66	
Issue that emerged	Number of respondents who mentioned the same
Exposure to new idea	20
Higher education	13
Professional training	13
Employment opportunities	19
Total	66

Table 11: Link of exposures and opportunities to child marriages

The findings in table 11. (above) show that, lack of exposure to new ideas (20) and inadequate higher education (13), professional training (13) and job opportunities (19) were among key contributors to child marriages. The findings mean that girls in Nyaminyami are mostly affected by these conditions since such opportunities are rare in the area.

e. Role of models in influencing child marriages

The table below shows the role of models in promoting child marriages. This was done in a bid to ascertain if models do have a significant role in the practice of child marriages.

Rating of role models in influencing child marriages n=66	
Participants	number of participants who mentioned , community leaders, fishermen and artisan miners as role models
FGDs	40/48(83.3%)
Key informants	14/18(77.7%)
Total	54/66(82%)

Table 12: The role models play in child marriages

The findings in table 12. (Above) show that lack of good models contribute to child marriages. The findings further illustrate that major sources of role models to child marriages came from peers, some community leaders and professional people like teachers and nurses. Others were fishermen, artisan miners and some religious leaders.

f. Choice of husband and timing of marriage by under 18 girls

The women and key informant participants indicated that girls now largely choose their own husbands and time to marry. However the same respondents agreed that girls who delay marriage generally end up in polygamous marriages with men much older than themselves. To sum up, women and key informants added that today parents indirectly influence their daughters to marry suitors from their preferred households through for instance jokingly identify a girl as a wife of a boy or men of

the preferred family until the girl grows older and marry from the family. The practice is known as chishashe in Tonga.

The findings mean that parents' control of the timing and choice of their daughters' husbands has shifted to influencing the process. Finally, the findings showed that tradition continues to influence child marriages through chishashe.

The figure below illustrates determinants of choice of husband and timing of marriage that are stronger from the centre.

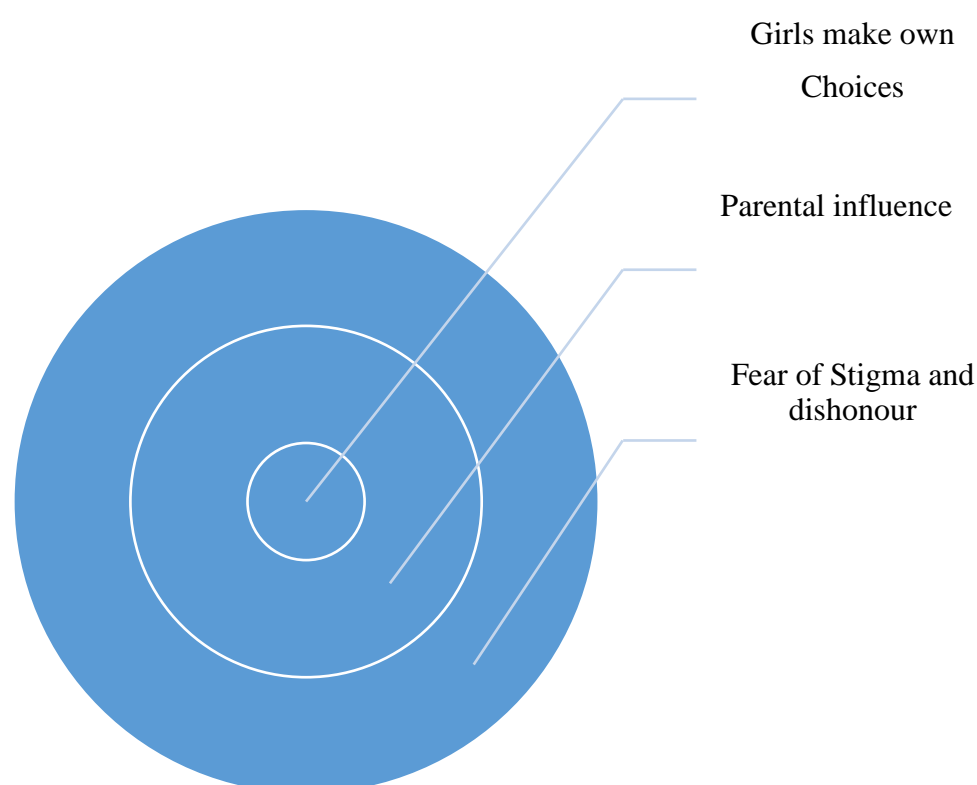


Figure 11: Factors influencing choice and timing of child marriage

Figure 11. (above) shows that under 18 girls themselves, parents and fear of stigma and isolation largely contribute to child marriages.

In conclusion, girls on their own, parents and fear of stigma and discrimination contribute to choice of partners and timing of marriage

g. Societal push for child marriages through verbal expressions

The table below shows the number of participants who linked verbal expressions to child marriages. This was done to measure the influences of communities in child marriages through verbal expressions.

	Link between verbal expressions and child marriages n=66	
category of respondents	Number of participants	Number of respondents who mentioned it
Women who participated in FGDs	48	40 (83%)
Key informants	18	15 (83%)
Total	66	55 (83%)
What women and men participants said was the age at which marriage is late n=66		
18-20 years		25/66 (38%)
20 years and above		28/66 (42%)
13 to 17 years		13/66 (20 %)

Table 13 : The influence of verbal expressions on child marriages

The findings in figure 13. (above) show that women and men agree that girls and households of girls who delay marriage are punished through name calling, labelling and stigma and discrimination by 83%. Also, the findings indicate that women and men concur that 20 years and above is the age of delayed marriage for girls (42%) followed by girls between 18 and 20 years at 38%.

