RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPLORING PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES FACED BY CHILDREN LIVING IN INFORMAL BOARDING FACILITIES (IBFS) NEAR SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE

[1,*]**Chiromo Charity**, [2]**Ganga Emily** and [3]**Muchenje Francis**

[1]Faculty of Education, Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe
[2]Faculty of Education, Great Zimbabwe University
[3]Faculty of Education, University of Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

This study explored the challenges faced by children living in informal boarding facilities near the school. It also suggested strategies and possible interventions. Though there are numerous studies on vulnerable children in general, not much information on challenges that they face, is available, specifically on children living in informal boarding facilities (IBFs). In carrying out this research, a qualitative approach was used. The population was estimated to have about 100 learners living in IBFs in Gokwe South and all schools with learners living in IBFs, teachers and school heads in those schools. Purposive sampling procedures were preferred in the selection of three schools and their school heads, six teachers (two from each school) and eighteen learners (six from each school). Three sets of data collection instruments were used. These were semi-structured interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and observations. The study established that, the distance to school from home was very long to walk each day with the briefest distance being 15kilometers and the longest being 34 kilometres. This led to the emergence of IBFs. It was therefore, recommended that the government could build more schools in rural areas to avoid the increase of IBFs. It was also recommended that in the long run, in line with vision 2030, the government should build more schools so that learners do not have to walk for more than 5kilometres to reach the nearest school. The parents of learners coming into IBFs for the first time should go for guidance and counselling services organised by the schools.

INTRODUCTION

It is an axiomatic truth that across the globe, education serves as a tool for human flourishing for both individuals and societies, and yet millions of secondary school learners live and learn in unconducive conditions that militate against quality education and learning outcomes. In contrast to the Sustainable Development Goal number 4, whose vision is to strive to provide children with a nurturing environment to optimise success in their education (Mangwaya, 2016), research evidence attests to a myriad of factors related to the kind of accommodation occupied by learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds as an impediment to successful educational achievement. While there are many factors that affect school outcomes for children from low socio-economic environments, including parental involvement and quality of schooling, one would assume that children's housing needs are an essential part of academic success, since they need a safe and healthy environment that is conducive to learning (Cunningham & MacDonald, 2012). Issues of children living in informal boarding facilities (IBFs) near the school, in order to avoid walking long distances from home, is becoming more and more common in Zimbabwe. This is so because schools have not been built according to the Zimbabwean policy which states that schools should be built within a radius of 5km from the residence of school learners (Monika & Bukaliya, 2011). This study explored the challenges faced by learners living in these facilities in Gokwe South in Zimbabwe.

Theoretical Framework: Considering the circumstances surrounding the challenges faced by learners living in IBFs near the school, the researchers used Critical theory to frame this study in view of one of its major tenets which accentuates the need to bring to light and attention of the learners and associated stakeholders, the actual reality on the ground regarding the nature of living conditions of these marginalized learners. The researchers particularly subscribe the mantra upheld by Critical Theory which suggests that, the voice of the voiceless should be heard by those in charge of the entire social system (Giddens & Sutton 2013; Horkheimer, 1972; Henslin, 2010; Haralambos & Holborn 2013). Therefore, by carrying out this study it is the researcher's hope that the challenges

---

*Corresponding author: *Chiromo Charity,*
Faculty of Education, Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe.

faced by learners living in IBFs will be unearthed in order to sensitise the teachers, school administrators and the government at large. Critical theory seeks to demonstrate that a good life for all is possible (Fuchs & Mosco, 2012). According to critical theory a good society relates to conditions that all humans require for surviving, thus the essence of human and society (Fuchs & Mosco, 2012). This means that according to critical theory the conditions of living of learners in IBF should also be improved to match those of other learners in society, as it is the future of these learners remains very unpredictable. Critical theory is an offshoot of Marxist theory. According to the Marxist theory, there is unequal distribution of wealth in capitalist societies which makes the poor people vulnerable (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013; Gwirayi, 2010; Henslin, 2010). Critical theory has a broad-based Marxist – oriented approach to the study of society. According to the Marxists view in capitalist oriented societies those who own the means of production exploit the poor and the poor become poorer and poorer whilst the rich become richer and richer (Haralambos &Holborn, 2013: Giddens & Sutton, 2013). According to Marxists theory it is very difficult for the poor to break the vicious cycle of poverty. However, the goal of critical theory according to Fuchs and Mosco, (2012) is the transformation of society as a whole so that a just society with peace, wealth, freedom and self-fulfilment for all can be achieved. Critical theory criticizes capitalism. It promotes human liberation and consequently attempts to expose domination and exploitation in its many forms, it struggles for a just and fair society (Patton & Bondi, 2015).