In short, the findings mean that girls and their parents are under pressure from the community to get their daughters married at the earliest possible time.

h. The role of gender issues and tradition in child marriages

The table below demonstrates how gender issues contribute to child marriages

Ratings by respondents on how gender issues contribute to child marriages n=66	
Issue that emerged	Number of respondents who mentioned it
Over valuing marriage more than education	36 (60%)
women assigned subordinate/dependent roles to men	30 (40%)
Total	66

Table 14: Contribution of gender to child marriages

The findings in table 14. (above) demonstrate that communities over value marriage (60%) thereby fuelling child marriages. Further the findings show that women are cultured to take subordinate roles to men (40%) making them marry before 18 years for support especially for girls in poor households.

To sum up the findings mean that gender issues continue to influence child marriages through making women dependant on men for a living and over valuing marriage more than access to education

4.3.3. Gaps on child protection polices and sexual reproductive health rights

a. Knowledge of laws and policies on child marriages

With regards to knowledge of child protection laws, participants generally noted that it was illegal to marry children under 18 years but were not clear of the legal age limit and the relevant legal instruments. The following table shows how the different categories of respondents understood legal age at marriages

n=66

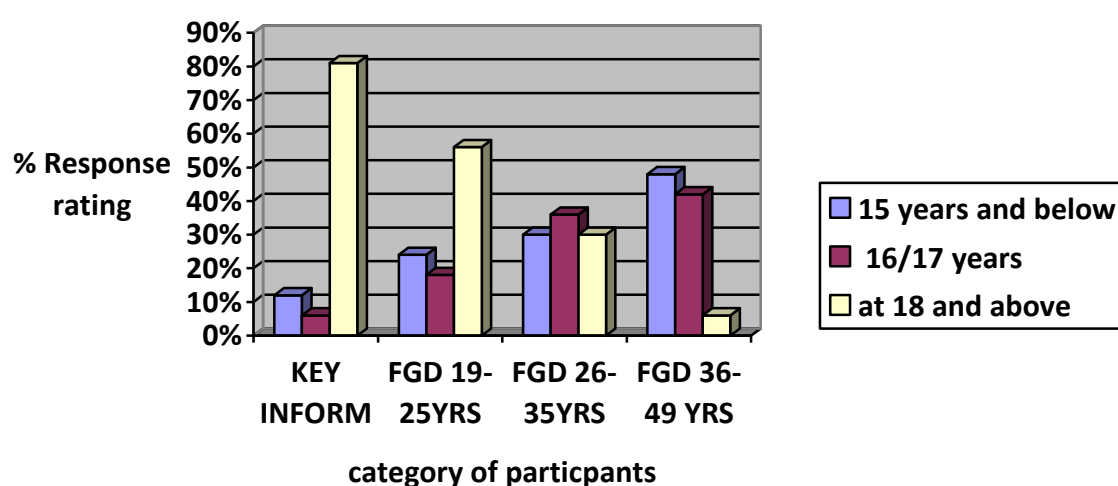


Figure 12. Rating of participants understanding of legal age of marriage

Figure 12. (above) shows that 80% of key informants knew the legal age for a child to marry, followed by FGD of ages 18-25 at 58%, However, FGDs of ages 26-35 and 36-49 years scored the least with 30% and 5% respectively

Accordingly, the findings mean that apart from community leaders and young people, most people especially from the elderly group have little knowledge on legal age for girl marriages. This could be because elderly people are less educated and less exposed to current information on such matters.

b. Enforcement of laws on child marriages

Participants identified and rated barriers to enforcement of child protections as shown in the table below.

Rating on barriers to enforcement of child protection policies n=66	
Issue that emerged	Number of times it was mentioned
low confidence in the legal system	20 (30%)
Intra marriages	16 (25%)
Contradictory Child protection policies	30(45%)
Total	66

Table 15 . Rating of barriers to enforcement of child protection policies

The findings from table 15. (above) indicates that respondents (30%) are not eager to report cases of child marriages to law enforcers. This was partly caused by low success rate of cases that are reported to law enforcers. In addition, the findings indicate that some marriages occur among relatives (25%) hence reports on marriage offences including child marriages were low. Again the findings show that child protection laws are largely contradictory to support successful prosecution of child marriages in law courts (45%).

The findings mean that little confidence in the justice delivery system, marriages among relatives and conflicting child protection policies, encourage child marriages.

c. Contribution of Sexual reproductive health services

The table below illustrates how participants rated the contribution of SRH services to child marriages.

ratings on how SRHR contributes to child marriages n=66	
Issue that emerged	Number of times it was mentioned
Little knowledge on SRH issues	25 (37%)
Inadequate and unfriendly SRH services for young people	24 (36%)
Traditional use of child marriage to prevent loss of virginity and pregnancies outside marriage.	17 (29%)
Total	66

Table 16 . Contribution of SRHR to child marriages

The findings in table 16. (above) indicate that SRHR issues are little known, inadequate and less user friendly to youths (36%). In the same way, the findings illustrate that girls are generally forced into child marriage as a traditional way of preventing loss of virginity and bearing of children outside marriage (29%).

To sum up, the findings mean that SRHR services are inadequate and less user friendly to young people. Again the findings mean that young people need more

knowledge on SRHR matters. Finally, the findings mean that traditional belief systems on SRH issues fuel child marriages.

4.4. Discussions and interpretations

This section discusses findings of the study in relation to views from literature and research participants.

a. Knowledge of the concept of child marriage

The low understanding of the concept of child marriage in the community can be attributed to ignorance of current issues among the elderly. Again, elderly people are largely expected to hold traditional meanings of child marriages and low formal education compared to younger people and community leaders who showed a better understanding of what child marriage is.

b. Socio cultural factors

1. Age at first marriage.

Although participants have small variations on the actually age girls marry they generally agree that child marriages start from 13 years and that the majority of girls marry around the ages of 15 to 17 years. UNFPA, (2012,p. 6) confirms the findings when they say that child marriages start around 15 years and increases at the age of 16 and 17 years at a ratio of 1/3 . In addition, the findings are supported by a study in India that established that under 18 girls marry at a ratio of 30%.

The participants further observed that the trend of child marriage has been decreasing since around 2000. UNICEF, (2014) affirms the findings by noting that in the 1980s 1/3 girls were married before 18 years compared to 1/4 in 2010.

However, institution records showed that under 18 deliveries marginally increased from 99 to 107 in 2014 and 2015 respectively while school dropout rate due to child marriages generally increased by 50% . This is supported by UNICEF, (2014,p. 6) when it said that in South Asia child marriages remain high for under 18 girls with some in country variances. The trend is further confirmed by ZHDS, (2015) and newsday.co.zw/2016/5/early, when they said that child marriages for rural areas in Zimbabwe, marginally increased from 27.2% to 28% during the period 2010 and 2015. The findings are further supported by UNFPA, (2012,p. 29) who noted that, generally in developing countries like Zimbabwe and Uganda there has not been much decline in child marriages and figures differed from area to area .

The slight increase of child marriages for under 18 girls can be attributed to strong culturally roots that still exist in those areas. To sum up, given these findings, it is a fact that child marriages are slowly declining but remain high in Nyaminyami.

2. Role of education

The findings on the influence of education on child marriages were confirmed by ICRW, (2010,p. 4) and UNFPA, (2012. p. 34) when they posit that little or no education contributes to child marriages while higher education generally protects under age girls from child marriages. UNFPA (2012,p. 34) adds that a study in Ethiopia demonstrated that educated girls delay child marriage by 3.2 times and that girls who drop out of school were more vulnerable to child marriages. This is further supported by (U.N.O. (n/d). when they point out that money that is invested in girl education has a high return ratio of 1:5 and it significantly delays child

marriages. The views above underline how education is critical in reducing child marriages and enhancing development at all levels.

However, for in school girls, the participants noted that child marriages are higher among secondary school than primary school girls. This is supported by UNICEF, (2014,p. 4) that stated that in Zimbabwe 4% of girls in primary schools against 40% with secondary education are married by the age of 18.

Indeed, the respondents highlighted that the reason why in school primary and secondary school girls are targeted for child marriages was that the girls look smarter and more attractive to men than girls who are out of school. One man who supported the findings said that:

After observing that girls who were getting funding support of tuition and complete uniform were a target for child marriages, I pushed for every child in the school to have a complete uniform since then the number of drop outs due to child marriages especially among girls who are supported by donors has dropped significantly from around 12 in 2014 to 2 in 2015 (man participant, 2016)

In the end, the above discussion shows the importance of education in protecting girls from child marriages. Further the discussion illustrates the need for SHRR information and other services for secondary school girls.

3. Role of poverty

The study findings shows that, poverty is a driver of child marriages are supported by UNICEF, (2014,p. 3) who said that girls from poor household are 2.5 more vulnerable to child marriages than those from richer households. This view was confirmed by Maslow who noted that basic needs such as food motivate human behaviour more than education needs (Mataruse etal, 2004). These views show that

even if girls are supported to enroll in school, poverty would still drive them into child marriage.

For this reason, ICRW, (2010,p. 3), UNFPA, (2012,p. 12) Svanemyr (2012,p. 2), UNICEF (2015,p. 19), concur with the findings by adding that because of poverty poor households marry their daughters as a coping mechanism to reduce the number of children who need clothes, food and education .

Similarly, Population Institute, (2010,p. 2) confirms the findings and adds that child marriage is meant to economically insulate vulnerable girls and their households against poverty by ensuring that they have someone to look after them

In addition, women participants, especially younger ones further explained the findings by noting that lack of basic things like good food, school fees, stationery, uniforms, pocket money, bath soap, lotion and blankets force under 18 girls into marriage.

To illustrate this point, women added that some households are poor to the extent of using donated mosquito nets as blankets forcing under 18 girls to go out with sugar daddies who provide them with lunch, school fees and pocket money. This view is affirmed by Harper, (2014) and Population Institute, (2010) when they say that girls fall in love with sugar daddies due to poverty and this causes child marriages.

Essentially, the respondents noted that although poor households were generally forced to marry their daughters early, child headed households were more vulnerable. The finding is again confirmed by Jensen et al. (2003,p. 17) and UNICEF, (2015, p.19), when they observe that poverty is the main cause of child

marriages in grandparent, divorced, windowed and child headed households. To further elaborate the findings, a participant testified that:

I married at thirteen because my mother's sister who took me in after the death of my parents used to visit leaving me alone without enough basic needs like food, lotion and soap for two to three weeks. I would not attend lessons because I had to look after cattle and goats in the home. I decided to end the harsh life through marriage and had my first child at 13

(Woman participant, 2016)

In summary, the study findings suggest that girls need more holistic support if they are to be protected from child marriages and realise their full potential in life.