Therefore, it is the hope of this study to help learners in informal boarding facilities to find ways of breaking this vicious cycle of poverty. Many researches on IBFs revealed that, most rich local men demand sex from these vulnerable children be it a boy or a girl in exchange for food. Life for most of these children is a daily struggle. The condition of most children in IBFs is dehumanizing (Mangwaya, 2016). According to studies, learners at IBFs seldom eat a balanced meal (Ahmed & Bbe, 2018). They came to the conclusion that people who eat insufficiently or the incorrect foods weaken easily, become ill, and even risk death. One of the prevalent dilemmas today in IBFs is about teenage pregnancy. Teen pregnancy in IBFs continues to be a problem for families, educators, health care professionals, and the government at large. A study done in Tanzania by Morakinyo (2003), which investigated the location of schools, revealed that, it is common to hear girl learners reported to be pregnant in most of the community schools because of living in rented houses near the school locally known as "maghetto".

Background to the study: The idea of children living in informal boarding facilities is becoming a common phenomenon worldwide nowadays because of the idea of avoiding walking long distances and economic hardships. However, there are no parental or adult guardianship in these facilities (Ngwenya, 2015). Children living in IBFs are a category of children who seem to be neglected and a category of vulnerable children. Their special challenges with regards those concerned with their education have not been adequately identified and addressed by various stakeholders, hence they seem to be left behind. There are numerous reasons why learners worldwide reside in IBFs. An examination completed by (Phelan, 2015) in Australia, there is a long history of country kids coming to Sydney and remaining in IBFs to try not to go for 45 minutes or so to get to and from school

consistently. An exploration done by (Mbiti, 2016) in Tanzania and in Makambako specifically showed that the execution of General Essential Training pronounced during the 1970s and later on the Essential Schooling Improvement Plan and furthermore the extension of Essential Schooling made deficiencies of optional schools around there. Learners had to walk a long way to and from school as a result of this. Very much like in Zimbabwe where most learners in provincial settings need to walk significant distances to and from school in his review (Phelan, 2015) noticed the speculation that student's responsibility becomes simpler to oversee as learners do not need to make a trip consistently to get to and from school. The pass rate would naturally rise as a result of this.

A research done by Kaiser (2014), showed that the practice of sending children to IBFs is a long standing and recorded in the classical literature in the United Kingdom with records going back to over 1,000 years in Europe. According to a research done by McCathy (2005) in Australia, informal boarding facilities are makeshift buildings built near a school; again there are no adults to supervise the learners. This results in learners not being protected. A recent study carried out in Zambia by Cornell University Law School Avon Centre for Women and Justice (2012) revealed that Zambian school girls are vulnerable to sexual abuses and violence while staying in IBFs near the school. In another research by Mulkeen and Chen (2008) in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda, if parents cannot afford proper boarding fees they send their children to rent rooms at nearby business centres.