4. Exposure, opportunities and models

Study findings on the role of exposure, opportunities and models on child marriages was agreed upon by all participants. Community leaders explained that most people have never travelled beyond their locations such as Mola and Negande while a good number is yet to ride on a vehicle.

On the other hand, it was indicated that some community leaders including traditional, religious and professionals practiced child marriages. However, the respondents acknowledged a remarkable decline in marriage of underage girls by community leaders as opposed to around 2005. Likewise, respondents noted that young people lack good examples of peers who are doing well in life through success in education, attainment of professional qualifications and well-paying jobs.

Singh et al. (1996, p. 149) supports the findings when he notes that inadequate work for money and lack of employment cause child marriages since there is little basis for girls and their households to postpone marriage. The findings are further supported by UNFPA, (2012, p. 4), ICRW, (2006) when they note that, without

better exposure to more life options of education and jobs girls and their parents regard child marriage as their only hope for survival in life.

The finding on the need for higher education and training is further confirmed by HDRC/DFD, (2011) and Singh, (1996), when they say that girls can delay child marriage if they have good opportunities for higher and vocational education while ICRW, (2010,p. 4) and UNFPA, 2012,p. 4/12, further agree with the findings by observing that for households with little economic choices for girl children, child marriage is chosen as a viable option that can guarantee their future .

On the other hand the finding showed the need for better models on issues of child marriage. This view is supported by Mcloud, (2016) and Bandura, (1925) who noted that behaviour, including child marriages, is acquired through imitation of models with community leaders acting as major conduits.

To sum up, the discussions above shows that child marriages can be reduced if the people in Nyaminyami have more exposures, opportunities and models on matters of higher learning , jobs and child marriages.

5. Choice of husband and timing of marriage

The study found that girls choose to marry man of their own choice at their own and that parents largely influence the process rather than directing it is confirmed by UNICEF, (2005, p. 23) who noted that in Cambodia and Haiti parents continue to influence choice of spouses by their daughters at a ratio of 35% and 33% respectively but girls now control the process.

However, participant especially women argued that cultural norms and values generally dictate timing of marriage for girls since it is not acceptable to marry later than the expected age. The findings are supported by ICRW, (2010,p. 3), who notes that society pushes underage girls and their families to marry before age to avoid disapproval and shame from the wider community. ICRW, (2010,p. 2) further support the findings by noting that culturally, women derive their value and dignity through marriage and that it should not be delayed else the chance may be lost for good while ICRW, (2010,p. 5) supports the findings by noting that marriage is viewed as sole determinant of a women's status in society.

The above discussion shows that girls largely choose their marriage partners but the choice and timing is influenced by cultural norms and values. In the end parents who are custodians of cultural values remain the major cause of child marriages.

6. Societal push for child marriages through verbal expressions

The study findings are supported by women participants who noted that marriage is highly valued that parents whose daughters delay marriage consult n'angas or prophets to find out why. Women and men participants said that some parents deliberately stop providing for the needs of affected girls in order to force them to marry. To further support the findings women and men respondents noted that girls who delay marriage attract verbal attacks such as: “..... *Why are you still not married? (uchiri kuitei ?), or are you still not married even now ? (na nhasi hausati waroorwa ?)....*” (Women and men respondent, 2016)

Further, respondents added that other girls are labelled as no longer suitable for marriage (haachaiti), too old for marriage (kachembere), prostitute (hure), unlucky

(ane munyama), wife of family spirits (Mukadzi we chikwambo), she has HIV, she has a spirit of witchcraft, parents use her to get wealth (anoshandiswa na baba vake kutsvaga pfuma) among others. The usual effects of labelling of girls who delay marriage are child marriages. Plan International, (2006,p. 34), further affirms the findings when they note that:

Late marriage causes parents and the affected girl to be rejected, victimized, through verbal attacks gossip and many families and girls avoid it because of old traditional beliefs that a girl can grow too old for marriage bringing shame to her parents whose success is measured through marriages of their daughters.

International Journal of Science and Anthropology, (2012,p. 1) and Nasrin et al. (2012,p. 54) support the findings and state that child marriages are influenced by social pressure in which communities link success of parents to marriage of their daughters.

It can be noted from the above discussions that the community is a key contributor to child marriages. If girls can be subjected to so much stigma and discrimination and denial of basic needs they can do nothing but resort to child marriages.

7. The role of gender and tradition in child marriages

The findings on the influence of gender on child marriages are supported by UNICEF, (2015, p, 135), when they noted that cultural and religious beliefs are some of the major challenges on efforts to end child marriages while RAU, (2011,p. 4) adds that, ”one of the dominant forces in child marriages is culture, history, traditional views which continue to frame the way societies think about women and marriage...”.

Another aspect is that, elderly participants claimed that girls have family spirits that need payment once the girl is pregnant, therefore parents push for the marriage of the girl so as to get payment from the husband on behalf of the spirits thereby fueling child marriages. Additionally, Harper, (2014, p. 4) supports the cultural value system when he notes that traditionally, child marriages are meant to safeguard the girl child from immoral behaviour that brings dishonour to the family hence it is done for the good of the child

To the contrary, The Herald, (2015) counters that underage girls are not fully mature mentally and physically to decide or involve themselves in marriage hence such actions are viewed as forced marriage

However, women participants noted that girls are now generally not segregated against on issues of access to education and other basic needs. This position contradicts ACRW, (2010,p. 4) and UNFPA, (2012,p. 4) who argued that, “....society provides more education opportunities to boys than girls thereby adversely narrowing down life options for girls to marriage....forcing them to take marriage as their pre-determined route to life....”

To sum up, what emerges from the discussion is that gender issues that are entrenched in traditional and religious values continue to assign the girl child subordinate positions to boys and little space for empowerment and self-determination through child marriages.

c. Knowledge of laws

The study showed that, there are some knowledge gaps on child protection policies that safeguard children from child marriages. This position is confirmed by

UNFPA, (2012,p. 11) who notes that,“...Lack of knowledge of laws on age limit to child marriages cause child marriages”

The study outcomes implies that if elderly people have little knowledge on age limits to child marriages they can only be guided by traditional values which further worsen the challenge of child marriages in Nyaminyami.

d. Enforcement of laws

Both women and men participants explained the findings by noting that some child marriages happen among close relatives and their purpose is to maintain harmony and ensure payment of lobola with minimal disputes. In addition, the participants stressed that cultural values and family ties came first on matters of child marriages as opposed to observance of national laws. On the other hand, it was added that where outsiders report cases of child marriages to law enforcers, most parents do not cooperate through hiding the concerned child or lie about the date of birth or name of the affected child in order to derail the course of justice. As one elderly mother noted, “... Parents of affected children ask, who are you to interfere with my family matters, the child is mine no one should tell me what to do with her...” (women participant, 2016). These finding are supported by ICRW, (2010,p. 5), who notes that, child marriages are used to strengthen relations and connections.

However, it is noted from the findings that economic needs and disregard of the law are the causes of child marriages in Nyaminyami. The other view to this, is that the community is too traditional that it sees nothing wrong in marrying under age girls even from close relatives.

In addition, community leaders who showed a better understanding of child protection policy guide lines agreed that parental consent, non-harmonization of the constitution and child protection policies were a hindrance to protection of girl children against child marriages. This view is supported by , UNFPA, (2012,p. 12) and AU, (2013) who noted that laws were largely too many and different and that the use of customary, civil and religious laws blare age limits to child marriages thereby hindering the justice delivery system to successfully prosecute offenders of child marriages.

Further, it was noted that parents preferred to negotiate marriage of their daughters among themselves and traditional leaders than to report the cases to law enforcer. This was because suspects of child marriages are largely not charged and they come back to the same community and stay with their victims. To illustrate the point, a participant said that,’ in a court case in which someone was giving defense for marrying a girl below 18 years, the defendant said that,’ In our culture, if a girl is as tall as I am I marry her ” ,(man participant, 2016). The accused was made to go with a light sentence – community service.

The findings are confirmed by RAU,(2011,p. 2) who noted that ,“.....authorities do not take laws on child marriages seriously allowing tradition, religion and poverty to dictate terms resulting in child marriages being rampant ..” ,while UNFPA, (2012,p. 11) adds that “... weak enforcement of laws cause child marriages....”

In the end, what is notable from the discussion is that disregard of the law on child protection, incoherent child protection laws and low confidence in the justice delivery system contribute significantly to child marriages in Nyaminyami.

e. Contribution of sexual reproductive health Services

The findings on the role of SRHR was explained by young women who observed that, “.....most girls have sex for fun not knowing that it can end up in a pregnancy ...” The findings are supported by UNFPA, (2012, p. 5) who notes that, “... girls need teaching in health and sexual reproductive rights.....” while Harper et al. (2014, p. 2), further supports the findings by adding that, “... girls who live in rural areas do not adopt western values and knowledge that encourage use of contraceptives to avoid pregnancy and marriage and are more controlled by traditional guidelines on matters of sex...”. Again, MoHCW, (2009), further supports the findings by noting that young people have no or little knowledge or information on SRHR issues including policy provisions.

Apart from that, women in the 19-25 age group stated that although some girls are aware of family planning services, supply points are not user friendly to youths since they are largely manned by adults and the youths felt that confidentiality issues are seriously compromised. Similarly, young women added that there are insufficient family planning services and this leads to teenage pregnancies and child marriages. These findings are affirmed by MoHCW, (2009) who said that provision of SRHR services should be quality, affordable, appropriate, acceptable, effective, safe, comprehensive and in the right location, Accordingly, a youth respondent noted that;

Chances for sex come when one is not ready with protection. In any case most sex encounters are done in a hurry for fear of being caught and there is no time to look for protection. Even if one wants to use protection, one would not gather enough courage to collect it from a health facility where it is generally dispensed for fear of labelling and being reported to parents.

(Women respondent, (2016)

The findings are further supported by International Journal on Sociology and Anthropology, (2012,p. 57) that notes that child marriages can be attributed to low use of family planning methods among sexual active under 18 girls. Further, Zimstat, (2014) further supports the findings by noting that adolescents in rural areas like Nyaminyami are 49% less likely to use contraception compared to other groups.