The above researches show that the issue of IBFs also exists globally and regionally. Issues such as Education for All, the movement of people under the land reform program and the Government inability to build schools within 5km radius of the learner's residence especially in remote areas, made the issue of IBFs to also exist in Zimbabwe. However, the school has no jurisdiction over this form of boarding arrangement and children are on their own. They are not supervised or taken care of by adults. This might cause the learners to face some academic challenges, social challenges as well as economic challenges. The general context of education in Zimbabwe is based on the recognition that Education is *a right* for each individual child, as it is a means for enhancing his/ her wellbeing and quality of life. Education also should be provided in an environment that enhances the realization of the potential for every learner (Mubika and Bukaliya, 2011). Though there are numerous studies on vulnerable children in general, not much information seems to be available specifically on children living in IBFs and the challenges they face. The challenges they face may limit their potential to realize their educational dreams and through no fault of their own, they are left behind. These learners seem to attract very little concern from the school authorities. As a result, the researchers feel that these learners may end up dropping out of school and joining the hordes of social delinquents. Lack of adequate, specific information on challenges faced by learners in IBFs, might hinder the ability of schools and educational planners to put in place strategies that may address the challenges. This paper therefore, sought to address that information gap and proposes the necessary copying strategies.

Statement of the problem: Although the government of Zimbabwe implemented the policy of Education for All, the policy of building schools within a radius of 5 km from the learner's residence was also not met in most rural areas in

Zimbabwe (Mubika & Bukaliya, 2011) leaving some learners travelling distances of around 20 kilometres to and from secondary school. This scenario has resulted in the mushrooming of IBFs which has become a coping mechanism to reduce long distances to school. It is also noted that there is no adult supervision in most of these IBFs resulting in the learners becoming vulnerable to all sorts of abuses. These challenges are likely to impact negatively on the students' educational experiences. Therefore this motivated the researcher to explore the challenges being faced by learners living in IBFs.

Research questions

This study is guided by the following research questions

- What are the challenges faced by learners living in Informal Boarding Facilities near the school in Gokwe South District
- What are the measures that can be employed to curb the challenges faced by learners in Informal Boarding Facilities in Gokwe South District?

Significance of the study: Researching the challenges faced by learners living in informal boarding facilities is significant for several reasons. Informal boarding facilities often lack the infrastructure and resources of formal institutions, which can impact learners' educational experiences and outcomes. Identifying these barriers helps in understanding how they affect academic performance and overall learning. Research can highlight disparities in educational access and quality between formal and informal settings. By identifying these gaps, policymakers and educational authorities can develop targeted interventions to improve educational opportunities and support for learners in informal boarding facilities. Learners in informal boarding facilities may face challenges related to health, nutrition, and living conditions. Understanding these issues is crucial for developing strategies to ensure that learners' physical and mental well-being is supported, which is integral to their academic success. Findings from such research can inform education policies and practices. This includes the allocation of resources, the development of support programs, and the creation of guidelines to improve the conditions and quality of informal boarding facilities. Research helps in recognizing and addressing inequalities faced by learners in informal settings. By advocating for equitable educational practices and support systems, the study contributes to broader efforts to create inclusive and fair educational environments for all students. In summary, researching the challenges faced by learners in informal boarding facilities is crucial for improving their educational experiences, addressing their needs comprehensively, and promoting equity within the education system.

Literature Review: There are numerous reasons why learners worldwide reside in IBFs. An examination completed in Australia, there is a long history of country kids coming to Sydney and remaining in IBFs to try not to go for 45 minutes or so to get to and from school consistently (Phelan, 2015). An exploration done by (Mbiti, 2016) in Tanzania and in Makambako specifically showed that the execution of General Essential Training pronounced during the 1970s and later on the Essential Schooling Improvement Plan and furthermore the extension of Essential Schooling made deficiencies of optional schools around there. Learners had to walk a long way to and