Again, the men and women respondents noted that child marriages are used as a traditional SRH method to reduce pre-marital teenage pregnancies that lead to single parenthood and family shame. The findings are supported by UNFPA, (2012,p. 12) and Harper (2014, p. 4) who note that child marriages are used to ensure that young girls are married before they are spoiled through pre-marital sex and teenage pregnancies. while, ICRW, (2010,p. 5), also confirmed the findings by noting that child marriage is a traditional tool to stop underage girls from indulging in premarital sex and fall pregnant which brings much dishonour to both the family and community. As such, MoHCC, (2012), further supports the findings by noting that cultural, religious and social barriers somewhat negatively influence the meeting of SRHR needs. Communities including ministry of primary and secondary education and some churches encourage abstinence, delayed sex, and faithfulness while discouraging the use of contraceptives such as condom among youths.

In the end, it can be noted that, apart from poverty, gender inequalities , little knowledge and low provision of user friendly SRH services coupled with negative traditional values and practices are among major factors that influence child marriage in Nyaminyami.

4.5. Summary

In summary, presentations and analysis of the study findings were discussed in this chapter. The presentations of findings were in line with the need to address the research objectives and ultimately attempt to resolve the main research problems.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introductions

The chapter provides conclusions and recommendations to the study.

5.2. Summary

The focus of the study was to establish socio cultural factors and practices that contribute to child marriages in Kariba rural District of Nyaminyami. The objectives of the study were: 1. To identify socio - cultural factors and practices that influence child marriages in Kariba Rural – Nyaminyami, and 2. To evaluate gaps on existing national policies on child protection and sexual reproductive health rights

The study was based on social learning theory by Bandura, (1925, 1977) and social constructivism theory by Vygotsky, (1962). The theories were used as a framework for explaining social and cultural factors that influence child marriages in Nyaminyami.

Bandura, (1925, 1977), attributes causes of child marriages to learning. The theory notes that child marriages happen because people observe and imitate significant others or models in their environment and adopt their values, beliefs and model their way of life. The people who are modelled on issues of child marriages are parents, peers, teachers, pastors, and community leaders among others. Bandura further proposes that if learned behaviours on child marriages are reinforced or punished they increase or decrease. This means that, if the behaviour of child marriages is rewarded it attract more followers than if it is punished (Mcleod, 2016, Bandura, 1925).

On the other hand Vygotsky, (1966) attributes culture of child marriages to Social Constructivism. He proposes that people construct their social reality on issues such as child marriages through interaction. The process of social constructivism is rooted in culture and history passed on the young people through adults or by opinion leaders and strengthened through anchoring and can change over time (Kasayira, 2006, Mberi, 2002, Mwatengahama, 2004, Open Education Resource Centre, 2017).

What the theories suggest is that communities are responsible for the creation of beliefs and values that promote child marriages and that the practice can be reversed by the same community through learning.

Additionally, the study investigated socio cultural factors and practices that contribute to child marriages in Nyaminyami, strengths and weaknesses of current child protection policies and sexual reproduction health rights and services for young people.

Ultimately, participants viewed child marriages in a similar way. The small variations were related more to varied age related life experiences and traditional value shifts that have occurred since around 2000.

Key stakeholders who were largely guided by their knowledge of child protection policies frameworks and the negative effects that are caused by child marriages, mostly condemned the practice of child marriages.

Likewise, women condemned the practice although they still think that girls can be married at 16 or 17 years. This view contradicts the Zimbabwe constitution which requires girls to marry at 18 years. In the end, data from health and school

facilities show that the practice of child marriage start at around 13 years and picks at around 16 and 17 years

In short, the findings are that generally, girls themselves now determine who and when to marry with parents largely influencing the process through traditional values. Further, the findings show that the practice of child marriage is high because of poverty mainly in child headed, elderly and single parent households. The findings also reveal that child marriages are high because communities see nothing wrong if a girl who is out of school or has completed form 4 marries. In addition to this, the practice of child marriages is high because, girls have fewer alternative path ways to take in life and lack good models from peers and elders.

Also, the practice of child marriage is rampant due to inadequate information and unfriendly SRHR services for the youths in the area. To add to this, the study established that child marriages are common because communities believe that marriage is so important that once delayed it may never come.

In the same way, the study established that communities marry their daughters before 18 years due to strong traditional values in Nyaminyami.

The study also established that most respondents know little about the legal age limit to marriages, related policies and their contents and that laws have gaps such as incoherence among themselves which expose girl children to child marriages. Again, the study found out that, the community do not have confidence in the justice delivery system with regard to cases of child marriage.

Lastly, data was collected using group discussions for women between the ages of 18 and 49, in depth interviews for key informant, review of health and school records and literature on child marriages.

5.3. Conclusions

The study concludes that there are prevailing socio cultural contributors to child marriage in Nyaminyami. Child marriages still exist in Nyaminyami though it is on the decrease compared to around year 2000. Marriage for under 18 girls starts at around 13 and is much higher for 16 and 17 year olds. The summary of conclusions are as follows:

a .Social factors

Firstly the study shows that among community leaders and peers there are fewer models on matters of child marriage, academic achievements, professional training and that there are fewer employment opportunities to encourage delay of marriage. Secondly, the study shows that traditional values that over value marriage for girls more than their education and professional training contribute to child marriages. This is evidenced through high expectations for girls to marry before 18 years and stigma and discrimination that is associated with girls who marry after 18 years. Thirdly, Communities traditionally use child marriages as a way of preventing loss of virginity and bearing of children outside marriage which is believed to bring humiliation, to the affected girls and their households.

Lastly, the study revealed that poverty which accounts for shortage of basic needs like food and clothing especially among child headed, single parent, and elderly

household influences child marriages. To sum up, the commonly shared effects of child marriages in Nyaminyami are high divorce rates and increased inter-generational poverty among affected households.

b. Policy and legislative factors

Little knowledge in child protection laws and lack of harmony among child protection policies coupled with weak enforcement of the policies contributes to child marriages as communities resort to settle such matters among themselves, further exposing the girl child to child marriages.

c. SRHR factors

There is little knowledge and inadequate user friendly service provision of SRHR among young people resulting in high teenage pregnancies and child marriages. Again, some churches, parents and schools discourage use of contraceptives among young people, putting those who fail to abstain from premarital sex at a higher risk of teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

5.4. Implications of the study

The findings mean that: Nyaminyami Rural District Council (NRDC) needs to strengthen efforts to reduce marginalization of Nyaminyami community through provision of better services in education, health and infrastructure. Further, NRDC should work with various stakeholders to create more tertiary and vocational education, more jobs and educate communities on child protection policies. In addition, NRDC should strengthen livelihoods in poor households especially in more marginalized areas. Also, Traditional leaders should change their value

systems on child marriages and further support education for girl children. In addition, Civil Society Organizations (CSO) should lobby and advocate for quick harmonization of child protection policies and give more support towards girl child education and household livelihoods. Further, CSOs should do more to sensitize communities on dangers of upholding harmful traditional practices such as child marriages. Finally, parents should, give more support to their children's education.

5.5. Suggestion for further research

Since child marriages continue to exist in Kariba Rural District of Nyaminyami there is a possibility that women have health challenges that are associated with mothers who deliver their children while they are under 18 years. Since this study established socio cultural factors that contribute to child marriages in Nyaminyami, future studies should establish effects of child marriages among affected women and their households.

5.6. Recommendations

5.6.1. Rationale for recommendations

Recommendations are critical in that they serve as action points. Apart from that, recommendations highlight suggestions to gaps that were found in the study and identify institutions that are best placed to fill them in. The following are recommendations on how the gaps that were identified in the study findings can be filled in.

a. Recommendations to Nyaminyami Rural District Council (NRDC)

Nyaminyami Rural District Council with support from line ministries, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and private sector should ensure that:-

1. Traditional practices that encourage child marriages are discouraged in order to reduce child marriages.
2. More programmes that increase access to user friendly SRHR services for young people, and strengthen household livelihoods are put in place in order to reduce poverty.
3. More opportunities for formal and non-formal education and vocational skills training are put in place in order to create more employment opportunities for young people.
- 4 More effort is put into the improvement of roads and communication network in order to stimulate more development in Nyaminyami.
5. Support efforts to harmonise the Constitution with various child protection policies.
6. More sensitization of communities on the provisions of the Zimbabwe Laws on child marriages so as to enable justice delivery system for children.

b. Recommendations to the government of Zimbabwe

The study recommends that:

1. A multi-sectorial approach should be adopted to support harmonisation of the constitution with other child protection policies for easier enforcement of the policies
2. More support is required to increase access to higher and tertiary education including Life Long learning especially for girls.
3. There should be more financial support of livelihood initiatives for marginalised areas in order to protect vulnerable households from poverty
4. More steps are taken to eradicate harmful traditional practices that relegate women to subordinate roles and positions to men
5. More financial support is allocated for support of user friendly SRHR services in marginalised like Nyaminyami.

c. Recommendations to traditional and church leaders

There is need to:

1. Support efforts to eradicate harmful traditional practices that work against the girl child
2. Cooperate with authorities in their effort to stop child marriages.

d. Recommendations to CSO

There is need to:-

1. Initiate more programmes that reduce poverty in vulnerable households through provision of more livelihood options.
2. Support young people especially girls and women with more user friendly SRHR services so as to reduce pregnancies that force girls into child marriages
3. Increase support for more girls to access education and be retained in school in order to raise the education levels of more people in Nyaminyami and reduce child marriages.
4. Increase awareness campaigns on the provisions of child protection policies so reduce harmful cultural practices on girls.
5. Advocate legislators to quicken efforts to harmonise and enforce child protection policies such as: Children's Act, Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, Domestic Violence Act, Marriage Act 5.11, and Customary Marriage Act Chapter 5.07 with the Zimbabwe Constitution in order to aid justice delivery for Girls.

e. Recommendations to private sector

1. There is need to support more development efforts in education eg building more schools and vocational training colleges as well as create more employment opportunities for young people in Nyaminyami in order to provide more life options to girls and the community.
2. More SRHR information that are user friendly should be provided to the community targeting young people in all the wards of Nyaminyami.
3. More efforts should be directed towards sensitizing communities and young people on the provision of the law on child marriages

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Sample focused group discussion guide

1. What do you/we understand by the term early marriages?
2. Did you/we choose the husband we married if not who chose him for us and why?
3. Do communities prefer early or late marriage for girls and why?
6. What were the education levels of our parents/guardians when we married?
7. Do community leaders lead by example on issues of early marriages or are there any cases of community leaders who marry girls under 18 years in your area?
8. Are reasons for early marriage the same or different between today and in the past, if there is any differences what are they?
10. Did you/we have both your parents at the time of marriage?
10. What education levels were you/we at the time of marriage?
11. What caused you/us to marry early (parents, poverty, having nothing to do, community expectations, church?)
12. How do you/we view or feel about early marriage?