from school as a result of this. Very much like in Zimbabwe where most learners in provincial settings need to walk significant distances to and from school in his review (Phelan, 2015) noticed the speculation that student's responsibility becomes simpler to oversee as learners do not need to make a trip consistently to get to and from school. The pass rate would naturally rise as a result of this. While the option of IBFs in poor countries is depicted as gloomy, this literature paints a positive picture of the phenomenon in developed nations by highlighting its advantages for learners. The Zimbabwe strategy expresses that schools ought to be worked inside a span of 5km from the home of learners (Mubika and Bukaliya,2011). A primary school and approximately three to four secondary schools should be provided for by a Zimbabwean ward. Be that as it may, this is not true in most far off regions in Zimbabwe. A few learners are being compelled to stroll for more than 20km to and from school as schools in Zimbabwe are not being worked at the rate at which the populace is developing (Zvobgo, 2009). Most of understudies show up at school late because of the broad drives they make and fall behind the individuals who show up sooner than expected. These understudies every now and again get muddled and lose centre all through class, snoozing off habitually (Human Sciences Exploration Gathering, 2005). A comprehensive investigation reveals that children's tardiness in rural schools is influenced by the same factors that influence absenteeism. Yet again nonattendance diminishes youngsters' possibilities accomplishing the most noteworthy accomplishments, keeping them buried in the pattern of destitution and hurting feasible turn of events. Once more, in Zimbabwe, walking significant distances from home to school turns into an issue as most waterways and streams get overwhelmed during the blustery season, making it challenging for most learners to get to school.

Another factor that prompts learners to relocate to IBFs during the rainy season is the flooding of rivers, particularly in Gokwe (Mudavanhu & Schenck, 2014). Most waterways and streams do not have spans. According to Matiki (2005), the majority of school children in Zimbabwe are unable to cross flooded rivers, which results in their absence from school. This adversely affects tutoring, as non-attendance hampers learning. An exploration done by Matiki (2005) that's what in Zimbabwe shows, when training is interfered with or restricted, most learners exit school. In the meantime, during the stormy season in most provincial regions a few streets are overwhelmed or to some extent lowered, and learners particularly the people who walk significant distances wind up remaining close to the school in make shift structures (Okello, 2006). In addition to impairing learners' ability to learn, these conditions pose a risk to children, particularly during the rainy season. This means that learners live in fear in abandoned homes. Omoteso (2010) says that learners who are afraid may find it hard to focus on their schoolwork. According to Amesi & Allen (2019), noisy, crowded homes with inadequate security and night-time lighting are typical examples of physical environments that hinder learners' ability to participate in their studies. (Mahiya and Murombo, 2019) emphasize uncertainty further by lamenting the way that understudies who live in perilous conditions, like IBFs, consistently stress over being ransacked, which adversely affects their scholastic exhibition. One of the components affecting understudies' scholarly execution might be the absence of oversight and security. According to the literature, learners who chose IBFs in different parts of the world frequently had to deal with a wide range of experiences

that could harm their physical, mental, and emotional health (Mangwaya, 2016). Such encounters as, a ton of commotion, lack of food, tormenting, homosexuality, youngster work, sexual maltreatment, lewd behaviour disregard. These encounters have consistently filled in as an attack against effective instructive pursuits by these learners. Basic Hypothesis grimaces at upsetting encounters that subject people to double-dealing and enduring, (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). Harassing was a difficult issue at IBFs; it was more common there, and most of young ladies were casualties while most of young men were menaces, as per an exploration by Ndotu (2015) on the challenges chiefs of recently established optional schools in Kenya experienced and their ways of dealing with stress. Young men were every now and again actually rough, and young lady were often obnoxiously manhandled. A violation of a person's fundamental rights occurs when bullying occurs in IBFs. The issue of learners becoming gay people is one more test in IBFs. As per (De White et al., 2019) factors that cause sexual issues in teenagers is expanded charisma sexuality brought about by young adult hormonal change and absence of data about sex in light of the connection among guardians and kids. Perhaps of the most over the top upsetting issue coming up today in IBFs is the issue of child labour. According to Haspels & Jankanish (2014), child labour is common, particularly in the developing world. The other upsetting issue happening to learners in IBFs is physical abuse. According to American Humane (2016), physical abuse is the most well-known form of child maltreatment. It is defined as non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, or otherwise harming a child. As per an examination directed by Drain, Matakana, and Mandoga in 2000, the friendly benefactor trap played a huge part in the sexual double-dealing of females living in IBFs in Zimbabwe. Teen females in IBFs are particularly defenceless against contracting STIs and HIV through constrained intercourse since their vaginal mucous film is as yet creating (Hakimi et al., 2001)

METHODOLOGY

Based on the interpretivist paradigm, this study has as its main aim an exploration into the psychosocial challenges faced by children living in (IBFs) near schools in Zimbabwe. To achieve our objectives of understanding the challenges faced by learners living in Informal Boarding Facilities near the school in Gokwe South District and the measures that can be employed to curb the challenges faced by learners in Informal Boarding Facilities in Gokwe South District, the researcher employed qualitative approach. The qualitative research method is a naturalistic process that seeks an in-depth understanding of the social phenomena within a peoples' surrounding (Strauss and Corbin 2013)**.** The population for this study was estimated to have about 100 learners living in IBFs in Gokwe South and all schools with learners living in IBFs, all teachers and all the school heads in those schools. A purposively selected sample of three schools and the three school heads of those schools automatically qualified to be selected. The school heads were also considered to be the key informants because by virtue of their positions as administrators they worked closely with teachers, learners and the community at large. Six teachers (two from each school) and eighteen learners (six from each school) were purposively selected as well. Purposive sampling targets only those potential participants who possess the desired information and

are likely to be sufficiently interested in responding conscientiously and effectively (Creswell, 2018). It enables the researcher to select a small group or sample of respondents as representatives' of a large group. Data was analysed thematically from semi-structured interviews, observations and focus group discussions, we heeded McMillan and Schumacher's (2010) assertion that qualitative research entails an inductive analysis of data by the researcher, in order to establish patterns and themes, producing a final written research report that captures the participants' voices. In this way the researcher could obtain a testimony of their lived experiences and meanings they assign to the topical issue from what they themselves say. Interviews and observations were for all the participants and FGDs were for the learners only. After the researcher was granted permission by the Ministry of education to conduct the research, the researcher visited the schools to seek for further permission and to make appointments with the participants. Interviews and FGDs were conducted at the participant's schools. Observations were conducted both at school and the learner's residence (in IBFs).

Trustworthiness: The researcher spent a significant amount of time in the field conducting focus groups and organized in-depth interviews with research participants to examine the challenges facing learners in IBFs. As a form of member verification to confirm the results, research participants were given the chance to see the findings after they had been prepared. A thorough description and documentation of the research techniques was done in an effort to maintain an audit trail in order to resolve difficulties with dependability in this study. Also the researcher had to conduct follow-up interviews with some participants to clarify their initial responses to questions on their experiences in IBFs.

Research ethics: In this research study, confidentiality was promoted by not divulging the research responses/data to anyone. The primary obligation of this study was to safeguard the rights and the dignity of all respondents. Codes (alphabetical letters) known by the researcher only were used to protect participants' responses/data. The researcher also kept records secure through the use of password protected files. At the end the researcher reported aggregated findings only, not individual-level data. The participants were assured that they were free to withdraw their consent or discontinue participating in the study without any prejudice. Participants who agreed to take part signed consent forms. All participants were guaranteed anonymity at all times by the researcher and to be informed of their rights and benefits of their participations. Everyone who participated was assured that they could withdraw should they want to. To protect the anonymity of the participants, the researcher used pseudonyms as well as aggregating and generalizing the collected data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study established that, the distance to school from home was only excessively lengthy for these learners to walk each day with the briefest distance being 15kilometers and the longest being 34 kilometres.

One learner participant had this to say:

I live in an IBF because I come from a very faraway place from here which is like 20km from here and there is a big river to cross.

Similarly, another learner participant had this to say:

I come from a village which is very far-away from here and there are no secondary schools.

During the Focus Group Discussions similar views were expressed with one learner participant saying that:

Because I have to cross flooded rivers during the rainy season, I am forced to miss school when rivers are flooded. I must thus reside close to the school in order to make things easy and prevent missing class.

Another learner participant expressed similar views during the FGD by saying that:

Since there are no schools in our neighborhood and the closest one is over the river, we must cross the river every day, which may be quite dangerous when it floods. Therefore, it is preferable for us to reside in unofficial boarding houses that are nearer to our school.

This was also observed by Chigodora 2020 and Mangwaya (2016), who noted that in remote areas of Zimbabwe, children walk considerable distances to get to school, some walking 34 kilometres. In any case, this was as opposed to the Zimbabwean strategy which expresses that schools ought to be worked inside a span of 5km from the home of learners (Mubika and Bukaliya, 2011).

The study established that, these learners rented and shared little rooms at the rear of the shops close to their school as IBFs. Another learner participant had this to say:

During warmer seasons, the room will be quite hot due to the small windows and rooms. We will thus spend the most of our time outside till late. Additionally, the rooms are so little that if one of us gets the illness, the rest of us get it too.

Commenting on the broken windows of the houses, one participant also had this to say:

The other sad thing is that since the windows are broken the room will be filled with mosquitoes. Many of us sometimes suffer from malaria most of the times.

Comparatively an exploration done by (Mulkeen and Chen, 2008) in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda uncovered that learners rented rooms at neighbouring business places as IBFs. McCarthy (2016) conducted a study in Australia and found that, like the learners in this study, some learners ended up living in old army barracks with many children sharing a room in order to avoid long walks. When the learner participants' comments about these rooms during the interviews and FGDs were examined more closely, it became clear that the windows were small and broken, limiting air flow and increasing the likelihood of learners contaminating one another with various diseases. The responses of the participants also indicated that learners in IBFs are extremely hungry. Rarely did these learners eat three meals per day. One of them who spoke eloquently about her experience had this to say:

It's really hard to live in an IBF when you do not have enough food or it gets stolen. Unlike at home, where my parents would do that for me while I focused on my schoolwork, you have to go around and labor for meals.

One participant had this to say:

Most of us come from a humble background. We only afford one meal per day. So we cook in the evening. However, others in trying to make ends-meet they steal.

Another participant in FGD highlighted that:

We have serious challenges with food ma'am. On a lucky day we have two meals but mostly it is 0, 0, and 1.

When the researcher further probed what 0, 0, and 1 meant the other participant shouted out the meaning. This shows that they are quite familiar with the language.

He had this to say:

Meaning no food in the morning and afternoon then we get a meal in the evening. Ma'am, let alone the fact that our parents cannot afford two homes, most of our food is stolen.

Due to poverty and theft, these IBFs have a severe food shortage. In the survey of writing, neediness was noted as negatively affecting the improvement of youngsters (Ganga and Chinyoka, 2010). The study found out that that a few learners end up participating in conditional sex with older men. These outcomes are in compatible with the findings of (Shankar et al., 2017) who said that in America older men took advantage of girls who were hungry. Some of the learners during individual interviews indicated that there is a lot of bullying in IBFs amongst themselves and from outsiders.

One SDC member had this to say about bullying:

There is so much bullying in these facilities. In most cases the village boys bully the boys in IBFs

Another participant had this to say:

Another concern I have is that senior learners living in unofficial boarding houses can beat up the younger learners and steal their meals. The majority of young learners in unofficial boarding facilities are malnourished because they are being bullied rather than because their parents are not providing meals. It is extremely, extremely difficult to work with a student who has had severe stress, as I know from my experience as a teacher.

This affirms the observation made by (Kim & Rector, 2010) in England who indicated that bullying in IBFs is "a problem that is elusive" a costly problem that involves physical and emotional harm at a time when public demands for safer environment, are gaining traction and worst of all a problem that so far defies solution. Continuing with the issue of coming from a very poor background and parents unable to afford two homes, the study found that the majority of learners bring only one blanket from home with them. As a result, they must share blankets at night leading to homosexuality. In a very shallow voice in an interview one participant had this to say:

The most boring one madam, but please do not say it to anyone. Most learners in these facilities are forced to become homosexuals. The fact that they share blankets might be the cause. I personally have refused to share my blankets with anyone, but do you know madam just hearing the sound of it when they start their business during the night is traumatizing.

The other thing is these boys are ever threatening me because I refused to join them. I pray that they do not force me to become a homosexual. This disturbs my mind, even my education.

In another interview one participant had this to say:

We are forced to become homosexuals with the older boys.
Another participant expressed similar views

The other challenge that we are facing is, some big boys who stay around force my brother to become a homosexual.

The issue of homosexuality was mentioned by Chigodora (2020) who mentioned that there as an increase of homosexuality in learners living in IBFs. Physical abuse was found to be the other type of abuse experienced by IBFs, according to the study. During an interview one learner participant had this to say:

A learner participant in support of the above had the following to say:

At times a girl is physically abused if she turns down a man's proposal. Last year a form two girl was punched in the face by a drunkard and she bled heavily. Honestly, we live in fear here.
Essentially, a review done by Kim and Minister in Zimbabwe uncovered that actual maltreatment is spreading broadly in IBFs. Physical abuse, as defined by American Humane (2016), is any physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, or burning. The issue of sexual abuse was the other finding that came from the interviews and FGDs. The difficulties looked by learners in IBFs take an orientation aspect on this issue where young ladies are helpless against sexual maltreatment. The review uncovered that youngest ladies live in apprehension about being physically mishandled. Sexual maltreatment is perhaps of the most horrible involvement with life (Holcomb, 2010) and brings about the enduring of these weak youngsters.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that building of schools within a 5kilometre radius from the learners' residence, as well as constructing bridges where there is need and making non-examination centres, examination centres, remains essential to improve teaching and learning of these vulnerable learners. Another conclusion drawn from the study is that learners from IBFs, could not have their studies and do their homework at night, because of lack of proper infrastructure, and unsafe environment. These were some of the social challenges they face, and these affected the learner's studies negatively. It can be concluded that challenges facing learners in informal boarding facilities which included shortage of food, noise, cases of bullying, child labour, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and homosexuality all affected teaching and learning negatively. The noise during the night distracted the learners from reading and doing their homework and also affected their routine sleep thereby affecting teaching and learning. It can be concluded that the environment is not conducive for raising children because of night clubs and too many drinkers. The lack of such proper environment has critical implications on

teaching and learning of a child. Therefore, coming up with a proper environment remains essential. The issue of bullying affected the mental health of the learners since they were now living in fear. This affected teaching and learning since most of the learners were now dropping out of school.

The issue of homosexuality, sexual and physical abuse also affected teaching and learning since the abuse made learners feel inferior and affected them psychologically. The challenge of child labour also affected teaching and learning negatively since the learners were going to school already feeling tired. All the challenges listed above made these learners lose concentration in class thereby affecting teaching and learning negatively. Therefore, coming up with solutions to these challenges remains essential thereby improving the teaching and learning of these vulnerable children residing in IBFs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the parents/guardians and the learners coming in IBFs for the first time should go for guidance and counselling services organised by the schools. The school administrators are encouraged to identify and capacitate the local counsellors on protocols in helping the learners and their parents/guardians so that the solutions are community driven.

Guidance and counselling for learners experiencing trauma
It is advised that learners in IBFs remain everyone's children need protection from possible abusive situations. Any learner who has experienced trauma need to be sent to a community or school counsellor, who can then take the matter further and contact the school's psychological services.

Teachers and heads: To address the social and physical needs of the learners, instructors and administrators should get in-service training (e.g. guidance and counselling). Through the government, counsellors can arrange seminars and workshops for its educators and administrators.

Learners with trauma: The school can receive training on how to support children who have suffered trauma through Trauma Informed Care and Therapeutic After Care by collaborating with non-profit organizations and school's psychological services.

Parental involvement: As parents have a big impact on learners' academic progress and a safe living environment, it is highly advised that parental engagement be required during school activities like meetings and prize-giving days. In this instance, a crucial element of any community-driven programme in schools is parental participation and involvement.

Through a change in norms, the parents actively participate in the management of the IBFs by advising learners and making decisions about their food plans, among other things. This refers to modifications in social norms and behavior brought about by parental participation in school-related matters.

Building of more schools: In the long run, in line with vision 2030, the government should build more schools so that learners do not have to walk for more than 5kilometre radius to reach the nearest school.

Ahmed, A., U, & Bbe, S., C. (2018). Impact of education in terms of housing opportunities. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *2(2),1321-1325*

Alvesson, M., & Skoldberg, K. (2000). *Reflexive methodologies*

Amesi, J., & Allen, K. I. B. (2019). Perceived Influence of Enterpreneurship Education Programme on Youth Restiveness in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni and Abua/Obual Local Government Areas of River State. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Manangement Research*, *5(1)*, 53-64.

Blum, R. W., & Nelson- Mmari, K. (2004). The health of young people in a global context. *Journal of Adolscent health*, *35(5)*, 402-418.

Chigodora , A. (2020). Low-Cost" Boarding and "Child Renters": Boys and Girls Schooling in Risky Physical and Social Environments in Bulilima and Mangwe. *Marginality, Migration and Education: Educational Experiences of Migrants' Children in Zimbabwe, 59-68.*

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five ap-proaches. New Delhi: Sage Publications.*

Cunningham, M., & MacDonald, G. (2012). Housing as a platform for improving education outcomes among low-income children. (Washington,DC)

Fuchs, C., & Mosco, V. (2012). Introduction: Marx is back-the importance of Marxist theory and research for critical communication studies today. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society*, *10(2)*, 127-140.

Ganga, E., & Chinyoka, K. (2017). An analysis of how contemporary African child-rearing practices affect a child's self-concept and learning. *International Journal of Case Studies*, *6*(3).i

Haralambos, M., & Holborn, M. (2008). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives*.

Henning, E. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research. Pretoria: Van*.

Holcombe, E., & Kezar, A. (2020). Ensuring success among first-generation, low-income, and underserved minority students: Developing a unified community of support. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *64*(3), 349-369.

Horkheimer, M. (1972). *Introduction to critical theory*.

Kaiser, T. (2014). The trouble of education schools. *New Haven*, *Yale University Press*.

Kim, C. C., & Rector, R. (2010). Evidence on the Effectiveness of Abstinence Education. *An Update. No. 2372. Heritage Foundation.*

Mahiya, I. T., & Murombo, G. (2019). Exploring social norms and the occurence of violence aganist children in 'bush boarding' arrangments in Binga, Zimbabwe. *Child abuse research in South Africa*, *20(2)*, 45-58.

Maliki, A. E., Asogwara, C. C., & Ibu, J. E. (2009). Bullying and its Effects on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Nigeria. *J Hum Ecol*, *25(3)*, 209-213.

Mangwaya, M. (2016). Bush Boarding closed as STI's at school soar to 35% *Masvingo Mirror*.

Matsa, W. (2020). "Low-Cost" Boarding and "Child Renters": Boys and Girls Schooling in Risky Physical and Social Environments in Bulilima and Mangwe. . *In Marginality, Migration and Education (pp. 59-68). Springer, Cham.*

Mbiti, I. M. (2016). The need for accountability in education in developing countries. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *30(3), 109-132.*

McCarthy, C. (2016). Parental choice of school by rural and remote parents. *Issues in Educational Research*, *26(1)*, 29-44.

McCarthy, C. (2016). Parental choice of school by rural and remote parent's. *Issues in Educational Research*, *26(1)*, 29-44.

McMillian, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). . *Research in Education: Evidence based inquiry 7th ed. UnitedStates of America: Pearson education.* .

McMillian, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). . *Research in Education: Evidence based inquiry 7th ed. United States of America: Pearson education.* .

Mubika, A., & Bukaliya, R. (2011). Teacher Competence in ICT. *Implications for computer education in Zimbabwean secondary schools*.

Mudavanhu, N., & Schenck, R. (2014). Substance abuse amongst the youth in Grabouw Western Cape: . *Voices from the community. Social Work, 50(3), 370-392.*

Mulkeen, A., & Chen, D. (2008). Teachers for Rural Schools: Experiences in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Ngwenya, N. (2015). Move to formalize bush boarding facilities *B-Metro*.

Phelan, W. (2015). Enforcement and Escape in the A ndean Community: Why the A ndean Community of Nations is Not a Replica of the E uropean Unioniu. *JCMS: journal of common market studies,, 53(4), 840-856.*

Zvobgo. (2009). Education and Development in Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe Publishing House.

****