13. At what age did you/we marry?
14. What is the youngest age you/we have known early marriages to occur in our area?
15. How prevalent is the practice of early marriage in your area?
16. At what age do communities prefer girls to marry?
17. Are there any policies that protect girls from early marriages? can you name some of them?
17. Who determines who and when a girl should marry?
18. Do communities report cases of early marriages to authorities if they do not why do they not report the cases of early marriages to authorities?
19. How have law enforcing agents treated cases of early marriages in your community?
20. Do communities cooperate with law enforcers on cases of early marriages? And why?
21. Is it possible to stop early marriages from happening if possible how can this be done?
22. Are cases of early marriages increasing or declining and why?
23. How does community view delayed marriage? And how are such girls viewed or view themselves
24. What interest do communities including parents have in letting their girls marry early?
25. Do you/we know of SRHR rights and services that are provided in the community/health facilities?
26. Are you/we satisfied with the SRHR services that are provided in community/health facilities and why?

Appendix 2. Sample questionnaire for Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education
and CAMFED

Section A

Ministry of Health, education and CAMFED

Fill in the table below:

YEAR	Number of girls who married early by age group			
	15years and below	Above 15 but below 18	Total	
2014				
2015				
Total				

Appendix 3. Confirmation letter

79 Deacon Drive,

Borrowdale, Harare

12 November 2015

LETTER OF CONFIRMATION FOR SAMSON NDANGANA (Student Reg. No. 129326)

Dear Mrs E. Bere

This is a confirmation that I went through **Samson Ndangana's** dissertation proposal entitled: *A study of socio-cultural factors that contribute to early marriages in Kariba rural district of Nyaminyami*. I hereby certify that the proposal is ready to undergo the review process as required by Africa University.

Sincerely,

Dr. Pindai Sithole

(Supervisor)

Appendix 4: Informed consent guide

My name is Samson Ndangana, an Africa university – Mutare Public Policy and Governance student conducting a study on Socio Cultural Factors that Contribute to early marriages in Nyaminyami. I am kindly asking you to participate in the study by answering provided questionnaires.

What you should know about the study:

The study is for academic purpose only. You / your organisation was selected because you deal with children and are well positioned to give useful knowledge for the study

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study socio-cultural factors that contribute to early marriages with a view to allow girl children to fully develop and realise their dreams.

Procedures and duration

If you are agreeable to participating in the study the researcher will be grateful to appoint you for an interview. The interview will be scheduled at a time and place that is convenient to you. The interview is expected to take 40 minutes to an hour.

Risks and discomforts

Since the study is purely for academic purposes the researcher does not see any risks associated with participating in the study. There are no risks physical, emotional, political, health, social or otherwise.

Benefits and/or compensation

The benefits for participating in the study are largely non-monetary and will accrue to individual participants and the general community.

You will contribute data that will be used to inform and influence policy and practice around issues of Early Marriages in Nyaminyami.

Confidentiality

The researcher pledges himself not to disclose information that is associated with any participants without their permission. No names or any form of identification will be asked for during the interviews.

Voluntary participation

Participation in the study is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time if the participant finds it reasonable to do so. Refusal to or Withdrawal from participating in the study will not result in the participating individual or organisation being penalised

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

Authorisation

If you have decided to participate in this study please sign this form in the space provided below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided above and have agreed to participate.

Name of Research Participant (please print)

Date

Signature of Research Participant or legally authorised representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher including questions about the research, your rights as a research participant, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa University Research Ethics Committee on telephone (020) 60075 or 60026 extension 1156 email aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher: Ndangana Samson (sndangana@gmail.com)

Appendix 5: Authorization letter from AUREC



(A United Methodist-Related Institution)
INVESTING IN AFRICA'S FUTURE

AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (AUREC)

P.O. BOX 1320, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE • OFF NYANGA ROAD, OLD MUTARE • TEL: (+263-20) 60075/60026/61611 • E-MAIL: aurec@africau.edu • WEBSITE: www.africau.edu

Ref: AU397/15

January 19, 2016

Samson Ndongana
Institute of Peace Leadership and Governance
Africa University
Mutare

Re: A study of socio-cultural factors that contribute to early marriages in Kariba rural District of Nyaminyami.

Thank you for the above titled proposal that you submitted to the Africa University Research Ethics Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and **approved** your application to conduct the above research. However it is important that you address the comments below before implementing your research study:

1. Print your proposal well. Some sections are missing.
2. Attend to minor spelling errors.

The approval is based on the following.

- a) Research proposal
- b) Questionnaires
- c) Informed consent form

- **APPROVAL NUMBER** AU392/15

This number should be used on all correspondences, consent forms, and appropriate documents

- **APPROVAL DATE** January 19, 2016
- **EXPIRATION DATE** January 18, 2017
- **TYPE OF MEETING** Expedited

After the expiration date this research may only continue upon renewal. For purposes of renewal, a progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before expiration date.

- **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems having to do with subject safety must be reported to AUREC within 3 working days on standard AUREC form.
- **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
- **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to AUREC using standard form obtained from.

NB: After addressing these comments you should resubmit the proposal to AUREC together with your supervisor's approval for further review and approval.

Yours Faithfully

MITI G. P. AUREC Programmes Officer-
FOR CHAIRPERSON, AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE



