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Contents

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of Zimbabwe Social Sciences Review. The issue pays particular attention to pertinent social issues that affect developing countries in the contemporary world.

The Editor in Chief would like to thank editors and manuscript reviewers for taking their time to work towards the publication of this issue.

For your comments do not hesitate to contact us.

Enjoy your reading

Percyslage Chigora

Editor in Chief ZPSR
Founding Director, Social Sciences Research Consultancy Trust

About The Contributors

Joshua Chakawa is a lecturer in The Department of History and development Studies, Midlands state University, Zimbabwe.

Luke Chipangure is a lecturer of Sociology of Education in the Faculty of Education at Africa University.

Richard Makoni is a lecturer of Philosophy of Education in the Faculty of Education at Africa University.

John Mapfumo is a senior lecturer of Psychology in the Faculty of Education at Africa University.

Tenson Tawanda Mugodzwa; is a lecturer in the Faculty of Education, Gender Studies Department, Private Bag 9055, Gweru, Zimbabwe.

Efiritha Chauraya is a lecturer in the Faculty of Education, Gender Studies Department, Private Bag 9055, Gweru, Zimbabwe.

Joseph M. Kasayirais affilited with the Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Charles G. Zimba is affilited with the Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Tilinao J.Thyangathyanga is affilited with the Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Lytone S. Jambais is affilited with the Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Limbika Senganimalunje is affiliated with Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Edister Jamu is affilited with the Department of Psychology, Chancellor College, University of Malawi

Students' Perceptions of an Effective Teacher at Three Secondary Schools in Mutare urban; Zimbabwe.

By

Luke Chipngure
Richard Makoni
John Chipfumo

Abstract.

Good teaching matters to all key stakeholders in all institutions of learning. In high schools unlike in most primary schools, students are taught by different subject specialists each day. It is important that students as teachers' main clients be given an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers. This study explores the views of high school students on the characteristics of an effective teacher. Three high schools in Mutare urban were selected (one a boys only high school, another girls only high school and the third one a co-educational mission boarding school). A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from the participants. Students were asked to write a letter to any one of their friends describing the qualities they would like to see in an effective teacher. Descriptive words within the responses were put into five different categories that were further collapsed into two categories; namely instructional and personal attributes of the teacher. The study showed that students are keen to evaluate their teachers and that evaluation should be done regularly in schools to improve practice.

Introduction

Traditionally, high school students have not been given many opportunities to offer their insights and comments on education and schooling. Groves and Welsh (2002) say that students' views of learning and schooling experiences, while important for educators, are rarely sought from the students themselves especially at high school level. In Zimbabwe like in many other countries,

student ratings as an evaluative component of the teaching system are normally done in institutions of higher learning; especially in universities. To improve standards and accountability in the teaching and learning process, it is important that students' ratings of teachers' effectiveness be an integral part. This research reports on a study which asked students to write a letter to a friend telling him/her what an effective teacher should be like and what he/she should do.

The views of students about teaching and learning have not been largely influential in the Zimbabwean education system and their perceptions especially about teaching and learning are rarely sought. Students' own views of their schooling are important as they impact on their lives (Krueger, 1997). It is common knowledge that their views can give stakeholders in education a better understanding of preferred teacher characteristics, teaching styles and schooling experiences. The one aspect of this study was to determine the students' perceptions of characteristics of effective teachers. Researchers have looked at students' evaluations of teaching effectiveness as a means of enhancing teaching both at high school and university level. This study looks at enhancing teaching at high school level from the perspective of the high school students themselves. It also looks at promoting and providing the opportunity for successful participation for everyone in high school who can benefit from it. Shelvin (2000) says that information from students' evaluation of teaching can be used for decisions by stakeholders about conditions of employment such as merit pay, tenure (indeed all universities do this) and promotion. Paradoxically, there is not much research relating to high school students' perceptions of an effective teacher using the Zimbabwean experience.

All those responsible for the preparation of teachers agree that having a highly qualified teacher in every classroom is essential to student academic achievement (Lasley, Stedentop and Yinger 2006).The students do expect a certain "behaviour" from their teachers which would make them like the teacher and the subject which motivates them to academically achieve or dislike the teacher which would achieve the opposite. This behaviour comes from the teacher's ability to translate the knowledge he/she has into thoughtful classroom practice (Kindsvatter et.al.1996). This is the challenging and difficult task of every professional teacher. The teacher has to make relevant instructional decisions for this behaviour to manifest itself. These decisions are taken for and on behalf of the students. It would be interesting to know whether these decisions in any way influence the students' perception of their teacher(s) since according to Hunter(1984) professional decision making and effective teaching are interrelated concepts and effective decision making inevitably precedes effective teaching (Kindsvatter et.al. 1996). Decision making is the basic teaching skill (Shavelson 1973). According to Hunter (1984:170) "teaching is the constant stream of professional decisions that affect the probability of learning: decisions that are made and implemented before, during and after interaction with the student". The perception that the students do have result from the decisions the teacher makes whether in class or outside the classroom. It has also been noted that translating the teacher's knowledge base into thoughtful classroom practice cannot be effectively done without the ability to take relevant instructional decisions. It is against this background that the current study focuses on high schools students' evaluation of effective teaching so as to improve educational practice using the Zimbabwean experience.

Conceptual Framework

There are a number of tools/instruments available that are used to assess the level of effectiveness of teachers. These mechanisms can be categorized into three major areas: student ratings, peer reviews and self-evaluation. The most often used measurement in universities has been the student rating of instruction or student evaluation. In high schools, students' ratings are not used in the educational setting and yet it could be the most reliable method for obtaining measurements of the quality of classroom instruction as it involves various dimensions of instructional process and presentation styles of the teacher. It can be the strategy used for measuring the effectiveness of teaching that occurs in the classroom.

Teaching according to Hunt (1984:170) "is the constant stream of professional decisions that affect the probability of learning: decisions that are made and implemented before, during and after interaction with the student". A teacher therefore is one who helps learners or students or pupils to learn what the teacher has decided often in a school (although this could also happen in a home, religious or community setting). As such, he/she is an acknowledged guide or helper in the process of learning especially academic subjects. In other words, he/she is also defined as a specialized professional. It is important to note that teaching and pedagogy are interrelated concepts. Teaching has been defined as the actions of professionally trained persons that enhance the cognitive, personal, social and physical development of learners (Cole & Chan 1994). Pedagogy on the other hand is the different ways to teach. So the different ways to teach are often referred to as the teacher's pedagogy. These different methods of teaching make the student either enjoy the lesson or dislike it. It is from such behaviour(s) that students develop perceptions (good or bad)of their teachers. Teaching at any given level is complex. Hetterbran (2008) suggests that, " at its core, good teaching involves the interweaving of content, knowledge, pedagogical skills and a knowledge and appreciation of the multifaceted nature of students, to in the end, be able to point evidence that

learning has occurred". We also need to note that the primary role of teaching has changed over time from imparter of knowledge to facilitator of learning, something that is important in the information or knowledge society in which we live. Where a teacher is playing the role of the facilitator, he/she accepts that students are not a tabular rasa (blank slate) but key players from whom he/she can also learn. Students learn from the teacher, from their peers, while the teacher also learns from them. In this case knowledge is not located in the individual but in the community.

Personal characteristics are integral in the overall portrait of a professional teacher. Most teachers can reflect on their past formal education and identify a teacher whom they remember fondly. Although it is quite possible that this remembrance may be heavily influenced by this teacher's formidable content knowledge or captivating methods of instructional delivery, it is also those intangibles, those elements of personality and practice that blended into the mosaic of being an effective/good teacher

Effective Teaching

To avoid conceptual ambiguity, it is important in this study to define effective teaching. Bok (1982) came up with one of the most notable definitions of teaching effectively by saying, "the willingness to continue teaching must always rest upon an act of faith that students will remain a useful conceptual framework, a helping approach to the subject, a valuable method of analysis, or some other intangible of lasting intellectual value". Thus teaching effectiveness can be defined as the ability to be useful, helpful, and valuable in facilitating learning. "The effective teacher is one who contributes to a student's acquisition of knowledge and skill by using a number of techniques

associated with the promotion of learning and who displays personal characteristics commonly associated with a positive learning environment"(Cohen, 1981; Theall, 2001). Studies of students' perceptions of effective teachers and effective teaching yielded characteristics that include the following: caring, encouraging, approachable, enthusiastic, respectful, knowledgeable, empathetic, passionate, and having a sense of humour (Bryant et.al. 1980;Schaeffer et.al. 2003; Kane et.al. 2004). A teacher who develops a clearly defined, well-organised topic is typically considered to be helpful in the learning process (Onwuegbuzie et.al. 1997; Webster et.al. 1997; Salles 2001). Therefore an energetic instructor, who can simplify complex topics while appearing completely in control of the class, is perceived to be more effective than instructors who do not exhibit these characteristics.

The qualities of an effective teacher tells of someone who has the ability to establish positive realistic expectations for success of their students and themselves; is organized and able to maintain a well-ordered environment, from the paperwork and deadlines, to the behaviour of students (www.dadeschools.net) . They should be able to walk away, so to speak, and learning should continue; know how important it is to reflect, not necessarily on what they plan to do , but how they will carry out that plan; know how to create interesting lessons. These lessons must be captivating, reach all students and ensure mastery; the teacher is kind and fair; does the right thing; is consistent; does not overlook the small acts of kindness they perform everyday. They do not think they are of no benefit. Even tiny drops of water-in the end-will fill a huge vessel; does not overlook any negative actions they may perform just because they appear small. However a small spark can burn down a haystack as big as a mountain and therefore effective teachers must be open to the possibilities of teaching and learning experiences by always challenging their own assumptions;

must find joy in the unanticipated occurrences.

The terms "effective' and "good" teacher are for purposes of this research meant to mean the same thing though researchers are aware that they can be differentiated in meaning. According to Yates (2005) " effective" is indexed by student learning criteria and " good" is indexed by professional respect and humanistic criteria. Berliner (2005) suggests that "good" is normative representing what is expected of a professional in a teaching post while "effective" is about reaching achievement goals; it is about students learning what they are supposed to in a particular context, grade and subject. Thus a research into high school students' perceptions of an effective teacher would obviously include both the respect and humanistic criteria and the student learning criteria.

Perception

Another key term involved in the teaching-learning process is perception. Perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. The word perception comes from the Latin words *perceptio percipio* meaning, receiving, collecting, action of taking possession, apprehension with the mind or senses. In simple terms, students observe teacher behaviours that they regard as good/acceptable/effective or bad/unacceptable/ineffective. From these observed teacher behaviours, students develop or build up perceptions about teachers, whether they are good/ effective or bad/ineffective. These perceptions are valuable as alluded to by SooHoo (1993:389) who says:

Somehow educators have forgotten the important connection between teachers

and students. We listen to outside experts to inform us, and, consequently, we

overlook the treasure in our own backyards: our students. Student perceptions

are valuable to our practice because they are authentic sources; they personally

experience our classrooms first hand…..As teachers, we need to find ways to

continually seek out these silent voices because they can teach us so much

 about learning and learners.

It is helpful to remember that what the student does is actually more important in determining what

is learned than what the teacher does (Shuell 1986). It is important to remember that each student

has a unique viewpoint and therefore a diversity of perceptions of the same experience may be

expected. Students' own views of their schooling are important as they impact on their lives

(Krueger, 1997). Their views can also give teachers and teacher educators a better understanding of

preferred teacher characteristics, teaching styles and schooling experiences." Teacher behaviuors

have a significant bearing on students' motivation, goal setting, selection of learning strategies or

interest in the course" (Wang, Gibson and Slate 2007:03). Effects on students resulting from teacher

behaviour can be positive or negative. According to Wang et.al. (2007:17) "students can blossom or

wither because of the effects, behaviours and methods of a particular teacher". In addition teacher

behaviours can affect student motivation and interest in a subject or course and their approach to

learning.

Whitfield (1976) says students can link specific, observable teacher behaviours to student

perception of that teacher. Such views are reinforced by Krueger (1997) who recognised that students perceive the same teachers differently and individual perceptions vary at different times depending on current experiences. Groves and Welsh's (2007) study of eleven high school students' views of their school experiences concluded that students have well articulated views, offering frank, clear and confident responses. Research on student perception of teachers has revealed a range of preferred teacher qualities." Effective teachers have been perceived to be "human", whilst also "professional" and subject centered as well as student centered" (McCabe 1995:125).

Studies carried out in the United States to establish student perceptions of an effective teacher revealed that students wanted teachers who are organized and enthusiastic (Robins 2000); who care and push them to do their work and are sensitive to their work (Rooney 2004); who put their soul into what they are doing (Crabtree 2004); who are strict (Wilson and Corbett 2001); who make learning fun and interesting (Taylor 2004). In addition, Wilson and Corbett (2001) identified six main qualities that students believed teachers should have to enable them to learn and be successful in school. These are pushing students to complete assignments, maintaining order in the classroom, willing to offer help whenever and for however long it was needed, going to great lengths to explain assignments and concepts, varying classroom activities and respecting students and their out-of-the-school worlds.

The above shows that considerable work has been done about teaching and qualities of a good/effective teacher mainly from the teachers' point of view. The issue of an effective teacher continues to be on the interrogative minds of not only educators but learners as well. Little attention has been paid to the perceptions of secondary school boys and girls in a Zimbabwean context about

what they perceive an effective teacher to be. Key questions that continue to beg answers are as follows: What do the students perceive as a good/effective teacher to be? To what extent are their perceptions similar to those presented in the literature?

Perception and Effective Teaching

If we combine the two concepts, perception and effective teaching, we arrive at a conceptual framework where participants (students) in this research are observing teacher behaviours that they think make a teacher effective. In other words, they are looking at those characteristics in a teacher that are indexed by professional and humanistic criteria as well as student learning criteria that may help them reach achievement goals. There is an increasing consciousness of the professional function and those qualities and attributes that contribute most to overall effectiveness or which may hinder the learning process. This is confirmed by Barr and Tagg (1995) who say that instructors have increasingly become of the paradigm shift between providing instruction and producing learning. This research focuses on the awareness that enables us to see the teacher through student eyes and therefore the ability to move oneself into effective purveyors of learning.

Statement of the problem

Effective teaching has a direct bearing on the academic performance of students in any institution of

learning. Effective teaching should ideally result in effective learning. Effective teachers usually consider the conditions under which the teaching and learning are to take place, the uniqueness of the individual students and the material to be learnt. But while students in institutions of higher education are afforded the opportunity to evaluate their teachers through some type of teaching evaluation form (TEF) in most primary and high schools students are not privileged to do this evaluation. This anomaly should be addressed so that so that students make a direct input in their learning.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of high school students about an effective teacher?

Why is teacher effectiveness important in the teaching-learning process?

Is there a significant difference in the chosen characteristic of an effective teacher between boys and girls?

Is there any significant difference in the chosen characteristics on an effective teacher between levels of schooling, that is ZJC, 'O' AND 'A' Level?

Materials and Methods

Cross-sectional surveys were conducted among high school students in three schools in Mutare urban (one a boys only high school, the other one a girls only high school and the third a co-educational mission boarding school) to interpret, analyse and report the perceptions of students on effective teachers.

Participants and Settings

Appointments were made with the heads of the three schools. The researchers explained as fully as possible the aims and nature of the research. The population consisted of all enrolled students in the three high schools. The study focused on the three levels of Zimbabwean secondary education namely ZJC (forms one and two), 'O' level (forms three and four) and 'A' level (form five and six). A letter questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants. This method of data collection was used successfully in a study done by Chireshe, Mapfumo and Peresuh (2004) on zimbabwean secondary school students' views on good and bad teachers. In the present study participants were informed that the letter questionnaire was anonymous and were assured that their responses would not be availed to their teachers or school heads. Participants were only asked to identify themselves by sex and form level. They were also offered the option to decline participation. Thus in the end a total of four hundred students across the three levels of education participated in this study.

 Participants were asked to write a letter to a friend indicating their expectations of an effective teacher. They were given one hour to write this letter and the researchers directly supervised the participants.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed in two stages. Stage one analysed the data using the narrative descriptions of what students revealed as characteristics of an effective teacher. Stage two analysed data using the Chi-Square test to establish whether there was any significant difference between boys and girls in the characteristics indicated of an effective teacher as well as establishing whether there was any significant difference between levels in the high school namely ZJC, 'O' Level and 'A' level.

Results and Discussion

Stage One

The table below presents data that were found in the present study.

Students Perceptions of an effective teacher

CATEGORIES	frequency	percentage
1. 0 Instructional Methods		
1.1 Methods	120	11.8
1.2 Explanations	77	7.5
1.3 Feedback	37	3.6
1.4 Grades	47	4.6
1.5 Homework	10	1.0

	291	28.5
2.0 Personal Aspects		
2.1 Discipline	57	5.6
2.2 Interpersonal behaviour	324	31.8
2.3 Feelings/Attitudes	138	13.5
2.4 Personal Attributes	210	20.6
	729	**71.5**
	1020	**100**

After the categorization and quantification of the students' statements, two dominant categories emerged namely the Instructional Methodological category and the Personal category. The instructional methodological category included the methods, explanations, feedback, grades and homework while the Personal category included discipline, interpersonal behaviour, feeling/attitudes and personal qualities. The table above shows these categories and the number of responses and percentages. The table does show that students were interested in these two very distinct categories in their categorization of an effective teacher. It also reveals that students were less interested in the instructional methodological skills of a teacher in determining his/her effectiveness than in the Personal aspects which was overwhelmingly attributed to determining how effective a teacher was. To the students, an effective teacher is one who is just nice or a good person to them.

Those students who expressed an interest in the instructional methods were more concerned about them being interested or motivated in the lesson. This agrees with Jones and Jones (1986) who found out that students need opportunities to deal with topics they find interesting and exciting instead of simply studying what they are told, otherwise they loose interest for school, Williams and Burden (1993) who reported that classroom activities which belong to a child's world arouse interest and (1997) when they found out that children learn best when they are motivated to

perform a task. What the students expressed is that teachers should avoid giving them information to memorise which according to Glasser (1969) causes students' indifference and dissatisfaction in all school learning activities. They want to enjoy the lessons through participating as opposed to teacher-centered classroom. They are claiming their right to participate equally in the teaching learning process.

This group of students was also concerned about the explanations by the teachers which they wanted clearly done. This is supported by Wragg and Wood (1994) who found out that the ability to explain things well was among the most important qualities of an effective teacher and Brown and Armstrong (1994) who also found out that the quality of explanations of new information and ideas that teachers provide to their students, may make a crucial difference in the success and failure of the lesson. The way a teacher defines and describes new information, the speed from the known to the unknown as well as the link between the old and the new pieces of information contribute a great deal to being an effective teacher. These students also appeared to be sensitive to the way feedback is provided by the teacher in that they wanted it as soon as possible and that it should be meaningful. This finding is in accordance with Page's (1958) findings as reported in Jones and Jones (1986) which indicate that feedback given in the form of supportive comments followed by statements about certain strengths and weaknesses in the students work is more effective in improving their performance than either grades only or just brief positive comments. In addition, several studies have shown that hostile or excessive criticism negatively influences students' attitudes, their achievement, creativity and classroom control. This means that students want to receive feedback on the quality of their performance as quickly as possible and through positive criticism and not through judgment expressed with negative verbalizations.

The students also showed keen interest in grades. This concern with grades is congruent with Jones and Jones (1986) report that says that students' interest in grades is increased compared to other aspects of the teaching learning process. The aspect that was most important to the students was that of discrimination and favouritism. Research findings from classroom interaction studies indicate that high achieving students receive more opportunities to respond (Brophy and Good 1971), are offered more time to reply to questions (Rowe 1974, Boszik 1982), receive more positive non-verbal feedback (Chaikin, Singler and Derlega 1974) and are less likely to be ignored (Willis 1970) unlike low achieving students who are generally ignored by the teacher. The above situation can be attributed to the teachers' expectations. According to Brophy and Good (1974), when teachers have low expectations of certain students, they may tend to skip over them during the teaching-learning process. Such behaviour they recognize and disapprove hence remarks like " an effective teacher does not choose the same students to answer questions".

Under this perspective, rating receives an interpersonal dimension as the teacher's behaviour can disturb the balance in the relationship between the students and the teacher as well as the relationship between and among the students themselves. This is confirmed by Ehrman and Dornyei (1998) when they say that the question of rating and assessment affects the relationship between and among the students in the classroom. Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice that students see grades as a means to an end. For the students in the study, grades offered them a realistic concept of the level of their classroom performance where the teacher should be objective and honest. The students also seemed to acknowledge the value of homework. However two main issues concerned them. The first is of the amount and the second is of the level of difficulty of the task(s).Jones and Jones (1986) point out that students do not differ much from adults in terms of the amount of the tasks they have to face everyday. Excessive amounts of tasks can put unnecessary psychological

pressure on the children because they do not have adequate time to complete them hence the need to match the amount of homework with the age of the pupils. It was interesting to note that these few pupils are not in favour of easy tasks as they are more worried about the amount and not the difficulty of the tasks. This can be attributed to the children's need to respond to challenges and to search for new challenges in life (Williams and Burden, 1993). Therefore teachers should consider this need and give young learners tasks that are suitably challenging for the age group, tasks which are neither too simple to become boring nor too difficult to lead to frustration and demotivation.

An overwhelming percentage of the students, as shown in the table, were more concerned about the interpersonal attributes of the teacher than his/her methodological skills. To them, it is the interpersonal aspects/behaviour of a teacher that make him/her an effective teacher. This clearly shows that students learn many things primarily by observing/watching the behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1970, Jones and Jones, 1986, Bandura1969,1977). People are more likely to model their own behaviour on that of those individuals whom they regard as being competent and having control over their resources and who can be a major source of control, support and reinforcement for them (Bandura, 1997). The students were concerned about the way teachers handle discipline problems in the classroom. The study revealed that teachers' classroom management skills are crucial to students. Burden and Williams (1993) confirm this by saying that in every classroom some disruptive student behaviour is almost inevitable and that skilled classroom managers are able to make the most of the way students become involved in tasks and those who are good managers tend to be effective teachers and vice versa.

Stage Two

From the discussion above, it is clear that the students in the study were more interested in the personal attributes of their teachers than in their instructional capabilities in determining whether or not a teacher was effective or not. To the students, an effective teacher is one who is just a nice or good person to them. The researchers then focused on the personal aspect of their characteristics of an effective teacher with a view to establishing whether both boys and girls equally preferred this aspect or whether there was any significant difference in the chosen characteristics of an effective teacher between boys and girls and between different levels of the education system, namely ZJC, "O" level and "A" level. To do this we used the Chi-Square test. The various characteristics that students came up with under the Personal Attribute were collapsed into five variables, Commitment, Empathy, Content Mastery, Deportment and Temperance so as to make user-friendly to the Chi-Square test.

Comparisons of characteristics of an effective teacher for boys and girls in forms 1-5

	Boys (fo)	Boys (fe)	Girls (fo)	Girls (fe)	ROW TOTAL
Commitment	81	86.94	116	110.06	197
Empathy	219	254.64	358	322.35	577
Content Mastery	99	76.34	74	96.65	173
Deportment	76	53.42	45	67.60	121
Temperance	44	47.66	64	60.34	108
COLUMN TOTAL	**519**		**657**		Grand Total= **1176**

Null Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between boys and girls in the

identified characteristics of an effective teacher.

$$\frac{(fo-fe)2}{fe}$$

Expected Frequency (fe) formula for boys = $\underline{\text{RTxCT}}$ = $\underline{197 \times 519}$ = 86.94   0.40

GT   1176

= $\underline{577 \times 519}$ = 254.64   4.98

1176

= $\underline{173 \times 519}$ = 76.34   6.72

1176

= $\underline{121 \times 519}$ = 53.4   9.54

1176

= $\underline{108 \times 519}$ = 47.66   0.28

1176

= $\underline{21.92}$

Expected Frequency (fe) for girls = $\underline{\text{RTxCT}}$ = 197×657 = 110.6   =0.32

GT   1176

$= \dfrac{577 \times 657}{1176}$ $= 322.35$ $= 3.94$

$= \dfrac{173 \times 657}{1176}$ $= 96.65$ $= 5.30$

$= \dfrac{121 \times 657}{1176}$ $= 67.60$ $= 7.55$

$= \dfrac{108 \times 657}{1176}$ $= 60.34$ $= 0.22$

$= \underline{17.33}$

Formula for Degrees of Freedom (df) =   df - 1

$$= 5 - 1$$

$$= 4$$

For Chi-square to be significant at the .05 level, the obtained value must be equal to or greater than 9.49 at 4 degrees of freedom. Since the obtained values of 21.92 and 17.33 are much greater than 9.49 the null hypothesis is not retained/rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between boys and girls in the characteristics of an effective teacher that they chose.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the secondary school students perceptions of an effective teacher. Significant evidence has been provided to illustrate that students have in their minds what they view as an effective teacher like having students' interests at heart, selecting interesting teaching methods, convincingly explaining concepts, providing immediate feedback, avoiding favouritism, grading objectively, involving everybody in the learning process, being humourous, being enthusiastic and committed, respecting pupils, being firm and so on. But as can be observed from the appendix at the end, students are more overwhelmingly concerned about the personal characteristics of the teacher than the instructional qualities. The perceptions of these students are congruent with some of the literature in terms of defining an effective teacher. To them, an effective teacher is not only indexed by student learning criteria but also by the respect and humanistic criteria. One of the several conclusions one can make is that teachers, administrators and

stakeholders in education should pay attention to what students have to say about the characteristics of an effective teacher. It is thus imperative that for effective teaching to take place in schools, all teachers should administer the teaching evaluation form on their students as is the case in universities and other colleges of higher education.

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Appendix

CATEGORIES
1.0 Instructional Methodological Aspect   (274)
1.1 Instructional Methods   (120)
e.g. An effective teacher analyses the lesson very well
An effective teacher varies methods in the lesson
An effective teacher teaches well and does not spoonfeed
1.2 Explaining and Explanations   (77)
e.g. An effective teacher explains the facts clearly
An effective teacher asks pupils if they have not understood
An effective teacher is knowledgeable enough to explain facts
An effective teacher is a good communicator
1.3 Feedback   (37)
e.g. An effective teacher marks books on time
An effective teacher makes meaningful comments in the books
An effective teacher gives prompt feedback
An effective teacher is fair in marking
1.4 Grades   (47)
e.g. An effective teacher does not show favouritism when awarding grades
An effective teacher is objective and fair in marking
An effective teacher is not lazy to mark books
An effective teacher does not shout at those who get low grades or fail
1.5 Homework   (10)
e.g. An effective teacher gives pupils homework
An effective teacher does not give too much homework
An effective teacher punishes those who do not do their homework
2.0   INTERPERSONAL ASPECT   (519)
2.1 Discipline   (57)
e.g. An effective teacher writes names of those disturbing others in class
An effective teacher does not beat us or shout at us in class
An effective teacher does not use vulgar language at those making noise
2.2 Interpersonal behaviour   (324)
e.g. An effective teacher is polite, warm, humourous, tolerant etc
An effective teacher is punctual
An effective teacher attends all lessons
An effective teacher is motherly and /or fatherly
An effective teacher should not ask the same students to answer questions

2.3 Feelings / Attitudes (138)	
e.g. An effective teacher loves us, is kind, caring helpful, lenient, considerate etc	
An effective teacher knows children's rights	
3.0 PERSONAL ASPECT/QUALITIES (210)	
e.g. An effective teacher has a good heart, smiles at us, is free to talk to, is	
responsible, is a role model, is friendly, dresses decently, is organized, is honest	
and does not date students, has a good sense of humour, is dedicated to his/her	
job, is confident, is hard working, loves God, does not cheat or steal, does not	
smoke or take drugs, does not come to school drunk and is intelligent	

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Marriage via the 'Holy' Spirit: Girl Child Sexual Abuse in the Johanne Marange Apostolic

Church in Marange Area of Zimbabwe.

By

Joshua Chakawa

Abstract

The Johanne Marange Apostolic Church patriarchs have crafted various mechanisms in order to sexually abuse the girl child. These methods are supported by the 'holy spirit', the old testament teachings regarding the position of women while others are rooted in the traditional African religion. The paper sets out to investigate how the church has manipulated both the girl child and the bible thereby threatening various of children's rights in Marange area. Some of the girl children are thoroughly indoctrinated such that they are not even aware of their rights. All this is premised on the realization that the church policy thwarts the full blossoming of children such that when they become adults, they cannot productively contribute to national development.

Introduction

The Johanne Marange Apostolic Church (JMAC) was founded in the Marange Reserve in Manicaland Province in 1932 by Muchabaya Ngomberume, a Methodist layman and who broke away to start his own African church. Many people joined the church at its inception owing to Johanne's ability to 'heal' diseases something he could only perform to members of the church- a policy which has persisted to the present day. Following closely on Shona traditions, the church permitted the practice of polygamy. Therefore, the polygamist and his wives are full members of the church as opposed to mainline churches such as the Methodist or the Catholic who insist on monogamy for one to be a full member. To facilitate polygamy, girl children are encouraged to marry within the church and not to mix with other religions in order to maintain their 'holiness'. Consequently children begin to accept their fate at a tender age and this can explain their compliance to forced marriages within the church. This paper starts by reviewing the general position of women within the church, followed by the church's perception of marriage before moving to sexual abuse on girls and concludes by an analysis of the impact of these marriages on children.

Position of Women in the Church

Bourdillion acknowledges the inferior position of women in the church by noting that women can only aspire to be 'hakiros' whose duty is to provide the lead in congregational singing.[1] This is not an important role as anyone in the church can lead in singing. There is no women's organization or 'ruwadzano' as in mainline churches compelling women to play less important roles as compared to men. One of the reasons why women cannot lead the congregation is that they are regarded as unclean during menstrual cycles hence cannot attend church services or take part in church activities.[2] Thus because they are absent from church during this phase means that , by extension , they cannot occupy administrative positions. A close biblical analysis reveals that this position on women is derived from the Levitical laws of the Old Testament, polygamous patriarchs like King David and King Solomon as well as St Paul's pronouncements on the position of women in the New Testament. Although Paul does not advocate for polygamy, he nevertheless supports the subordinate position of women in church affairs for example through his letters to the Corinthians.

Members of the Johanne Marange Apostolic Church are supposed to attend twelve major religius meetings in a year. During such meetings, it is associated with pride from fellow male colleagues if the man in attendance is served food by a young wife. Those who are served by their older wives are often scorned at by fellow male church members. Therefore sect members would ensure that they have a young wife to take with them to the meeting- something which conforms that generally women are viewed as tools to advance the interests of men. Senior wives are sometimes given a responsibility by their husbands to find new wives and end up being entangled in the sexual abuse racket of girl children.[3] Furthermore, they take part in virginity testing of girls due to their knowledge of a woman's body. Again they will be advancing patriarchal interests for the girls who 'fail' the tests or are found to be virgins no more become victims of sexual assault by the male elders who then add them to their list of wives.

Women can also ascend to the position of 'vachemeri'. These are older women in the congregation to whom the newly married women go with their (marital) problems. In the Focus Group Discussions [FGD] it was pointed out by these women that the new wives are taught not to be jealous and most importantly to treat each other as sisters because 'women that fight bring upon shame not only to themselves but to their husband.[4] In some of these meetings, girls above the age of 10 are included and taught how to become good wives and other senior wives take this chance to choose brides for their husbands. The whole process is called 'kuvaka' in verncular taken to mean giving constructive advice Jointly, the husbands and wife are guided by doctrine of 'parens patriae' which is a vibrant in the JMAC. According to Hastings, parents patriae makes children the sole possession of their fathers who are invested with absolute control over their lives and therefore can

treat them in whatever way they deem necessary without interference from anyone.[5] It is this piece of doctrine in the church which is responsible for child marriages.

Church Teachings on Marriage

The respondents revealed that 'at the church site, girls from 9 years and above sit in front facing the older married men seated on the opposite side. Married women sit behind the girls while the young unmarried men sit behind married men.[6] Church leaders argue that such an arrangement is because older men have positions in the church as baptisers, evangelists or healers they sit in front as opposed to the younger men who either have no positions or still occupy lower ranks. Moreover they forward elder women sometimes do not sit properly and when that is the case religious men may find it hard to concentrate in prayer. However, the probability is high that such a set-up has been manipulated by older men to begin taking note of blossoming girls and apportioning to themselves who will get which girl and so on. After all may also sit imprperly but the elder men do not complain.

That the church fully accepts polygamy is not a secret. Daneel notes that according to the sect, one can expand their households according to their own insights and as long as they notify the church superiors. Johanne Marange himself had 16 wives hence there is no control as to the number of wives a church member can have.[7]   As quoted in Daneel, Sundkler forwards that leaders of the church argue that, *King Solomon turned away from God not because he had many wives but because he allowed a heathen wife to draw him into idolatry.*[8] Taken further to church patriachs this implies that of importance to is the religious life not the number of wives one has. In addition, it is an undocumented tradition within the church community to give more respect to a polygamous member. Thus a polygamist can easily get a senior position in church on the assumption that he is experienced in conflict resolution at home hence more qualified to try cases in the church court or *dare*.[9] A monogamous men can only ascend to the position of a baptiser or evangelist if he displays exceptional qualities.

Bourdillion asserts members of JMAC are against the customary marriage ceremonies whereby the groom is made to pay cattle and money.[10] Among the church membership, bride price or lobola payment as it appears in the traditional manner is regarded as appeasing spirits or 'kupira midzimu' hence discouraged. As such the 'mapostori' (apostles or church members) set their own lobola which will be uniform among the Marange members - it is usually a small and reasonable amount, just a

token of appreciation to their in-laws and is paid in no stipulated time frame. It was revealed that in the year 2000, it cost $3000-00 Zimbabwean dollars to conclude a marriage contract. [11]   That sum was not exorbitant because one of the authors remembers that as a teacher he earned $11000-00 in the year 2000 implying that he could pay for 3 wives and still keep some change. Furthermore,church teachings emphasise that marriage is a solution to prevent a man from lusting over a woman or indulging in an adulterous affair as it is sinful. Therefore, if a man is having sleepless nights over a girl in the church who he loves, he may be caught at the 'gates', be taken to the *dare* where he will have to confess before the 'judge' the reasons that are hindering to submit totally before God. In such a case, he is recommended to marry the woman he is thinking of having an affair with and usually young girls become victims.

Forms of Girl Child Sexual Abuse in Church

To start with it is inviting to highlight that child sexual abuse occurs in Zimbabwe just as it does everywhere in secret and the scrutinizing of court records is one way the extent of the problem might come to light. Children are still defined as persons under 16 years of age, although the government of Zimbabwe has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child which defines children as persons below the age of 18 years.[12] In a sexual abuse study undertaken by the Legal Resources   Foundation in the early 1990s in Harare, all 291 victims were girls. [13] Against this background, it is imperative to examine the plight of the girl child in JMAC in Marange area.

Forced marriages among members of the sect usually take the form of customary marriages. Such a marriage usually entails the consent of the parents, husbands and the bride involved. In the case of JMAC , a marriage can take place without the consent of the bride. Force is exerted on the girl from all directions, parents, prophets, the bridegroom and various church institutions especially the *dare* until the girl submits. That way she ends up having to do with a husband imposed against her. In future, this may be the source of traumatic tendencies. Muronda asserts that 'the parents of a minor can facilitate a valid marriage between their young daughters through the popular traditional customs of kuzvarira (betrothment').[14] Normally this is done for economic gains on the part of the parents. A respondent revealed that, 'many families within the church were and still are surviving by marrying off their young daughters to fellow church members. The marriages are also facilitated by the geographical location of Marange where a successful harvest is highly unlikely and therefore marrying of one's daughter is a means of survival and by refusing the girl is condemning her family to death by starvation. [15]

Some of the respondents acknowledged that the forced marriages are a result of the parents' urge to fulfill their beliefs through their daughters. Therefore, some parents who follow the church doctrine religiously begin to pressurize their grown up daughters to marry and even take it upon themselves to find potential suitors for their children. In the end the girl finally succumbs to the pressure and marries off. It was outlined that a woman can approach another women in the church and informs her about how she wishes that her daughter to be married either to her son or husband. This is called 'kushashira', the marriage is ignited by statements of praise on behavior, wealth or position in the church. In such a case the marriage arrangement is entered into by the parents and afterwards the girl is informed of the decision and usually conforms. In this case, the JMAC doctrine can be accused of denying girls the right to plan for their future and develop independently as an individual.

Schewartz –Kenny also supports that 'intimidation with threats, weapons, beatings and choking also facilitates the forced marriages of young girls'.[16] All these come from various quarters especially the parents of the young bride. The respondents noted that 'the parents can threaten the child by telling her that if she refuses the marriage , she will be disowned or she will be cursed for not following the commandment that calls for children to respect their parents.[17] Such intimidation leaves the child with no option except to be married. Intimidation hinders the girl child's development as she is extremely traumatized and remains with emotional scars that may never be heal.

In the FGD one respondent who eventually decided to leave the church narrated how his sister became a victim of a forced marriage encouraged by their father. He revealed that,

'*when my sister was in form two, in Marange, our father told her that she was to marry fellow church member from Buhera. As the brothers we tried to convince our father against the idea but he gave an ultimatum that if she did not go to Buhera and connive with us then we would all be disowned. In the end the young girl was married off. Within three months of her marriage the husband already had taken another wife and did not even pay lobola for the wife up to today.*'[18]

The above scenario is a common experience young girls undergo in the Johanne Marange Apostolic sect. They have become enslaved in religion and undergo such abuse and still continue to suffer in silence.

The manipulation and conniving of prophets and members of the congregation has also encouraged the continuity of girl child sexual abuse within the sect. Bourdillion points out that in most independent churches prophecy is a 'gift from God' and when one has such a gift bestowed upon him, he is uplifted to a higher level above the ordinary man and as such church members accord to such a person much respect.' [19] As a result prophecy cannot be questioned and should be adhered to ass prophets are the mouthpieces of God. As such key respondents revealed that 'in all cases prophecy is intertwined with lust (ruchiva]) or force.[20] A common scenario portrayed by the respondents is that of an older man from the church who consults with the prophets on a particular girl that he is interested in. Since at all church services the congregation passes through the '*gates*' manned by prophets it was noted that it is at this time that the prophet filled with the 'holy spirit' will openly reveal to the old man that something is troubling him and is affecting his worship and should speak to the dare. When he outlines that it is because a certain girl he wants, the parents of the girl are immediately informed and if they agree which mostly is the case, marriage arrangements begin. Thus it was learnt that, '*in 2008 alone six young girls from Masasi and Madondo villages in Marange communal lands were married off as a result of such prophecies.*'[21] This clearly shows the gravity and prevalence of child sexual abuse that continues within the Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect.

The researcher also observed that prophecy is made to be extremely holy and 'supreme' such that rarely can adherences go against its recommendations. Thus the 'failure of a young girl to adhere to a prophetic marriage may lead to her being summoned to the '*dare'* a church court presided over by church elders. [22] In such a case the child is accused of kun'ora i.e. disrespecting the church principle. As such she succumbs. It is important to note that the church members are silent about the loopholes that these prophets are people that live within the same community and are bound to know what's happening within their communities thus they are able to 'prophesize' members as they pass through the 'gates'. The widespread prevalence of prophetic marriages by church elders and men not necessarily prophets was brought out to researchers. Members in the FGD outlined that the prophecy is usually done at the church site where an elder or male members of the church will ask a young girl to fetch and bring him water. When the girl hands over the water the man then tells the child about a vision or dream that would have been qualified by the acceptance of the young girl to offer a cup of water to the man. Where pressure is continually exerted, the girl may find it hard to continue opposing demands from 'heaven'. Thus one Mrs Mudende revealed how her 13 year old daughter was prophesized to a 67 year old church member. She narrated that,

'The incident took place at a gungano (a church gathering of members of the same church but from different areas) in 2006 when a Mr. Masasi asked my daughter to bring him water and when he had been given the water, he revealed the vision in the cup that they are to be married and their failure to satisfy the vision the young girl will not be able to make it home as she would die before reaching their home. [23]

Such lame prophecies are done to young girls who are often too young to reason in an abstract manner and lack the mental capacity to critique such claims. To this end most men prophesized the young girls still at primary school. This also displays the excessive power of these men on their young wives. In recent times prophecy has precipitated incestuous relationships within the church and this strikes at the very core of civilization and disturbs both the social order and the development of the child. Girl children are also assaulted through incest which Stewart sees as 'an overly sexual contact between people who are either closely related or perceive themselves to be. If this trust between a child and parent figure is violated by a sexual act then the act becomes incestuous. [24] Within the church, cases of incest are made highly secretive making it a clear manipulation of Christianity which regards incest as the worst form of abuse.

The Johanne Marange Apostolic church is deeply entrenched within the Marange community as the founder of the church was from the area and the church leadership has continued to be from the area. In this sense the church has a large following from the area and since kinship relations are emphasized within the church most of these church members are somehow related. However these kinship relations have fueled the sexual abuse especially sexual molestation of young girls through the traditionally popular chiramu.   Stewart defines sexual molestation as 'an instance in which the perpetrator intentionally touches erotic areas of a child's body or the perpetrator demand that the child in turn touch erotic areas on the perpetrator's body.[25] Khan et al note that chiramu is a custom aimed at socializing girls but has been disguised by men to introduce young girls especially young sisters to their wives into sex. [26] Among the Johanne Marange Apostolic Church membership the chiramu teaching is portrayed by the taking of a wife's young sister to help her sister's home but with time the brother in-law will make sexual advances on her as prior to her coming the sister and her husband would have 'agreed' to bring her in as a second wife. This is evidenced by the increase in cases of sisters or cousins married to the same man. Some women argue that it is better to share one's husband with a sister or cousin than to do so with a total stranger.

In the FGD with members of the Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect at the Marange Kraal, one woman referred to as Tariro in her mid 30s narrated her experience of how sexual molestation led her to marriage at 12 years to her sister's husband. Tariro begins:

'*When I was 12, I was sent to live with my older sister and her husband was an elder within the church. At first my in law would accidentally touch and fondle me. With time it increasingly became frequent and more intentional until the prophets 'caught' me at the gates thus I married my in law and we have three children together.*[27]

This might just be one exposed incident of child sexual abuse within the church. Generally such is common and terrifying experience of what young girls following the Johanne Marange Apostolic Sect in Marange area go through and continue to suffer in silence all in the name of the religion.

Furthermore, 'gwiti' i.e. sexual play also takes place between the older men and the younger girls who are related. Gwiti potrays the lust of the Johanne Marange Apostolic sect menfolk. Another respondent argued that 'older men in some cases connive with their senior wives to lure young girls to secretive places indulge in gwiti and with time the adulterous act is either caught at the gates or the man may create a scenario in which the girl would confess thus resulting in their marriage.[28] The respondents also exposed lust on the part of the girl's parents. Parents can envy a prosperous man to such an extent that they will make their daughter marry him. Another respondent Jephias revealed that, 'a father can facilitate the marriage of his daughter merely because the man is a good preacher or evangelist and as such he would want his daughter to be in the 'light' of the lord i.e. *murume uyu anoziva Mwari saka, mwana wangu haangarisike ainaye*. (the man is a strong apostle so my daughter will not get lost) .[29] Moreover, another common measurement of wealth is the frequency of tea *hobvu* i.e. tea with milk that a man drinks at his homestead and other material things such as cattle.

Virginity testing is another form of child sexual abuse that young girls belonging to the Johanne Marange Apostolic church are exposed to. Through virginity testing is a once in a year event performed at the Pentecost it can be performed by the older women at the request or suspicion that a young girl has lost her virginity. This event is popularly known as '*kuzemeni*'.The respondents concurred that virginity testing is performed in July during the two weeks long Pentecost. The young girls are taken into a nearby bush where the older and more 'knowledgeable' women insert two fingers into a young girl's vagina and if these fingers do not meet any resistance then the girl is

not considered a virgin and if vice versa she is regarded as having been deflowered. In an interview with Mrs Shumba a member of the church it was revealed that,

'*At the zemeni the virgins are given leaves while non virgins are given one with a hole to potray their absent virginity. The non virgins will then be asked who would have deflowered them and if it's not a member of the church, marriage with a church member is quickly planned and in most cases it would be into a polygamous union with an older man who are quick to claim that as no one will accept a deflowered wife and they are being done a favour.*[30]

The virginity testing process is inhuman and is a health risk as these women undertaking the *zemeni* do not wear any gloves when performing the task thus fluids from girl A can be inserted into girl B thus thereby transferring infections. Mr., Gwana also posited that '*in mordern day most vapostori are not keen on the church doctrine and as such have other boyfriends on the side that do not attend the church who normally deflowerd them. When this happens the young girls are forced to marry a church member who is in most cases is older.*'[31] Hence the church doctrine is forcing young girls not to explore sexual activity with none members. Pauline, an ardent follower of the church posited that in July 2008 at the Pentecost held in Mafarikwa, all the girls present were virgins and the result was that virginity was commercialised as there was a 'gold rush' by the older men to marry these young girls. [32] In this sense it can be asserted that the Johanne Marange Apostolic church men are lustful in nature thus they manipulate the purpose of virginity testing up to fulfil their lustful endeavour

Effects on children

Child marriages among the JMAC has decreased the realisation of the Millenium Development Goal which alludes to the access of education by all children regardless of their background and the child marriages have curtailed strides to empower the girl child. According to the Manicaland Provincial Education officer Mr Mandimutsira, '*of the 10 000 children that enrolled for form one in 2000 only a third managed to complete form fourin 2003.*[33] This high dropout rate is alluded to the child marriages commonly facilitated within the Johanne Marange sect. Moreover, school authorities at Masasi Secondary School and Mangatu Primary School confirmed the school drop out rate as a result of the child marriages. The later informants further highlighted that at Masasi a minimum of 8 girls drop out in each stream each year as a result of the child marriages. This therefore means that these young girls are trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty and women subordination that they cannot escape. Their situation is compounded by lack of education a major

tool for empowerment. The key respondents also revealed that the child marriages are increasingly being performed after grade seven but before form one. School attendance becomes erratic hence school authorities do not immediately suspect marriage as a reason for absenteeism. Such manipulation the current systems clearly shows that the determination of the Johanne Marange population to maintain their tradition to continue the sexual abuse of children.

The church doctrine is known for not allowing its members to seek medical treatment. Such a stance has been detrimental to the maternal health of pregnant young girls whose tender age implies their reproductive system is not fully matured. The Herald revealed that:

Marange has the highest number of maternal deaths which largely are a result of complicated pregnancies that are only brought to the hospital when it is too late. Conditions complicate because the young girls have immature uterine muscles and mucus membranes and this posit serious dangers of a ruptured uterus in the case of a prolonged labour usually performed by (varapi) unskilled church healers.[34]

In 2007, 11 pregnant minors sought help at Marange clinic. Of these 9 were 13 year olds and 2 were 15 year olds who had fallen pregnant at 12 and 14 respectively.[35] This was also similar to data collected from St. Andrews clinic also in Marange that, where in 2007 alone, 13 pregnant minors had sought help at the clinic. Twelve were thirteen year olds who had conceived at 12 and 1 at 11 years.[36] An official of the clinic revealed that in most of these instances they only managed to save the mother as the babies usually have a low birth weight and coupled with the prolonged labour complications they die at birth. Women from the JMAC also confirmed the prevalence of a high infant mortality rate among the church members especially among the young mothers. In discussion one woman spoke how she only managed to have seven live births out of 15 pregnancies since she was 12 years old.

The child sexual abuse among the JMAC system has drastically increased the church member's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. In one FGD it was outlined that such differences in ages between the husbands and their young brides pose serious complications to the sexual relationship between the couples. Men in the group argued that the older man consult prophets and are given holy waters to help them satisfy their wives sexually and also that they do not become 'spent forces' but can go on meeting their wives' sexual demands. [37] The reality of the matter is that these young brides tend to seek sexual gratification elsewhere especially from young men of their ages. A prophet in the

church also revealed how on many times adulterous relationships between the young wives and the elder sons of their husbands were being heard in the *dare*. In such cases the young bride would always argue that the husband was failing to please her sexually thus she opted for the son. Mavunganidze asserts that, 'when one has more than one partner it becomes a sexual network which is a web of sexual relations in a community and this acts as a transmission highway for HIV/AIDS .[38] Among the church community sexual networks have increased due to the vast differences in ages between the older men and the young girls that they marry. The presence of such sexual networks with at least six people taking part increase the risk to HIV/AIDS of all those taking part in the network. This clearly points out the urgent need for a change of the church doctrine that encourages the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Moreover, the church is still to accept the presence of HIV/AIDS in their midst because they still regard it as a 'mysterious illness' which the JMAC members are immune to as such that most that most funerals causes of death is attributed to long illnesses, short illness or headache. The Local Programme Officer for Women in Law in Southern Africa Ms Gud also noted with concern the inability of these young girls to negotiate safer sex thus increasing their risk to HIV transmission. She noted the 'unbalanced power and economic relations between the minor and the man who in most cases will be above 40 and economically powerful than her.[39] The young girl continues to have unprotected sex with a man she shares with at least four other wives without the use of a condom which she cannot even initiate. In this sense one can argue that a child marriage within the JMAC increase the vulnerability of young girl to infections due to the polygamous nature of their marriages.

The ILO and UNICEF concur that early marriages at a tender age do not only rob children of their childhood and a chance to education but it also risks exposing them to economic exploitation. Respondents outlined that, 'most of the young girls do not usually go past primary school and even when they manage to find employment they occupy the lower levels of the economic strata mostly as housemaids. [40] This in turn further exposes these young girls to a multifaceted abuse which incorporates physical, emotional, economic and verbal . As a result these women remain in the vicious cycle of the poverty and violence which then becomes multifaceted to include economic, physical and verbal abuse.

Herman et al posits that sexual abuse shatter construction of the self that it formed and sustained in relation to others. [41] The mental health of children will not have secure attachments, healthy social relationships and effective coping skills when they are exposed to a traumatic event (sexual abuse) which stops the normal development process. These children become prone to poor self esteem, attachment social problems and general adjustment difficulties. The respondents have confirmed that in recent years a large percentage of the girls that are married off tend to have suicidal tendencies. This has been compounded by increased awareness on issues of on child sexual abuse through campaigns at schools that children attend and have become aware of the consequences of child marriages in which their feelings are not taken into consideration when being married off. Thus the girls resort to suicide as a last hope on the part of the child and failure by the community to rescue her.

In the FGDS it was brought out that 'in 2006 one Mandivengerei hanged herself after having been married of to her sister's husband an ardent member of the church. The first time she ran away to her uncle's place that brought her back to her husband, and she ran to a distant maternal uncle who also brought her back. In the end she hanged herself.[42] In this sense, Mandivengei was just one of the many young girls who resorted to ending her life than marry an old man whom she did not love. Further her education had been disrupted by the unwanted marriage. Thus the sexual abuse of children within the JMAC community hinders the wellbeing of children as a large number of young girls suffer in silence, yet sexual abuse is a violation of the person and of human and legal codes of behaviour.

Conclusion

In the Marange here JMAC is deeply entrenched, child sexual abuse has gone almost unimpeded as most members of the community belong to the church. The paper has just but ignited a debate that could probably compel both state and non-state actors to look for solutions to assist the girl in Marange and elsewhere in Zimbabwe. It is also hoped that by strengthening the position of women who are currently appendages, the plight of women may be changed for the better. Curtailing the spread of HIV/AIDS can also be possible when issues pertaining to church marriages have been addressed. The paper has examined the position of women within the church, various forms of girl child sexual abuse prevalent in Marange where the church is deeply entrenched and how sexual abuse has affected women and the girl child in particular. In terms of securing access to proper maternal health and basic education, the girl child has fared badly and the primary reason for that is sexual abuse.

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The Incongruities Between the School Culture and the Home Background Culture: Perceptions from Students, Teachers and Heads in Gweru Urban Secondary Schools

By

Tenson Tawanda Mugodzwa

Abstract

This study investigated and analysed the incongruities between the school culture and the home background culture, focusing on the importance of cultural capital and its influence on academic performance. The main focus was to analyse the perceptions of students, teachers and heads on the incongruities between the school culture and the home background culture. The study employed the descriptive survey method and the research instruments used were the questionnaire and the interview. A sample of 6 heads, 120 teachers and 200 students was selected for the study. Research findings revealed that the influence of family back ground on children's educational experience is of significance importance, and that language in the classroom draws from the socio-linguistic experiences of children at home. The results of the study revealed that children from poor background are frozen out of the school system as they lack the culture of the school, because schools draw unevenly on the social and cultural resources of members of the society. The research findings also revealed that lower social class families lack the cultural capital to influence their children to perform well at school. The study recommends that curriculum designers, planners and implementers take cognisance of the diverse socio-economic and cultural background of the nature of the Zimbabwean society. The study also recommends that the Government, Non-Governmental Organisations and all relevant stakeholders rapidly intervene in the education system by funding the school system so that the burden of financing education is reduced on the part of the family during these difficulty times in Zimbabwe. Reading material could also be made available in large quantities so that poor families are assisted with reading material at home and hence provide the lower class students with cultural capital to perform well in the education system.

Introduction

The influence of family back ground factors on students' educational experiences has a curious place in the field of sociology of education. In the Zimbabwean context however, the family background as an influencing factor in academic performance has been largely ignored as authorities blame teachers, heads and the nature of schools attended for poor academic performance. In contrast, western research has consistently shown that the home background is a crucial factor in the academic performance of students as it provides the child with the necessary prerequisite to cope with the school culture, herein referred to as cultural capital. Using both simple and sophisticated research methods, western sociologists have documented, elaborated and replicated the influence of family back ground on educational life chances (Laureau, 1987). Resultantly, while a general consensus is yet to be reached on the causes of poor public examination results by students from poor family back ground, most western research findings confirm that many students from lower socio-economic classes obtain poor results. In an attempt to explain why students from poor back ground under-achieve in the education system, two schools of thought have emerged. The first school of thought, largely emanating from western research findings by Bourdieu (1974), Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), Erickson(1986), Laureau (1987), Levitas (1974), MacDonald(1977),and Zeuli and Floden(1987) maintains that family background characteristics (cultural capital) have strong effects on students' academic performance. The second school of thought largely rooted in research findings from Zimbabwe such as Irvine cited in Jordan (1988), Nyagura (1991), Nyagura and Riddel (1993), and Nyagura and Reece (1989) is of the view that school-related factors strongly influence the academic performance of students. This study therefore is a follow up to western research findings, the purpose being to examine and analyse perceptions from students, teachers and heads on the home back ground factors (cultural capital) that affect the academic performance of students from lower social class. This is because very little research, if

any, has been carried out in Zimbabwe to establish family background factors that affect the academic performance of students as parents, educational authorities and most relevant stakeholders continue to erroneously blame teachers, heads and schools for poor examination results by students from poor home background. In this study cultural capital means what the family equips the child with in terms of educational skills and resources such as the language of the school (English), reading material (school culture), and other school related factors.

Conceptual Framework

Broadly, this study is rooted in the Marxist Social Conflict Paradigm which views poor academic performance by students as stemming from their lower socio-economic back ground due to the stratified nature of the Zimbabwean capitalist society. In the current Zimbabwean situation for example, three distinct social classes have emerged due to the dollarization of the economy. There is one social class of very rich people (the bourgeoisie) and these are very few indeed, though very rich, then there is what appears to be the middle class largely composed of the civil servants who are currently struggling to survive on a monthly allowance of US250 dollars, and the lower class made up of very poor people living in rural and high density urban areas. It is against this back ground that this conceptual framework explores some of the reasons put forward by Marxist theorists in their explanation of poor academic performance by students from low socio-economic back ground and the role of cultural capital in this equation. This approach is rooted in the observation that the Gweru Urban Community in which the schools under study are situated, is largely of poor back ground, and most of them are reeling under the impact of the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy, and are surviving on meagre monthly allowances ranging from a pathetic US 20 dollars to US250 dollars, or simply scrounging for a living from informal trade.

The social conflict paradigm contends that the educational system of every society is rooted in that society's system of social stratification(King,1987).The Marxist theory asserts that formal

education and its outcomes reflect and perpetuate patterns of inequality in the society based on sex, race, ethnicity and social class(King,1987; Karabel and Halsey,1977) .According to the social conflict paradigm, the education system largely reinforces the values of dominant cultural groups(Levitas,1974;Laureau,1987),the minority bourgeoisie, their relatives and immediate subordinates in the Zimbabwean context. Inherent in this paradigm is the fact that children in the lower-socio-economic stratum that constitutes 70% of the student population in Zimbabwe (UNICEF, 1997), are disadvantaged in the education system and consequently obtain poor examination results. For example, in Zimbabwe a close analysis of 'O' level results consistently shows that students attending Urban and Rural Day Secondary Schools which cater for 70% of the secondary school population (UNICEF, 1997) are under-achieving in the education system (Mugodzwa, 1998), and the blame for this under performance has been erroneously directed wholesomely on teachers, school heads and the schools (Nyagura, 1991; Nyagura and Riddel, 1993 and Nyagura and Reece, 1989).

From the onset, it must be acknowledged that Zimbabwe has a stratified society. For example, those who have been cabinet ministers (or continue to be ministers in the current Government of National Unity) before and after the Government of National Unity, Army Generals and Zimbabwe Republic Police Commissioners and top Central Intelligence Officers and their associates, have more wealth, power and prestige than the poorly paid civil servants, industrial and farm workers, rural peasants and 94% of the unemployed Zimbabwe labour force currently. Social stratification therefore refers to "...the presence of distinct social groups which are ranked one above another in terms of wealth, prestige, and power" (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004:23).This unequal distribution of resources results in social stratification which has serious consequences in real life situations. Access to, and equal educational opportunity, the type of schools attended and the quality of educational outcome,

are all affected by the parents' social class (Laureau, 1987; Carpenter and Hyden, 1987; MacDonald, 1977; Jencks, 1974; Cohen and Manion, 1981). Because the individual's social class in part determines where a family lives, children of different social classes have varying opportunities to attend better quality schools, which produce excellent results (Nyagura, 1991; Nyagura and Riddel, 1993, and Nyagura and Reece,1989).If the above argument is true, then 70% of the students in Zimbabwean secondary schools are disadvantaged in the education system because of their poor family background which is deficient of the school culture. In the current Zimbabwe for example, the cost of education has gone beyond the reach of many families, largely because it's pegged in foreign currency which most people simply do not have, their main focus is to avail food on their table. Most families, because of poverty, find it difficult to afford toys, games, reading materials(cultural capital) and other resources which may be helpful to their children's cognitive development (Haralambos and Holborn, 2004).Finally, due to poverty at home, children are very often inadequately nourished which may interfere with their success in school (Zeuli and Floden, 1987).The conclusion from the ongoing discussion is clear, that children from lower socio-economic class lack the cultural capital to do well in school.

Theoratical Framework

Following on Marx's thoughts, Althusser (1977) considers that the function of the education system is determined by the needs of the capitalist socio-economic system, which is characterised by stratification, exploitation and inequality. As far as the low socio-economic class is concerned, this means that it must be socialised through the education system to accept its subordinate working and peasantry position in the class system and the kind of work it has to do (Althusser, 1986). In the Zimbabwean context, this is reflected by the 70% under-achieving students attending Urban and Rural Day Secondary Schools where they are taught how to fail in the education system by being

subjected to a school culture which is incongruent to their home back ground culture, thus creating a rift between the home and the school. In this case then, lower social class students are socialised in the education system to accept their working and peasantry class position and the menial tasks demanded by the nature of their occupation. Inherent in Althusser's assertion is the view that the education system serves the needs of capitalism, the maintenance of a small elite bourgeoisie class and the creation of a poorly remunerated poverty-stricken proletariat class in its multitude. This is done by teaching 70% of the students from poor home back ground how to 'fail' in the Zimbabwe education system through imposing on them a school culture which is incongruent to their home back ground culture.

Bourdieu has made a special study of education in a capitalist society, particularly France (MacDonald, 1977) and much of his findings reflect the Zimbabwean scenario. He concentrated on how middle, working and peasantry class structures are reproduced in the education system. He analysed particularly the role of education in this selection and placement process. Like Althusser, Bourdieu (1974) argues that schools are middle class institutions run by middle class people, in which generally middle class students succeed. From Bourdieu's thesis, it may be inferred that the lower class culture does not fit well into the demands of such an education. To support his thesis , Bourdieu used substantial empirical evidence to show that middle class children tend to achieve better examination results than working and peasantry class children of equal measured intelligence(Bourdieu,1974;Levitas,1974;Laureau,1987).Bourdieu explains this further by use of the concept "cultural capital".

According to Bourdieu (1974), the individual acquires through his/her family, linguistic and social competencies as well as such qualities as attitudes, values, manners and know how. Bourdieu and

Passeron (1979) assert that the family equips the child with expectations about his/her future, with criteria for success, through its culture and language, with a particular disposition towards the dominant values of the school. Inherent in Bourdieu's thesis is the assertion that the child acquires the code which he calls cultural capital with which to decipher the message of the dominant culture(school culture).However, contends Bourdieu, for those who do not acquire such cultural capital(working and peasantry class children) from their family, the school is the only link to the dominant culture. They come to school disadvantaged in the sense that they do not have the ease and familiarity of those who, because of their family back ground, are already equipped with the necessary "habits" to handle the demands of an academic training(Bourdieu,1974).The cultural rift created by the segregation of school and home life, and of academic and everyday knowledge, becomes the source of class differentiation and reproduction(Bourdieu and Passeron,1979).Thus according to Bourdieu, the causes of poor academic results by students from lower social class is rooted in the family, the class structure and the family's position in it, and the school culture. However, Bourdieu falls short of identifying the home back ground factors affecting academic performance which constitute what he calls cultural capital, this study therefore seeks to establish these causal factors.

The work of Bernstein (1977; 1980) on class culture is highly complementary to that of Bourdieu discussed above. The distance between the language and culture of the school, and the social class back ground of the child is seen by both Bernstein and Bourdieu as the crucial factor in the students' performance in examination. He asserts that working class children speak in what he calls a restricted code(Bernstein,1977).This means that the working class children tend to talk about particular cases or examples, where as the middle class children express themselves more conceptually and are more inclined to make abstract generalisations than working class

children(Bernstein,1980).

If Bernstein's assertion is true, then the educational consequences of the codes are far reaching, because the social, emotional and intellectual learning allowed by them are of different kinds (Levitas, 1974).Following on Bernstein's work on language codes, Levitas (1974) maintains that an elaborated code allows a child to experience above his/her separateness from others- his/her individuality. The elaborated code, argues Levitas (1974) has two forms of expression, as a verbal elaboration of relations between persons, and as a verbal elaboration between objects. While it is possible for a middle class child to posses both of these forms of expression, the same child also has access to a restricted code. For the child with a restricted analysis, classification, as well as synthesis and concept building in relation to experience are inhibited (Bernstein, 1977).

In short then, it may be concluded from Bernstein's thesis that a lower social class child is disadvantaged in the education system as slhe has to orient oneself towards a different structure of meaning at school, whether in form of reading books, language use or in the patterns of social relationships(McNeil and Townley,1994). The meaning structure of the school is imposed on, rather than integrated within the form and context of the lower social class child's culture (Levitas, 1974). A wedge is progressively driven between the child as a member of a family and community and the child as a member of a school (Bernstein, 1980). Either way, the child is expected, and his/her parents as well, to drop their social identity, their way of life and its symbolic representations at the school gate. For by definition, their culture is deprived (cultural deprivation) and parents are inadequate in both the moral and the skill orders they transmit (Bernstein, 1977). Under these circumstances therefore, lower social class students are expected to obtain poor results in public examinations because they lack the school culture.

Ethnographic research findings by Zeuli and Floden (1987) similarly revealed that cultural deficiencies are a significant obstacle to obtaining good examination results. Zeuli and Floden (1987) maintain that schools are insensitive to students' cultural back grounds, and thus fail to serve some sections of the society because instruction and curricula are designed for middle class children. The middle class is only one of the many groups that public schooling should serve. Another ethnographer, Erickson (1986), asserts that the risk of school failure for lower social class students is increased by the incongruities between classroom patterns and those prevalent in the students' culture. The contention is that subtle sub cultural differences between the family and the school culture can lead to "... interactional difficulties, misunderstandings, and negative attributions between teachers and students in the classroom" (Erickson, 1986; 135).These incongruities between the students' school and everyday culture include among other things ways of showing attention, ways of asking questions, dressing and other subtle action and communication patterns(Erickson,1986).From the discussion, it may be concluded that the rift between the students' home background culture and the school culture(cultural incongruity) largely influences academic outcome of students.

Methodology

The study used the descriptive survey method since the main focus was to gather information among students, teachers and school heads about their true opinions, feelings ,attitudes and perceptions towards the incongruities between the home background and school culture vis- vis the poor academic performance by students from lower social class in the education system. There are 12 secondary schools in Gweru Urban, 5 are boarding schools and the other 7 are scattered in high density areas of Gweru. 6 out of the 7 schools in the high density areas were selected for the study, since it was assumed that they are largely attended by students of poor home back ground which

was the target population of the study.6 school heads, 120 teachers and 200 students were randomly selected for the study from the 7 schools. Three sets of questionnaires were administered to school heads, 'O' level teachers and students respectively. The questionnaire items were both closed and open-ended and solicited for both quantitative and qualitative data. The research findings are presented both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The Findings

A number of home background factors were identified and investigated to establish their incongruities with the school culture. Unlike western research which mainly focused on the incongruities between the school culture and the home background culture, the purpose here was to focus on establishing the home background factors that cause the cultural rift between the school and the home in Zimbabwe. Similar to research findings by western research(Aithusser,1971;1986;Apple,1979;Bernstein,1977;1980;Boudon,1974;Bourdiue,1974;Bour dieu and Passeron,1979;Douglass,1964;and Giroux,1981), the findings of this study revealed that there are incongruities between the home back ground culture and the culture of the school leading to negative consequences on the academic performance of students from poor family back ground.

The research findings are presented and analysed under the following headings;

Family socio-economic status

Family size

Parental attitude

Language used in the home

In this study, 'family socio-economic status' means the differences between the groups of people caused mainly by their financial situation(Macionis,1989).This study established that students

attending secondary schools in Gweru Urban High Density area are largely of poor family back ground and that only 33% of their parents had secondary education. Being of working class background, and most of their parents employed largely in menial jobs where they are grossly exploited and under-paid, the students were of low socio-economic status. Their homes were found to be deficient of the prerequisites of the school culture such as reading material and English language, the medium of instruction and communication at school. Tables 1 and 2 below show the occupation and educational levels of the parents of students under study.

Table 1: Occupation of parents of the students under study

OCCUPATION	PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS		
	MOTHERS		FATHERS
	NUMBER %		NUMBER %
Civil service; Army/ Police 6	6	10	10
General wor	83	65	65

ker83			
Unemployed11	11	17	17
Mining0	0	8	8
Total 100	100	100	100

Source: 'O' Level students in Gweru Urban High Density Secondary Schools

As table 1 above shows, only 6% of the students' mothers and 10% of their fathers were employed in the Civil Service where they are currently receiving US 250 dollars monthly allowance. It must be noted that most of these parents are lodgers and mostly landlords are currently demanding on average US100 dollars monthly rentals, and there are other costs to pay monthly such as electricity bills, water bills phone bills and other essential services, let alone transport costs to and from work.83% of the students' mothers and 65% of their fathers were General Hands in the Civil Service and numerous Companies where they were equally largely under paid or sometimes not paid at all. From the research findings, it was revealed that most of the students under study were of poor back ground whose parents are currently reeling in economic hardships because of poor salary remuneration and the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy. From these results, students attending schools in Gweru Urban High Density secondary schools are largely of poor home back ground, their parents can hardly afford the necessary reading material and nutritious diet, they

therefore experience cultural and material deprivation, and their home background and school culture are miles apart leading to a cultural rift between the home and the school

Table 2: Highest Educational Level Attained by Parents of students under study

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS	
	MOTHERS	FATHERS
None	15	11
Primary Education	31	34
Form two	37	15
'O' Level	17	30
'A' Level	0	5
Tertiary Education	0	5
Total	100	100

Source: 'O' level students in Gweru Urban High Density Secondary Schools

As table 2 above demonstrates, the parents of most of the students had very minimal education; 'a characteristic of low socio-economic status families" (Shizha, 1998:167).Only 30% of their fathers and 17% of their mothers had secondary education, while 60% of their fathers and 83% of their mothers had very minimal secondary education. Such parents according to Laureau (1987) lack the cultural capital to shape their compliance with requests from schools to participate in the schooling of their children. The results of the study revealed that 67% of the students were absent from school for the better part of the year because they had not paid fees, they did not have a uniform, or they did not have stationery, that is ,lower class children are frozen out of the school system. It was found out that the greater part of the syllabi was covered while most of the lower social class students were absent from school trying to find money for their educational costs. Asked if they

would proceed to 'A' level if they passed 'O' level, 67% of the students said they would not, largely because their parents did not have the financial resources, only 5% of the students said they would proceed to 'A' level, while 28% said they would not pass 'O' level in the first place, the reason being school life was difficult for them, thus revealing the cultural incongruity between the home and the school.

Most of the responses from students showed that they lived in dire poverty. The most frequent responses from students were;

'My parents are poor, I come to school without shoes, a uniform or jersey during winter'

'Our harvests are not always good, we are struggling to make ends meet'

'I do not have enough reading material because I come from a poor family'

'My parents are poor, I come to school without having taken a meal, we only have supper'

'We are poor, sometimes I go to school hungry'

Responses from 87% of the teachers on students' home back ground revealed that most of the students attending high density urban secondary schools are from poor back grounds. The most frequent responses from teachers were;

'Most parents are poor, they can not afford to pay fees on time, buy reading material or stationery for their children'

'Some of the students come to school on empty stomachs, which results in low concentration during lessons'

These findings confirm conclusions made by Lockheed, Fuller and Nyirongo (1989) that greater financial resources may allow parents to provide children with a greater range of reading material and superior diet and thus enhance their academic performance. These financial shortcomings and their negative consequences demonstrate the cultural incongruities between the home and the school.

As table 3 below demonstrates, the students in this study came mostly from large families, 'a characteristic of low socio-economic status' (Douglas, 1964; 71)

Table 3: Family size of the students under study

Number of children in a family	Number of students	%
0-3(small)	3	3
4-6(medium)	16	16
7+ (large)	81	81
Total	100	100

Source: 'O 'level students in Gweru Urban High Density Secondary schools

The students interviewed said that they did not have adequate reading space in their homes as they did not have conducive study rooms or privacy in which they could study alone. Because of their large families, studying at home or writing homework was quite a tedious task for these students. Only 20% of the students said they had enough reading space or privacy in their homes, while 80% indicated that they had to make-do with the overcrowding in their families.70% of the students said they had bedrooms which they however shared with their siblings and that they did their homework or studies there. The study revealed that lower social class students did their home work and studies in very difficult and unconducive conditions. In other words, characteristics of family serve as a cultural rift between the school culture and the home background culture, the social and cultural elements of family life can be viewed as a form of cultural capital which in the case of this research findings, inhibit the learning of students from lower social class. The findings demonstrate the cultural rift and the social class differences in students' school experiences and educational outcomes.

The study revealed that 87% of the students had difficulties in communicating and comprehending

in English, the language used in school. The students mostly never used this language outside the school, 77% used Shona, and 17% used Ndebele, while 6% spoke Nyanja. However, lessons in school are largely conducted in English, and examinations (measure for academic performance in Zimbabwe) are also set and written in English. In other words during the examination (whatever the length of that particular examination is), students are required to think and write in English, a language which they are mostly unfamiliar with. For one to do well in a predominantly English Language dominated education system, one has to be familiar with English Language. Yet 87% of the students in this study only came into contact with this language at school, what Bourdieu (1974) called lack of cultural capital while Bernstein (1977; 1980) described this cultural incongruity as the Restricted Code.91% of the teachers interviewed attributed the high failure rate among students from lower social class to the language they used at home, as it is incongruent to the school culture.

Asked how often English was spoken in their homes, 87% of the students' responses were;

'Not at all'

'We only hear it on radio or television'

'Very rarely, we only use it at school '

Commenting on English Language as a causal factor of poor examination results, 97% of the teachers responded thus;

'Students had difficult with the language(English) used at school'

'Students' poor grasp of the language of the school(English) led to poor results'

'Students found it extremely difficult to comprehend instructions and answer questions in English'

'Students could not communicate in English'

These findings confirm assertions by Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) that the family, through its culture and language, equips the child with the dominant values of the school. These findings also

confirm Bourdieu's (1974) thesis that, for those who do not acquire the language of the school (cultural capital) from their family, the school is the only link to the dominant culture. Students in this study came to school disadvantaged in the sense that they were not at ease or familiar with the official language at school because of their poor family background(i.e. because of material and cultural deprivation).The findings of this study are also complementary to Bernstein's(1977;1980) observations on language codes and class culture. Similar to this study, Bernstein concluded that low socio-economic class students do not do well in the education system as they have to orient themselves towards a different structure of meaning at school, usually in the form of language use.

The results of this study revealed that a student from lower social class' performance was also affected by lack of parents' participation in their children's education. Research findings revealed that parents rarely visited the schools to check on the educational progress of their children, yet quantitative studies have established that parental involvement is a crucial determinant of educational performance (Laureau, 1987). 60% of the teachers interviewed said that the parents came to school only when invited for disciplinary issues involving their children, 20% said the parents never at all visited schools attended by their children, while 5% of the teachers said the parents only came to school once a year to attend the annual general meeting, largely to block school fees increases.53% of the students said their parents visited their school only when invited, 27% said their parents never visited their school, while 20 % said their parents visited their school once a year.

Asked when their parents paid fees, 13% of the students had their fees paid on or before opening day, 67% paid after they had been sent back home for not paying, while 20% said they could not afford the fees in the first place. The study also revealed that 83% of the students' parents did not

help their children with homework largely because most of them had minimal secondary education.

Most frequent responses from teachers on parental attitude were;

'Most parents were hostile to teachers'

Most parents were unwilling to pay fees on time or to buy reading material for their children'

'Parents did not motivate and encourage their children'

'Children lacked parental guidance'

'Parents were not interested in their children's education'

'The parents did not promote a conducive learning environment at home'

The findings from this study revealed that parental participation and involvement in their children's education is low, demonstrating cultural incongruity between the home and the school. Yet Douglas(1964)'s research findings revealed that, the single most important factor related to academic performance is the degree of parental interest in their children's education.

Policy Reccommendations

The study recommends that the Government should urgently consider increasing significantly the salaries being currently paid to civil servants, this could help capacitate parents to not only pay fees, but also buy reading material for their children. The Government could also significantly increase the grants being paid to schools to reduce the burden of the cost of education on the family. A well planned mix of school inputs, both material and pedagogical, can overcome socio-economic home environment in students' academic performance. The costs to parents, noted earlier as a major obstacle to education for lower social class students is reduced drastically since the Government's intervention through paying grants to schools would substitute for school levies paid by parents. Finally, the curriculum planners should also take into account the culture of the home back ground of lower social class children so as to cater for this larger section of our national population. This could be achieved by including the experiences of lower class children in the curriculum.

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The Zimbabwe Domestic Violence Act (Chapter 5:16): An Elusive Agenda?

By

Efiritha Chauraya

Abstract

This article discusses the Zimbabwe Domestic Violence Act (2007) (Chapter 5: 16) and its regulations. It starts by giving a brief overview of the Act, and then goes on to explore the key

concept of this study, which is women empowerment. As a legal channel for dealing with the problem of domestic violence, the Act draws domestic violence from the private sphere into a public matter, the question being: How useful is the Act in bringing power inequalities within the family from the private arena into a public matter? Drawing on in-depth semi structured one- to-one interviews with married women, their husbands and police officers, the study explores this question through the application of the Act and the implication of this on women empowerment and decision making. This article takes a rather feminist perspective as it is mainly concerned with the Act as it relates to married women. The results show that, in spite of the new law, acceptance and tolerance of domestic violence is still widespread. The gendered power dynamics within the marriage setting in Zimbabwe have been identified as the key factors determining women's vulnerability to domestic violence. The article ends by providing important directions in intervention and reform. At the very least, the Zimbabwe State needs to provide adequate resources and materials to stem the tide of domestic violence. Included in this venture is intensive and extensive legislation education, grassroots campaigns and empowerment programmes for both men and women.

Introduction

A research by the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), in 2005, shows that domestic violence is a problem throughout the world (Pkhakadze and Jamaspishvili, 2007). The Zimbabwe National Report to the Fourth World Conference on women held in Beijing in 1995 (Zimbabwe Government 1994), the report by the Zimbabwe Republic Police (Tichagwa and Maramba, 1998) as well as the results of a 2003 study by Musasa Project, an indigenous Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) in Zimbabwe, show that Zimbabwe is no exception to this problem (Musasa Project, 2003). In the face of this problem, greatly pressed by NGOs, especially the Musasa Project and the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association, the Zimbabwe Government passed the Domestic Violence Act on the

10th of February 2007. This Act became operational as law in Zimbabwe on the 25th of October 2007, heralding a new era through sculpturing the Zimbabwe legal landscape, for before this, there was no law specifically addressing domestic violence.

The gist of this study, though only a fairly small exploratory one, is to explore the feasibility of fruitful application of the Act by women in a society where an ideal woman is one who does not complain even if badly treated and where socialization brings with it a lot of myths about battered women. The study focuses on married women whose socialization disempowers them from birth and worse off in marriage. For these women socialization disempowers them in that, born in patriarchy, they are considered minors from birth to death. As minors the women are relegated to a subordinate and subservient position. One of the key cardinal points of patriarchy is that men dominate, not in terms of numbers, but in terms of decision making. Thus these women's primary form of access and control in decision making is as dependent members of their families. There capacity to make strategic life choices is thus likely to be very limited. This in turn is critically bound with how these women perceive themselves, are seen by those around them and their societies. The marriage institution further disempowers the married women in that marriage is an institution characterized by power and in patriarchy it is always male power. This power is found in cultural attitudes and internalized beliefs related to different areas of marriage life e.g. in relation to how and when sex is conducted. This power has become so entrenched in the people's minds that the inequalities it creates are accepted as normal. This perception, silences married women in situations of extreme inequalities.

Ideas for this study were, however, also sort from men on what they thought of the Act and also from the police who handle cases of domestic violence.

This article is in six parts. The first part is this introduction which gives the objective of the study. The second part gives the theoretical perspective that underpins the study and the third section is an elaboration of the Zimbabwe Domestic Violence Act, herein only called the Act. The fourth section elaborates on the concept of women empowerment, a term felt very crucial in this study. The fifth section provides the research methodology and findings in detail. The sixth part are recommendations made from the findings. Finally, there is a section on conclusion of the study.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective underpinning this study is the Radical Feminist Theory of gender inequality (Haralambos & Holborn 2004). In line with Haralambos and Holborn (2004), this study takes the view of a theoretical framework as a statement or group of statements established by

reasoned argument based on known facts, intended to explain a particular fact or event. According to the Radical Feminist theory, the male based authority and power structures are responsible for the discrimination of women in society. This male based authority is called patriarchy, and literally translated patriarchy means rule of the father (Daly, 1998) and this social dominance of women by men is bred through socialization. The theory views patriarchy as dividing rights, privileges and power primarily by gender and in the process oppressing women and privileging men. To this perspective, patriarchy has tricked society to view the world in opposites e.g. men/women, active/passive/ rational/emotional, civilized/uncivilized, strong/weak, bright/dull, clever/stupid e.t.c. and this dualistic frame of the world has structured and patterned and continue to structure people's thinking, action, behavior, attitudes and perceptions. According to these dualistic principles, femininity is associated with submissiveness, passivity, weakness and obedience. Masculinity on the other hand is associated with aggressiveness, strength and authority. Women and men, according to the Radical Feminist theory, are thus attributed different status and roles which legitimize the segregation between the two sexes and the subordination of women.

In this dualistic view of the world, the men is the 'one' and the women is the 'other' and in their position as the other the women are kept in a subordinate position. In their subordinate position, the women are denied access to and control of decision making, thus denied enjoyment of own rights. In patriarchy, males rule by right of birth and commenting on this fact Meena (1992) says, that is why, in 'patriarchy even the weakest man has a woman to oppress and exploit.'

From this frame, this study's interest lies in how the research participants' remarks, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes shape and perpetuate scenarios that strip women of any form of control and access to their rights and decision making. Though disregarding the rather militant approach of the theory, this study borrows the theory's radical ('radical' as getting to the root) support of change and skepticalism of any political action within the current gendered system This frame also informed both the method and methodology of this study.

The Act

The Act is a family law whose legislated mandate is to make the home a safe haven for its inhibitors, through providing them with security and protection. Before this, there was no law specifically addressing domestic violence (dv) and cases of dv were regulated through administration of miscellaneous acts. The Act thus attracted significant national attention and is generally heralded as a ground breaking force for enhanced peace and security within the home and private sphere. According to this Act, dv is now an offence, punishable in its own right. The broad

aim of the Act is to make provision for the protection and relief of survivors of dv. Part 1(3) of the Act gives the meaning and scope of dv, and to its credit the list of behaviors that constitutes dv is not finite and in its own words the Acts defines dv broadly as "any unlawful act, omission or behavior which results in death or the direct infliction of physical, sexual, or mental injury to any complainant by a respondent" (Government of Zimbabwe 2006: 213). Part 11(5) of the Act outlines the duties and powers of arrest of the police in respect of dv. Of interest to this study is the Act's requirement that every police station be staffed by at least one police officer with the relevant expertise in dv. Of particular interest to this study is how the mobility of the individual officers is taken care of.

The Act is both protective and preventive. Part 111 of the Act is on the protective aspect while part 1V dwells on the preventive dimensions of the Act. The Act protects through issuing of protective orders and warrants. Part 111 (6), (9) and (10) are specifically on this protective aspect. These three sub-sections elaborate on how the protection order and warrant of arrest can be applied for and how they are issued. Part 111(6) gives guidance on how a protection order can be applied for. Part 111(9) elaborates on how a protection order can be issued, while 111(10) outlines the main contents the protection order.

More or less like dv laws of most countries, a key achievement of the Act is its inclusion of provision of shelters for survivors of dv. These shelters, commonly known as 'half way homes', are safe homes which act as buffer zones which separate the survivor of violence from the violence s/he is vulnerable to (Pkhakadze and Jamaspishvili, 2007). This study sought to establish if such shelters are in place and if so, examine the extent to which they meet the minimum standards in terms of services for survivors of dv. Another protective device provided by the law concerns potential applicants for a protection order. Of interest to this study is item one of 111(6) (d) where an application can be made by a complainant's representative, with or without his/her consent. This sub-section states that "… an application for a protection order maybe made to court by any person acting as the complainant's representative , with or without the consent of the complainant". This study sought to establish the fruitfulness of this in a society where socialization emphasizes on no searching of other people's private lives. Marriage is considered private and therefore reporting a case of dv within a marriage, without the consent of any one of the marriage parties is considered prying on other people's private lives. Can people pry into married people's lives?

The law is preventive through rehabilitation of both victim and perpetrator through establishment of Anti-Domestic Violence counselors and through setting up of an Anti-Domestic Violence

Committee. Section IV of the Act elaborates on the duties of the Anti-Domestic counselors. The anti-domestic counselors shall, (Section IV (14) (2) (a)) "advice, counsel and mediate the solution of any problems in personal relationships that are likely to lead or have led to the use of domestic violence". The rehabilitation is meant to stop reoffending because it is believed that, if this is not done, then the fear is more violence. Section IV (15) elaborates on the composition and duties of the Anti- Domestic Violence Committee. The Anti-Domestic Violence Committee is composed of Government officials, NGOs and Churches. Its duty is to keep the problem of dv under review, disseminate information, and promote research and service provision as well as monitor implementation of the Act. It also promotes the establishment of safe homes mentioned earlier own, to shelter victims of dv. At the time of writing this article, this is the only law in Zimbabwe which is managed by a committee. This study set itself to find out how far the committee is meeting its endeavor.

The next section explores the meaning of women empowerment as it is a critical element of the study.

Women Empowerment Clarified

The idea of women empowerment taken in this article originates in the perception that the women being talked about are in the first place disempowered by the gender socialization process that they go through from the time they are born. Gender socialization is herein taken to be the means through which social expectations regarding appropriate gender characteristics are conveyed to the child (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993). This process is very significant for these women in that from their birth, it provides them with role models and prepares them for their current and future lives as 'cultured' married women.

Because this socialization process differs from society to society and within societies (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004), the disempowerment of women takes different forms and contexts. This could be the reason why Longwe (2001) finds it easy to define empowerment by its absence rather than define it in action. This is because in action, empowerment takes on multidimensional facets. Longwe (2001) and Babikwa (2004) make note of what empowerment is not. Among these is that empowerment is not:- improved socio-economic status, increased intellectual pursuit, increased political participation, equality in gender division of labour, e.t.c. At best these only contribute to or result from the process of empowerment. This study takes Kabeer (2005)'s view of empowerment. According to Kabeer (2005) only formally disempowered people can be empowered. To be disempowered is to be denied access to make a choice and to be empowered, (Kabeer, 2005), is to

gain access to make choices by those who previously have been denied that access.

Even if there is no blueprint for empowerment (Hannan, 2003), this study adopts the empowerment stages outlined by both Kabeer (2005) and Hannan (2003). The first step on the road to empowerment is realization by the women that they are denied access to make a choice and that this denial is not God given but societal determined. The second step sees the concerned women desiring and willing to gain the denied access. This normally happens through conscientisation. The third step is their gaining skills to attain the denied access to make a choice. This again normally happens through conscientisation. The fourth stage is their attaining the access and the last stage is putting their choice into effect. According to Kabeer (2005) and (Hannan, 2003) the first four stages are the road to empowerment. Empowerment is the last stage, that is action. Change has to be the perceived end.

In the context of this understanding, this article thus then totally agrees with Kabeer (2005) that people may exercise a great deal of choice in their lives but not empowered in the sense in which the term is used in this study. This is because they may not have been disempowered in the first place. For these women, making a choice and decision to report domestic violence is empowerment because their socialization is based on denial of choice and making a report is something considered outside the realm of possibility.

Preferred also are the definitions of empowerment by Ankerbo and Hoyda (2003) and Babikwa (2004). Ankerbo and Hoyda (2003:12) take empowerment to mean "A process by which disempowered individuals and groups gain the power to control their life and the ability to make strategic life choices." A strategic life choice is one that changes an individual's position through the individual's recognition of and challenge to his or her exclusion from domains imposed by customary gender relations. Traceable to the works of Molyneux (1985)'s concept of gender interests and later built upon by Moser (1993)'s works on gender needs, strategic life choices when met enable men and women to transform existing imbalances of power between them (March, Smyth & Mukhopadhyay, 1999). Concurring with these ideas about strategic life choices, Kabeer (2005) argues further that not all choices in life are equally relevant to the definition of empowerment. Some life choices have greater significance than others in terms of their consequences for people's lives. Strategic life choices are these life choices of greater significance. Strategic life choices for these women include for example control over decisions affecting one's life, like freedom of movement and associations, how to use one's income, whether to have sex or not, and so on. A strategic life choice helps frame other choices.

Also preferred is Babikwa (2004: 72)'s view of empowerment as "…an understanding of the causes of powerlessness, recognizing systematically oppressive forces and acting individually or collectively to change the conditions of life". Because of the significance of beliefs and values in legitimating these women's subordinate and subservient position, empowerment has to begin from within, with the women realizing their self worth. That is why Kabeer emphasizes the fact that the process of empowerment is self generated and self propelled because such a change must be believed in, initiated and directed by the one whose interests it is meant to serve and sustain (Kabeer cited in March et al 1999).

We often hear of empowerment workshops and the like. In the context of this study, this is at best a watered down view of the term or at worst a misuse of the term. This is because dealing with issues of HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe in 2009, a joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS has frequently discovered that although they could generate a high level of awareness among women about practicing safe sex through using e.g. condoms, they were not successful in getting the women to change their sexual practices (UNAIDS, 2009). This could be the result of people's beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors. Provision of resources and services (like condoms in this case) cannot, as Hannan (2003) indicates, tackle the root causes of the disempowerment which are ingrained in the causes of gender inequalities in societies. The women have little control in decisions regarding them as relates to sexual matters. The women are worse off when married because the cultured wife should know very little about sexual matters and rarely talks about such. It is this structural and systemic discrimination within societies which subordinates women and this cuts across all corners of these women's lives. Empowerment for these women, therefore, includes processes that lead the women to perceive themselves as people with rights and entitlements, able to voice their demands and access and control decisions. This study thus also agrees with Hannan (2003: 2) who aptly define empowerment as a "process which involves changing consciousness, identifying areas needing change, developing strategies and action to be taken and monitoring these actions and their outcomes." Empowerment for women in this study is when knowledge of the Domestic Violence Act leads to action. It is not the will to report a case of domestic violence, but it is reporting itself. The law can only be implemented if the victims or sympthisers report. From the above, it is crystal clear that for these disempowered women to be empowered, it requires a great deal of self confidence and self actualization.

The thrust of this study was to establish whether the women have abilities to make strategic choices and decisions that would affect important life outcomes like reporting own husband for dv. For the

studied women gender violence aspects are culturally condoned within their culture because they are perceived as within the bounds of what is expected of men in their interaction with women in different situations.

Research Methodology

Mixed research designs have been adopted for this study, consisting of a simple survey and of network referrals (Creswell, 2003). Five women were randomly selected from women who had reported cases of dv to the police at Gweru Central Police Station, and using network referrals, a further 20 wives and 20 husbands were chosen for the study. Semi structured one-to-one interviews, because of the need to access opinions, beliefs, perceptions and values of the respondents, were held with the 3 police officers who handled cases and issues relating to dv (2 from the main urban station and 1 from a sub station), and with the 20 husbands and 25 wives. The interviews were held in Gweru peri urban and urban area of the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. All the interviews were carried out by this researcher from March to September 2009. Of the 20 husbands 5 were from peri urban and 15 were from the urban area. Of these, 4 had their wives report them for domestic violence to the police. Of the 25 wives, 4 were wives of the 4 husbands mentioned above. 8 wives were from the peri urban and 17 were from the urban area. Of the 20 husbands and wives, 13 were couples but were interviewed separately.

Findings

Results from the study revealed that dv is still prevalent and is indeed a controversial issue in Zimbabwe. In 40 out of the 45 (88,9%) cases studied, women are the recipients of this form of violence. Statistics from the Victim Friendly Unit (VFU) at Gweru Central Police Station revealed that women are the chief recipients of dv. In 2008, the police recorded 160 cases of dv in the Midlands Province and of these 95% were cases against women while the remaining 5% cases were against children. Thus, these results concur with Osirim (2003) 's findings on violence against women in Zimbabwe, where she noted a lot of 'gender asymmetry' against the women as regards dv. From January 2009 to 18 February 2009, 20 cases of dv had been reported, 85% against women, 5% against men and 10% against children. These figures could not be compared to the period before enactment of Act because there was no law on domestic violence per se,   let alone, on even what domestic violence constituted. Thus from January 2008 to January 2009 an average of 14 cases were reported per month. This demonstrates that violence against women is still on the increase despite passing of the legislation that fully criminalises dv. Statistics from the police show that more crimes are committed in the month of November, a month in Zimbabwe when most

workers receive their bonuses.

The study also revealed that crimes of dv go widely unreported especially in the peri- urban areas studied. The research findings revealed that there is widespread ignorance of the new Act. Where knowledge of the Act existed (in the peri urban areas) it was mostly men (76%) who said they knew about the new Act but there was a lot of misconception as regards its contents and purpose. This was true of 88% of the studied peri urban cases and 71% of the urban cases studied.

According to the police statistics the main causes for dv are poverty (68%) and HIV/AIDS (30%). The poverty cases included cases where women were economically dependent on the men (78%), where both husband and wife were not working (15%), where only the wife was working (5%), and where both were working (2%). Commenting on these statistics, the police officers said when money is simply not enough conflict on its usage degenerated in acts of violence mostly because the husband monopolizes its usage. This, Johnson (2005: 3) calls "situational couple violence" and in this study it was established that although this situational couple violence was perpetrated by both men and women, the men did more serious damage and their violence was more likely to introduce fear into the relationship. In the cases citing HIV/AIDS as the main cause, it was the woman who would have gone for HIV testing on her own, got the results and then the husband refusing safe sex. In 8% of the cited cases, this resulted in husband finding another woman. In 19% of the cases it resulted in marital rape. This could be the result of power differences between husbands and wives in patriarchal societies.

In the words of one informant who confided that she had tested HIV positive, told the husband and got a thorough beating for going for testing without his knowledge, the woman said "Even if I am against it, we continue to have unprotected sex." This reveals the powerlessness of married women in sexual matters. This powerlessness is a result of patriarchy. In patriarchy, women are viewed not as human beings, but as sexual objects to be used at will. Working on 'Patriarchy and Female Subordination in Zimbabwe' Kambarami (2006) notes that part of the marriage contract in a patriarchal society, is that when the husband wants sex, the wife should comply and is expected to be sexually passive and submissive to the husband. The man is the initiator of sex and sets the conditions for the sexual encounter. Who then is a woman to demand protection? This is one way in which marriage disempowers married women. The disempowerment takes away the women's voices and control not only of sexual matters but control of other facets of their marriage lives. Thus born and bred to be subordinates, socialization in patriarchy strips the women of any form of control over decision making. Ironically, this same woman withdrew her case of battery from the

courts. Asked why she withdrew, she said almost all the family members, including her parents, blamed her for reporting the issue to the police. Again this is an indication of how marriage disempowers married women through the power found in cultural attitudes and internalized beliefs. This perception together with fears of stigma and of negative consequences silence married women in situations of extreme suffering from dv. Battery in this case could have been considered legitimate by relatives because this woman as a subordinate was not supposed to go for testing without the knowledge and consent of the husband. According to friends and relatives she is the wrong doer. Her failure in marriage because of such a thing would bring shame to the relatives and friends too hence their blaming her for reporting.

Another woman whose husband had beaten her because she had refused to give him money from her sale of tomatoes, said now she no longer resists because the husband beats her up so badly that she ends up regretting why she said no in the first place. (This case involved both husband and wife out of formal employment). Resistance came at a prize of a thorough beating. Asked whether she knew about the Act, she said yes. Asked again why she did not report to the police, she scoffed and said "what will reporting him to the police yield? - more beatings or even divorce. What will that mean to me?" Indeed, 69% of the women felt the same about this intimate terrorism. They found the prize for stepping out of the line making one suffer physically and emotionally so much that it is not worth the trouble to report.

From the results obtained, many factors surround the reason why women do not report dv inflicted on them by their husbands. The first and most important reason from the study was socialization in a patriarchal society. Patriarchy, by its definition, is control of men over women, and as said already this socialization strips women of any control in marriage matters. Of the 25 interviewed women, 23 (92%) alluded to undergoing dv of some sort. 20 (80%) had been abused verbally, 11 (44%) raped in marriage, 4 (16%) had been denied chance to enter into gainful employment while 78% of the wives in employment talked of their salaries that were spent against their wish. Admitting suffering these various forms of dv, all of these women said they had more to lose if they report and that it would tarnish their reputation in their communities, while a sizeable number (60%) feared that reporting would land their husbands in jail and this would result in his loss of employment. This they claimed would lead into financial suffering of the whole family. "What is better I suffer and my children have food to eat or I don't suffer and my children starve" claimed one women. Her definition of suffering is a beating yet any form of abuse, be it verbal, emotional e.t.c. is suffering. Little did she realize that either way she was suffering. This false consciousness

is again a result of the patriarchal socialization the women have gone through. 76% of the women said they forced themselves to have a non suffering personality in the face of the public, even in the face of their own children, parents and close relatives. "After all, that is what motherhood is all about," claimed one of them. Again this false consciousness is evident of patriarchy.

Eight (32%) of the women held conciliatory views about battered women. They claimed that wife beating is a sign of love, and therefore, there is nothing unusual about it. In fact, they said it is something welcome. Twelve men (60%) held the same view, claiming that wife beating was a legitimate approach by a man to his wife. Six (30%) men thought that the women who get beaten or scolded ask for it, alluding to the fact that a woman should not have a voice at all in marriage. These remarks are best understood with reference to the concept of patriarchy. In this study patriarchy is useful not only in explaining how the marriage institution works, but how it controls women and gives men and women false consciousness. The mental schemes of these men and women reflect the patriarchal socialization that they have through. Such attitudes, views, perceptions and beliefs are a result of socialization in a patriarchal society. It is this socialization that produces and maintains the structural and systemic discrimination in societies which subordinates women. This is why the Radical feminist theory argues that patriarchy imprisons women lending to their subordination.

Interviews with the police officers revealed that there was sufficient personnel at the police stations, though no police officer trained in handling dv cases was found in the peri- urban police stations. Ironically, gruesome cases of dv that went unreported were revealed there. The study established that in peri urban areas wife buttery was common but unreported and was taken not as an issue.

Information received from the main police office revealed that the police officers handling cases of dv had under gone training in handling of such cases. However, this contradicted the situation witnessed by this researcher at one of the sub stations. It was established that no trained police personnel was at the sub stations and at the peri-urban stations. Those present reported of the trained personnel being out of station. Whatever the reasons, it points to inadequate police officers who are trained in dv. Also evident from the interviews with the police officers was that there was lack of basic equipment from stationery to vehicles, not to mention the safe homes.

All the interviewed police officers talked of 'women who lay charges today and the next day the battered women asks for withdrawal of charges'. This again points to the women's lack of empowerment. Their disempowerment makes them fail to stand by own decisions in face of opposition. These women do not live their lives but live a life dictated by others.

All the five women who had reported to the police complained about police officers who tended to restrict their intervention to calming down the dispute rather than pressing charges. This points to their lack of knowledge in handling dv cases and also to the patriarchal society which takes dv as part and parcel of marriage life. Two of these women complained about police officers who accepted bribes from their husbands, were corrupt (3), and deliberately neglected their work (2). Yet all the five women who had reported their cases to the police lamented the delay in justice delivery. This could be the result of what the police officers called the 'go slow strike action' that they said characterised the police force from 2008 to the time of carrying out this study in February – March 2009.

Of the twenty three interviewed women who admitted having undergone dv, nineteen (82,7%) wished to put the dv incidents out of their minds. These talked about adapting to the violent situations and accepting what one feels cannot change. This defeatist attitude is a result of false consciousness brought about by socialization in a patriarchal society. Bourdieu cited in Ankerbo & Hoyda (2003: 9) calls this false consciousness "symbolic violence", that is the invisible form of power where the dominated women are socialized into "*doxa*" which means taking things for granted. This false consciousness results in the women naturalizing their subordination so that they experience their suffering from dv as inevitable, natural and unchangeable.

These women talked about their coping mechanisms of acceptance and adaptation (what cannot be destroyed has to be endured). These women would rather wait for their husbands to recognize their virtue and were very willing to actually shield them from the consequences of what they called 'unreasonable' or 'cruel behaviuor'. This could be the reason why , though confirming undergoing domestic violence, only 12% of these said the idea of reporting their cases crossed their minds and of these 12% only 2% reported. It could also be the reason behind those women who would report and then withdrew their cases. From the study it was established that anger and pain drove them into reporting immediately, but further reflections on the possible effects of reporting forced them to withdraw the case. This reflection could be a self initiated process (only one case), or pressure and influence from an outsider (three reported cases). Part of an ideal woman's innocence, from the study, was her inability to rebel against or repay own husband for insults or injuries suffered. This was the feeling of eighteen (72%) women and eighteen (78%) men. After all, as one woman said, the martyr role of a wife as injured but innocent makes her an ideal wife – "perseverance and subordination-else no woman would be in the home," she concluded. This totally conforms to what Gaidzanwa (1995) says about images of women in Zimbabwean literature. Gaidzanwa talks about

women considered ideal as those who do not rebel or revenge their husbands for wrong doings but would rather shield them from blames by society through sometimes lying and putting on of non-suffering personalities. Only four (17%) women talked of violence resistance, (though at a prize), as a coping mechanism.

However, what is only clear is that whether the husbands and wives called it 'perseverance, subordination, idealness, adaption or acceptance', it is lack of empowerment and decision making. The following factors were identified as militating against women reporting cases of dv where their own husbands were the perpetrators (only responses from women themselves are reflected here): cultural beliefs resulting in fear of tarnishing own image and being excommunicated by society (100%), value placed on marriage (80%), uncooperative husbands, (where reporting may result in more intimate terrorism) (32%), economic dependency (60%), inaccessibility of information (68%) especially after explaining the purpose of the Act to them, fear of the unknown (16%), hope that things may eventually change for the better leading to development of a wait and see attitude (48%) and for the sake of children and fearing that they may get affected by reporting and their friends may laugh at them even at school (24%).

Of the 20 husbands studied, 13 (65%) complained that the Act disrupts the existing social order by giving women power to voice a lot. Asked if expressing one's wishes is a crime these men were of the view that women should be subdued, submissive and subordinated. This is patriarchy at its best. These men then argued that violence against women is a necessary tactic to control the women especially when they do not comply with the husband's wishes. They also argued that violence is a means of displaying and displacing a man's anger and not an abuse. Eight (40%) of the studied men openly admitted that they too were victims of dv. Six of these men's wives admitted abusing their husbands through not giving them food (5), through use of abusive language (6), and engaging in extra marital affairs (2). They said that they do such things as a way of retaliating against the husband's abusive ways. The data tapped from the 23 women who openly admitted to being abused by their husbands, showed husbands abusing them through battery (65,2%), use of demeaning language (43%), not providing material requirements like soap, food, clothing, e.t.c. (91%), engaging in extra marital affairs (78%), marital rape (65,2%), marital suspicion and accusations(i.e. suspecting without proof/evidence or with very slight evidence. This deprives the individual joy and peace) (17,4%) and not allowing their wives to engage in any economic activities (17,4%). From this it emerged that both men and women are victims of dv, although women seemingly are the brunt of the practice. Men and women, it also emerged from the data, engage in abuses for different

reasons: men used violence as a tactic to maintain control over partner and use this control as a system from which they benefited. Women used violence as a retaliation technique and mechanism. Interviews with the eight men who openly admitted being victims of dv, established that the idea of reporting never crossed their minds, claiming it a shame to be seen to be doing such a thing. They said reporting would remove their manhood and said that they had resorted to drunken behaviours (3), keeping quiet (1), sharing with a religious leader (1) and battery as a way of bringing the misbehaving wife to book (3). Generally, the interviewed men and women shared a natural horror of wife beating and considered it a prelude to the most heinous of crimes, but shockingly, in 40 of the 45 (88,9%) interviews, the tendency was to accommodate it only because the victim was a female spouse. Surprisingly 23 (92%) of the women shared this view. In this way the women contributed to their own subordination. From this, it can be seen that some aspects of dv are embedded in traditions and beliefs and are perceived by even women themselves as something not in need of change- as something divinely ordained. These traditions and beliefs constrain married women's abilities to exercise choices in their own lives, including even choices (like reporting to the police) that would enable them prevent further abuse and make contribute to their own suffering.

So to return to the question in the title, one can safely conclude that the Act seems an elusive agenda because its promise of transformation has been wedged between two hard surfaces. One surface is 'gender and socialization in a patriarchal society'. The other surface is the 'seemingly divinely ordained gender discriminatory traditions and beliefs'. Both of these surfaces, in Zimbabwe, are operating in an environment hostile to fairness and justice in marriage. The study also found that when women view and internalize themselves as subordinates to men, they view themselves of less value, and their sense of their own rights is diminished. Traditions such as this not only deprive women of their rights but sadly, they let men who commit the same crimes scot free. This could be the reason why a sizeable number of women lamented lack of seriousness by some of the police officers handling cases of dv.

Recommendations

The approach taken in this section is firstly to briefly mention the finding, and then advance a recommendation that goes with it, so that findings and recommendations are kept matching.

According to the Act, there have to be safe homes where the victim of dv can be temporarily sheltered to immediately separate him/her from violence as the case might demand. Information from the police indicated that at the moment there is not a single one in the country, citing

financially constraints. Of all the safe homes in the country, non is state owned. Musasa Project, a non governmental organization owns a sizeable number in the country. In line with this finding, yes the Government may be financially crippled, but surely, the Government as a social services provider should avail the shelter, at least to show its commitment to the issue of dv. If building houses proves expensive, at least the Government should consider renting the shelter. The Government can still appeal to well-wishers, churches and NGOs for assistance in this area.

It also emerged that knowledge about the Act is scarce, especially what the Act stands for and information on enforcement of the Act. This study recommends that the Act be written in all the national languages of the country, and availed even on brail to cater for the visually impaired. Currently the language on the Act and even on the application form for a protection order is English. This, considering the women's lower literacy level, presents a big challenge. The Government, the NGOs and the Anti-Domestic Violence Committee should see to the translation and production of relevant materials. Again the study established that there is no monitoring and evaluation of the Act. In view of this, this study calls for supervision of the implementation of the Act, by the lobby groups like the Women Coalition of Zimbabwe, Musasa Project e.t.c. True, the Act designates this role to the Anti-Domestic Violence Committee, but its apparent the committee seems to be meeting challenges in fulfilling its commitments. The lobby groups should supervise and monitor the committee.

Poverty of social power characterized married women's lives. This involved power to make and act on own life choices, even in the face of parents, own husband and society's opposition. This is power to overcome cultural and religious practices and beliefs. Here the study calls for awareness campaigns at churches, schools and other public gatherings. These campaigns should be on the Act and on human rights. The so called Anti Domestic Violence Council should be compelled by both government and lobby groups to spear head the campaigns. In rural communities they should first target the chiefs and counselors, and these in turn should be made to spearhead campaigns in their areas of jurisdiction. The NGOs can help the financially crippled Government with resources. The campaigns are made to bring the new law to the members of the communities. Laws maybe ineffective in practice because they have not been communicated to the people. Peri urban and rural communities in particular should be greatly targeted because people in these communities do not readily get information, whether in print, electronic or through the air. The campaigns should be made to enlighten women especially, so that they do not suffer from lack of knowledge of the laws that affect their lives. The campaigns should aim to make people, especially women whose

socialisation disempowers them, change their perceptions to dv and this is a necessary step towards self empowerment. Through the campaigns an individual develops the capacity to actualize own potential and this is crucial for self empowerment. While the emphasis of the Act is change at an individual level, this cannot be sustained without a supportive social environment. Significant improvements can only be achieved if they are accompanied by wider social changes. A large number of people need to reject ideas and beliefs supporting violence against women. The study emphasizes women especially, because the its findings revealed that some cultural interpretations and justification of wife beating contribute to a display of tolerance of dv even by women themselves, and make women unable to take action against injustices and perpetrators. It was disheartening to note that the majority of women themselves believed that their husbands have a right to beat them. Surely, gender operates through this unquestioned acceptance of power and these women who accept violence at the hands of their husbands like this, do so because to behave otherwise is considered outside the realm of possibility. The gender awareness campaigns should provide such women with analytical skills and capacity as well as with courage to question such unjust practices. These practices are against the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)'s articles three and five. Article 3 states that " Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person,.." and article 5 states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948). The gender campaigns are particularly necessary bearing in mind that the study also found out that, to some women though knowledgeable about their formal legal rights, there existed to them a multitude of reasons why they could not access or exercise their rights. In cases like this, legislation alone will not change behavior – hence this call for empowerment programmes and campaigns. It was here revealed that subtle power mechanisms maintain and reproduce gender based dv, like fear of relatives and society, naturalisation of gender inequalities, e.t.c. Thus, institutionalized violence through beliefs and myths negated women's rights and promoted violence against them. It has to be dealt with through empowerment of men and women. The empowerment for men should make them realize that females are equal partners in marriage and in life. For the women, the empowerment should make them realize that they are worth human beings, with same rights and entitlements as their male counterparts.

This study also established beyond any shade of doubt that dv against wives is grounded in power imbalances between their husbands and themselves, and is caused and perpetuated by factors seemingly different from those that cause dv against their husbands. In line with this, on top of

empowerment initiatives, the community awareness campaigns should also be targeted at anger management and conflict resolution strategies.

This study also calls for training of every police officer in handling of dv cases. This will cater for the staff turn over, transfers and also that it is not known when one may encounter such incidents. Although awareness about gender issues and the Act in particular has risen in Zimbabwe among the police, some police officers were reported to still treat gender as a household problem, hence reports about police officers who were calming down disputes rather than laying charges. More awareness training of handling of dv issues by the police force is called for.

A handful of women (60%) talked about staying in an abusive relationship for economic reasons. This study feels that the Zimbabwe Government's Social Welfare departments and the NGOs should have a fund to help such victims. Poverty and disempowerment have long been proved to go hand in hand (Kabeer, 2005). The inability to meet one's basic needs and the resulting dependence on the powerful husband, rules out the capacity of the abused woman to make a meaningful choice. Thus the end result of the woman's material poverty is her intensified disempowerment.

Conclusion

Although the NGOs and the state in Zimbabwe have worked together to develop a law on family violence, effective response to intimate dv requires more than an enactment of a law. Legislation alone does not change behaviour. For such a law to be successful, it needs to accompany and be accompanied by a context in which dv is not tolerated, condoned or welcomed, and also in which the state aggressively supports the law with adequate resources to stem the tide of dv. This article has offered recommendations in this regards, key of which is the need to challenge and change norms, myths and attitudes that perpetuate dv, else the act's promise of transformation reduces to an elusive agenda.

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Situational Analysis of Psychology at Chancellor College, University of Malawi

by

Joseph M. Kasayira
Charles G. Zimba
Tilinao J.Thyangathyanga,
Lytone S. Jamba
Limbika Senganimalunje
Edister Jamu

Abstract

The study analysed trends of student enrolment in Psychology courses at Chancellor College from academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009 with particular emphasis on enrolment in Psychology courses. In addition participants' experiences and views of Psychology were examined. Participants were 98 (53 female, 45 male) students taking Psychology courses. Two questionnaires, one for first year students and another for Psychology majors, were used to collect data. Further data were obtained from the College Administration office and the Department of Psychology records. Compared to the College, the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Science enrolments, steeper peaks and dips in enrolment trends were observed for Psychology courses. Main reasons for choosing Psychology included: Interest in the subject; and, Failure to qualify in other subjects. The study revealed that Psychology seems to attract average students who generally do better in Psychology courses in comparison to other courses ($t=2.91$, $df=22$, $p<0.01$; $r=0.57$, $df=22$, $p<0.01$). The implications of these and other findings of the study are discussed and recommendations were given.

Introduction

In the early 1970s the role and status of psychology in Africa was not clear as little research had been done in this area (Abdi, 1975). "The few American, French, British, and Belgian psychologists carrying out research in Africa utilized the Western frame of reference to analyze African

problems" (Abdi, 1975, p.228). Thus due to different cultural backgrounds, the results were in most cases biased (Abdi, 1975). On the other hand, in South Africa, where psychology had been prominent since the early 1920s (Louw, 2002), studies by few white psychologists did not represent the true picture as there was tendency to use research as a means of maintaining the view that Whites were superior to Blacks. As a result, there was no effort to train indigenous African psychologists. Furthermore, Blacks had limited access to psychological services.

In Zimbabwe, for instance during the British colonial period, school psychological services were not available to indigenous African students attending government run institutions (Mntungwana-Hadebe, 1994; Mpofu, Mutepfa, Chireshe, & Kasayira, 2007; Mpofu & Nyanungo, 1998). Thus, most indigenous Africans were not exposed to psychology as a field of study. Some of the few trained indigenous African psychologists were not employed in jobs related to their specific fields of training, and so there were few models to emulate. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that, "there was no foreseeable future for those few Africans who trained in the field of psychology" (Abdi, 1975, p.228). Furthermore, Abdi (1975) observed that one of the problems of psychological research in Africa was lack of communication among African psychologists themselves and with other psychologists in the rest of the world. In the same line, Mpofu, (2002) argued that experiences of African communities are significantly underrepresented in psychological literature as compared to those of Western European and North American communities.

There is an improvement in the situation, however, the following scenarios support Abdi's 1975 and Mpofu's 2002 observations: in "International psychology", a book edited by Sexton and Hogan (1992), only three African countries appear: Egypt, South Africa, and Zimbabwe; while in "The handbook of International school psychology" a book edited by Jimerson, Oakland and Farrell

(2007) again, only three African countries appear: Nigeria, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Likewise, Mogaji (2007) observed that, there is very little literature on school psychology in Nigeria. In 2000, the Working Group on the Development of the African Psychological Association also noted that few Africans participated in the International Congress of Psychology (Mpofu, 2002). This suggests that psychology has not been given a prominent position in Africa for a long time. The African countries themselves seem to give psychology a low status to the extent that "when universities are established in Africa, psychology is not given legitimate priority. As a matter of fact, Abdi, (1975) contended that "few African universities train psychologists or offer psychology as essential course requirements" (p.228). By the turn of the century; psychology was not a well established field of study in most African countries (Holdstock, 2000). This is especially true of the sub-Saharan Africa where in most Francophone West Africa, Psychology was offered within teacher education while most former "British areas of East and Southern Africa and Central African Federation have produced full Departments of Psychology" (Shouksmith, 1996:19). Malawi is one of those African countries with at least one university with a fully fledged department of psychology. Malawi, formerly known as Nyasaland, was part of the British Central African Federation.

In Malawi, the Department of Psychology in the University of Malawi originated from the Department of Human Behaviour (Sociology, Social Anthropology, Psychology, Philosophy) in the then School of Social Science that was established in 1965 (Hunnings, n.d.). It became a fully fledged Department of Psychology in 1978 as one of the five departments in the Faculty of Social Science at the University of Malawi's Chancellor College in Zomba. From about 27 students in 1965 (University of Malawi, 1999), the numbers increased to some 130 by 1990 (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993).

In the early 1990s Psychology was very popular and the Department of Psychology at Chancellor College was one of the largest throughout the constituent colleges of the University of Malawi (Carr 1996: 181). According to Carr (1996), in the 1992/1993 academic year the enrolment had to be restricted after it increased by 75%. The result of a research carried out just before the 1992/1993 academic year revealed that students were mainly attracted by the social psychological aspect of the curriculum. Carr (1994) concluded that the high rating of social psychology content in the Psychology curriculum was the main reason why Psychology was very popular with Malawi's undergraduates. In the early 1990s, the popularity of psychology does not seem to be unique to Malawi alone as Louw (1992) had reported that psychology as an area of university study was immensely popular in South Africa with approximately one in five university students taking a course in psychology.

At Chancellor College, the Department of Psychology mainly services two general degree programmes: Bachelor of Social Science degree offered by the Faculty of Social Science and Bachelor of Arts (Humanities) degree offered by the Faculty of Humanities. In the past the Department also used to service the Bachelor of Science degree offered by the Faculty of Science. These   general degree programmes are structured in such a way that a student would take subjects of choice within the faculty in which he/she was admitted and one course outside the faculty. As such, Psychology is an optional subject both within the Faculty of Social Science and outside the faculty. Only students on the Social Science degree programme are allowed to major in Psychology provided that they have done at least 6 Psychology courses (UNIMA calendar 2008). Students are considered majors at third year and fourth year, thus in the present study, psychology majors are those students taking all psychology courses including Psychological Methods for third years or Psychology Research Project for fourth years.

Purpose of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

a) ascertain student enrolment trends in psychology courses from 1990 to 2009

b) determine why some first year students registered for a Psychology course

c) compare first year students' views of Psychology and what they had heard other people say about Psychology

d) examine first years' likelihood of taking Psychology as major during third and fourth year

e) determine students' main reasons for choosing psychology as their subject major

f) examine what Psychology majors heard other students say about Psychology

g) establish students' awareness of where professionals trained in Psychology work

h) suggest ways of improving the profile of Psychology at Chancellor College

Method

Participants

A total of 98 (53 female, 45 male) Psychology students participated in the study. Seventy six participants (40 female, 36 male) were first year students who register to take Psychology (14 of these first year students later deregistered from the course). Twenty two (13 female, 9 male) were third year and fourth year students majoring in Psychology (One student majoring in Psychology opted not to participate in the study).

Instruments

Two questionnaires, one for first year students and another for majors, were used to collect data. The questionnaire for first year students (Appendix A) focused on students' experience before orientation while the one for majors focused on their experience after taking all available Psychology courses (Appendix B).

Procedure

During the registration for the 2008/2009 academic year, first year students registering for Psychology as one of their five courses, and third year and fourth year Psychology majors were asked to respond to questionnaires seeking their views on Psychology. The researchers explained to participants that participation was not compulsory, and for those who participated, it was emphasised that their responses were confidential and were to be used for academic purposes only. They were also reminded that, since no identification details were required, their responses were anonymous. Information on student enrolment in Psychology courses from academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009 was obtained from the College Administration office while data on grades of Psychology majors were extracted from the Psychology departmental records.

Results and discussion

Trends in student enrolment into Psychology courses

Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2 summarize the general trend of student enrolment in Psychology courses from academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009 (by head count). Results show that the relative percentage enrolment peaked to 8.4% in the year 1992/1993 and dipped to 2.4% in 2001/2002. Since 2001/2002 enrolment has been on the rise to 10.7% in 2008/2009 which is exceeding the 1992/1993 peak. From the academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009, the department has serviced an average of about 227 students per academic year which represents about 5.6% per year (see Appendices C and D).

Table 1: Undergraduate Student enrolment at Chancellor College from academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009

Academic year	Relative percentage student enrolment in the			
	College	Faculty of Humanities	Faculty of Social Science	Department of Psychology
1990/1991	4.1	2.7	5.5	4.4
1991/1992	4.4	3.0	5.7	5.3
1992/1993	4.7	2.6	7.0	8.4
1993/1994	4.2	2.5	6.7	7.8
1994/1995	4.9	3.5	6.7	6.4
1995/1996	4.7	3.7	6.1	5.8
*1996/1998	4.6	5.6	4.2	4.0
1998/1999	4.5	3.9	4.7	3.7
1999/2000	4.4	3.9	3.9	2.7
2000/2001	4.8	4.8	4.4	2.9
2001/2002	5.0	4.6	4.3	2.4
2002/2003	5.6	4.9	4.4	2.6
2003/2004	5.7	6.7	5.1	3.9
2004/2005	6.3	6.7	5.6	5.9
2005/2006	7.2	6.1	4.9	5.6
2006/2007	8.4	8.5	6.2	7.7
2007/2008	7.2	13.2	7.3	9.7
2008/2009	9.4	13.2	7.4	10.7
Total	**100.1**	**100.1**	**100.1**	**99.9**

* 1996/1997academic year the college was closed

Figure 1: Student enrolment in undergraduate courses from 1990/1991 to 2008/2009

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0001003f3f3f3f3f3f3f3f00003f3f3f00040000002d010000040000002d0100000400000020101001c000000fb02f5ff0000
00000009000100000000000440002243616c69627269690000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000000400
00002d010100040000002d010100040000002d0101000500000000902000000020d000000320a0a000000010004000000
0000d6014e012000060004000002d010000040000002d010000030000000000

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the percentage relative enrolment for Psychology courses increased from 4.4% in 1990/1991 to 8.4% in 1992/1993. This is consistent with Carr's (1996) conclusion that students' interest in Psychology courses was unprecedented. From 1992/1993 academic year to 1995/1996 academic year the enrolment has been above 5.8%. The trend changed from 1997/1998 through to 2001/2002 when the enrolment dropped drastically from 4% to 2.4% with the academic year 2001/2002 witnessing the lowest relative enrolment within the 18 year period under review. In the last seven academic years (2004/2005 - 2008/2009), with the exception of year 2005/2006, the relative percentage enrolment steeply increased to the extent that, the department maintained enrolments of over 5.6% per year with the 2008/2009 academic year having well above10%.

Although there are many factors that could have attributed to the above described trend, the following are possible explanations: a) The trends in staffing levels both in terms of numbers and qualifications. b) In some years enrolment was restricted, for instance in the 1992/1993 academic

year when the department was oversubscribed (Carr, 1996). c) The use of double codes for introductory courses in some years allowed flexibility that attracted a lot of students. d) Also the inevitable general increase of student enrolment throughout the College over the years, especially with the introduction of non-residential programme, has most probably contributed to the trends of student enrolment presented in Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2. e) The control of registration of audit students varied over the years with laxity in some years and strictness in other years, hence the figures could be slightly more in some years than what is indicated. f) The Department of Psychology has always serviced only undergraduate level programmes. There has been no expansion into certificate, diploma and postgraduate degree levels.

The enrolment trends demonstrate fluctuations in student enrolment from year to year. Such fluctuations appear to be a direct consequence of the structure of the general degree programs at Chancellor College under which Psychology falls. Students are gained and lost to sister departments within and between the faculties.

 First year students' views on Psychology and what they had heard other people say about Psychology

Table 2 is a summary of the first year students' views on Psychology and what they had heard other people say about Psychology. It indicates a good match between what first year students thought about Psychology and what they had heard other people say about Psychology before they went through the University Student Orientation Programme. The main idea concerning what the students heard other people say about Psychology and what they thought about Psychology before the orientation is generally correct. That is, Psychology is the study of human behaviour and helps one to interact with others more effectively. More than 34% of what participants had heard people say about psychology applies to the preceding statement while about 16% of what participants

thought about psychology before the orientation also applies. However, an equally common general idea is the belief that psychology deals with mind reading of which 32% of the participants subscribed to the idea while about 19% of them had heard people subscribe to the same idea.

About 18% of the comments pertaining to what participants thought about psychology and more than 12% of what they heard others, could not be categorised so they were considered under "other" category. Examples include the following:

a) People who do psychology are mean and very argumentative.

b) They do not go to church because they believe that God is dead.

c) It makes someone mad

d) Most psychology students are found of criticising others.

e) It enables one to treat friends the way they like to be treated.

Table 2: First year students' views about Psychology and what people say about Psychology

What participants thought about psychology before orientation	Frequency (%)	What participants heard people say about psychology	Frequency (%)
I would like to study people's minds	24 (16.1)	Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour	42 (28.0)
Psychologists are mind readers	24 (16.1)	Enables you to know what people are thinking	29 (19.3)
Study and understand human behaviour/ Helps one interact with others	24 (16.1)	Helps one to understand oneself and others better/Interact with others more effectively	10 (6.7)
Psychology is tough/challenging	13 (8.7)	It is difficult	17 (11.4)
Helps one be a deep thinker	10 (6.7)	Helps one think/reason better	6 (4.0)
Psychology is interesting	7 (4.7)	Easy/interesting	10 (6.7)
Not marketable	2 (1.3)	Unmarketable	6 (4.0)
Other	27 (18.1)	Other	19 (12.7)
No answer	18 (12.1)	No answer	11 (7.3)
Total	**149 (100.0)**	**Total**	**150 (100.1)**

Reported reasons for registering for a Psychology course

Table 3 shows that the three most common reasons given for registering to do Psychology course are as follows in order of commonness: a) Wish to understand people's behaviour; b) Interest in psychology, and c) To be able to help others, or to become a counsellor or a psychologist. These three reasons account for more than 68% of the reasons given for registering for a Psychology course. Some of the reasons which could not be categorized, constituting 10.5% include the following: a) I want to achieve great thinking; and b) Am just willing to take the challenge because am sure it is not simple

Table3: Reasons for registering for a Psychology course

Reason for registering for Psychology course	Frequency	(%)
Wish to understand people's behaviour	24	31.6
Liking/interest in psychology	16	21.1
To be able to help others /be counsellor/psychologist	12	15.8
It will help in my future career	7	9.2
It is relevant to my other courses	4	5.3
I would like to be able to read people's minds	3	4.0
I was curious after the orientation	2	2.6
Other	8	10.5
Total	**76**	**100.1**

First years' likelihood of taking Psychology as major during third and fourth year

Table 4 shows that 10.5% of the first year students who registered for Psychology indicated that they would take Psychology as a major; 36.8% indicated that they would not major in Psychology while 52.6% reported that they were undecided.

Table4: First year students' likelihood to register for Psychology as a major

Likelihood of taking Psychology as major	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	10.5
No	28	36.8
Undecided	40	52.6
Total	76	99.9

Table 5: Reasons for thinking of taking or not taking Psychology as major

sons for the likelihood of majoring in Psychology

Total

undecided
unlikely
Likelyf (%)f (%)f (%)f (%)It would help in my interpersonal relations2 (2.6)1 (1.3)5 (6.6)8 (10.5)It would help with my future career2 (2.6)1 (1.3)1 (1.3)4 (5.3)19 (25.0)6 (7.9)0 (0.0)13 (17.1)I have already decided on another major

It is outside my faculty0 (0.0)12 (15.8)2 (2.6)14 (18.4)11 (14.5)11 (14.5)0 (0.0)0 (0.0)I would like to learn more about it first

It would depend on my grade in the course0 (0.0)0 (0.0)9 (11.8)9 (11.8)I have always wanted to study psychology1 (1.3)0 (0.0)1 (1.3)2 (2.6)I think psychology is interesting1 (1.3)0 (0.0)0 (0.0)1 (1.3)I believe I can understand any course including psychology1 (1.3)0 (0.0)0 (0.0)1 (1.3)I want to read people's mind1 (1.3)0 (0.0)1 (1.3)2 (2.6)

I do not know a suitable course for me0 (0.0)0 (0.0)3 (3.9)3 (3.9)

I would like to be a good manager0 (0.0)1 (1.3)1 (1.3)2 (2.6)

Total8 (10.5)28 (36.8)40 (5*Reasons for thinking of taking or not taking Psychology as major*

Table 5 shows that the two common reasons given for the likelihood of taking Psychology as a major were; a) It would help in my interpersonal relations; and b) It would help with my future career. These two reasons account for 12% of the reasons given for the likelihood or the unlikelihood of taking Psychology as major. The most common two reasons for the unlikelihood of taking Psychology as a major were: a) participants have already decided on other majors, and b) Psychology was outside the participants' faculties. These two reasons account for 32% of the

reasons given for the likelihood or the unlikelihood of taking Psychology as major. The main two reasons given for being undecided were; a) need to learn more about Psychology first before making a decision and b) need to see how well the participants are going to perform during the first and second years. These two reasons account for 20% of the reasons given for the likelihood or the unlikelihood of taking Psychology as major.

Psychology Majors' main reasons for choosing psychology as their subject major

Table 6 presents a summary of the reasons why students who registered to major in Psychology decided to do so. Two respondents' answers (9.1%) could not be categorized. The first one was incomplete and it reads: "I've always wanted to do something related to …" The second was not specific and it reads: "It is a wide field."

 More than 45% of the current majoring students reported that they find Psychology as a subject interesting while just above 18% registered in the subject because they failed to qualify for subjects of their choice. Since students are allowed to major at third year level, it means the decision whether a student qualifies to major in a certain subject or not is mainly based on second year results. Thus if the reason of failing to qualify applied only to the above mentioned 18% of the students, then most students would have good performance in other subjects and not necessarily in Psychology alone.

Table 6: Reason for choosing to major in Psychology

Reason stated	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
Interested in the subject	10	45.5
I want to gain helping professional skills such as counselling	4	18.2
Failed to qualify in other subjects	4	18,2
Marketable	2	9.1
Other	2	9.1

Total		22	100.2

Table 7 is a summary of Mean Average grade (without PSY210 grade) for second year courses and Mean Psychology grade (PSY 210) in second year for Psychology majors. The means of 53.7 and 56.7 for Average grades and PSY210 grades respectively, fall within the 'clear pass' segment of the University Malawi, Chancellor College Undergraduate Degrees grading system (Student's Handbook, CC/167/90 revised n.d.). The 'clear pass' grade classification denotes performance that is expected of an average student. Above average performance is above the grade of 60. The study thus revealed that Psychology seems to attract average students.

Table 7: Mean Average grade for second year courses and Mean psychology grade (PSY 210) in second year for Psychology majors

Student	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Average Grade	53	52	65	49	52	52	53	47	59	57	51	51	54	56	60	53	55	48	49	57	50
PSY 210 grade	68	57	64	52	60	52	54	48	60	60	56	52	50	67	52	52	63	51	50	58	58

Table 8: presents a summary table of a t-test for dependent samples that was performed to determine the significance of the difference between the mean of average grades for second year courses (excluding PSY 210) and the mean of psychology (PSY 210) grades. Results show that the mean PSY 210 grade is significantly higher than the mean Average grade (t=2.91, df=22, p<0.01). This implies that Psychology majors seem to be better at Psychology in comparison with other subjects. There could be several plausible explanations for psychology majors performing significantly better in Psychology compared with other courses. The better performance may be an indicator that they find psychology more interesting and hence easier than other subjects. However, some of the students who chose to major in Psychology may have done so after failing to qualify in other subjects.

There is moderate positive correlation between PSY210 grades and Average grades (r=0.57, p<0.01). This shows that students who do well in Psychology also tend to perform relatively well in other courses and vice-versa.

Table 8: A summary table of t-test for dependent samples to determine the difference between average grades for second year courses and PSY 210

	PSY 210 grade	Average grade
N	23	23
Mean	56.7	53.7
Std. deviation	6.0	4.3
Std. error mean	1.3	0.9
Degrees of freedom	22	
t- obtained	2.91*	
t- critical	2.82	
Pearson correlation (*r*)	0.57**	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* t- obtained is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Psychology Majors' reports of comments made by other students

Table 9 presents the summary of what Psychology majors had heard other students say about Psychology, favourable views and unfavourable views. From the favourable views presented, about 32% reported that other students believe that Psychologists can tell what other people would be thinking. This is a wrong perception of Psychology as psychology is a scientific discipline that systematically employs specialized tools and techniques to understand, predict and control people's thoughts, feelings and actions. About 18% reported that other students thought psychology is fun and interesting. These favourable comments match with the reasons the first year students gave for enrolling for psychology as in Table 3. The match between what other people say and what

students report as guiding their decisions seem to suggest that other people's views may influence students' choice of course combinations.

Table 9: Comments from other students

Favourable comments	Frequency (%)	Unfavourable comments	Frequency (%)
Psychologists can tell what people are thinking	7 (31.8)	It is not marketable in Malawi	12 (54.6)
Psychology is fun and interesting	4 (18.2)	For lazy/dull people	6 (27.3)
Applicable in many fields	3 (13.6)	Counselling is not an acceptable field in Malawi	1 (4.6)
It helps other people	2 (9.1)	Psychology majors work with mad people	1 (4.6)
Other	6 (27.3)	Other	2 (9.1)
Total	22 (100.0)	Total	22 (100.2)

Pertaining to unfavourable comments, more than 54% reported that some students believe that Psychology is not marketable in Malawi. This is worrisome considering that marketability is most likely an important determinant of a student's decision whether or not to register for a course. As much as 27% believe that Psychology is for lazy and dull people. This perception is not supported by the finding that most Psychology majors' performance were in the 'clear pass' category suggesting that they are average students.

The following are some of the favourable and unfavourable comments which could not be categorized: a) The impression that psychologists are clever and are cheatable; b) It is not common in Malawi; c) It is course for crazy people; d) Psychology is judgemental subject, only God has the power to judge and understand people; and e)The department does not look for vocation employment for students.

Psychology Majors' awareness of areas where professionals trained in psychology work

Table 10 presents Areas identified by Psychology majors where professionals trained in Psychology

work. More than 59% of the Psychology majors reported that they knew some people who trained in Psychology who are working in some areas where they are using some psychology. More than 40% said they were not aware of any one who trained in Psychology and working in some areas where they are using some psychology except their lecturers. This is very serious especially coming from Psychology majors and appears to correspond with the low percentage (9.09%) of majors who indicated that Psychology is marketable (Table 6). It is therefore understandable that over 54% of unfavourable comments from other students pertain to the perceived non-marketability of Psychology in Malawi.

The most common fields where people with a qualification in psychology are known to work are counselling, teaching and marketing which together constitute over 90%. Only 1 participant, representing 7% of Psychology majors, reported knowing someone with a qualification in psychology working for a nongovernmental organisation. In terms of awareness, counselling appears to be the most popular. It is possible that the high level of awareness of counselling as an area where professionals trained in Psychology work may be associated with the corresponding increasing demand of Voluntary Counselling and Testing as an intervention for HIV and AIDS in the country.

Table10: Areas in which identified professionals with a qualification in psychology work

Where professionals trained in psychology work	Frequency	Percentage Frequency
Counselling	6	46.2
Teaching	4	30.8
Marketing	2	15.4
NGO	1	7.7
Total	**13**	**100.1**

Limitations of the study

The study could have included other students taking Psychology in second year through fourth year who are not majoring in Psychology, and students who are not studying any courses offered by Psychology department to get a more complete picture of students' perceptions of Psychology at Chancellor College. Also the staffing situation in any given academic year and the policy on auditing could have had some contribution in students' choice of courses offered by the Department of Psychology. Also the general increase of enrolment by the College over the years has an impact which could not be isolated in the present study.

Conclusions and recommendations

Trends of student enrolment in Psychology courses from academic year 1990/1991 to 2008/2009 started by increasing for the first three academic years, drastically decreased in the eight years that followed then finally increased in the last seven years with the exception of year 2005/2006. It is concluded that the enrolment trends, as fluctuations in student enrolment from year to year, are a direct consequence of the structure of the general degree programs at Chancellor College under which Psychology falls. One major implication of such trends is that some departments may be oversubscribed while others may be undersubscribed leading to less than optimal utilisation of resources. Establishment of specialised degree programmes could be a possible solution.

Most first year students (54.6%) were undecided as to whether they would want to major in Psychology while relatively few students (10.5%) indicated their intention to major in Psychology. There is need therefore to make Psychology more attractive.

The two main reasons students gave for choosing psychology were that they were interested in the

subject and desired to develop helping professional skills such as counselling.

One prominent perception of Psychology by other people was that it is not marketable. This perception indicates an image problem relating to the profile of the subject.

Students' awareness of where professionals trained in Psychology work is limited to counselling, teaching and marketing. This suggests that students are not well exposed to the world in which professionals trained in Psychology work. Ways which could widen students' exposure include: educational visits, guest lectures and industrial attachments.

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APPENDICES
Appendix A: A *short questionnaire on psychology*

The Department of Psychology wants to know what you have heard and your thoughts about Psychology. The information will help the department to improve on the programme for the benefit of the nation. The information we get will be used for academic purposes only and your names are not required, therefore no one would know who filled in which paper. Thank you for participating in this short questionnaire.

Answer the questions as honestly as possible.

   1. Tick in the appropriate space: Male………   Female…………

   i)   Before the Department of Psychology's presentation on the 18th of March 2009 during orientation, the following is what I heard people say about Psychology.

   a. ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………..…………………......
   ………………………………………………………………………..…………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………..

   ii) Before the orientation, the following is what I thought about Psychology
   a. …………………………………………………………..……………………………………
   ……………………………………………………..……………………………………………

   i)   ……………………………………..…………………………………………..……………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………......

   iii) I am registering for a Psychology course because
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………………

   iv) Are you likely to take Psychology as a major during your third and fourth years of study? (Tick in the appropriate space below.)

   a. Yes…......…   b. No….....……   c. Undecided…..……..

      v) Explain   your   answer   to   number   4   above.
         …………………………………………………………………………………………
         …………………………………………………………
         …………………………………………………

Appendix B: *Questionnaire for psychology majors*

The Department of Psychology wants to know your experiences and thoughts about Psychology. The information will help the department to improve on the programme for the benefit of the nation. The information we get will be used for academic purposes only and your names are not required, therefore no one would know who filled in which paper. Thank you for participating in this short questionnaire.

Answer the questions as honestly as possible.

1. Tick in the appropriate space: Male………   Female…………

2. Indicate your year of study: Third………   Final…………..

When did you decide to major in psychology? (Be as specific as possible)

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………...………

What made you decide to major in psychology? (Give as much information as possible)

………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………….

What do you like most that other students from other departments say about psychology?

……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………

What do you feel uncomfortable about that other student from other departments say about psychology? …………………………………………………………………………

……..……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………...………………

Besides your lecturers have you ever come across people who specialized in psychology? YES…..…   NO……..

If your answer to 7 above is YES, give details of what they are doing with their qualifications in psychology. ………………………………………………………………...….

………………………………………………………………………...………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix C: *Student enrolment in Psychology courses from 1990/1991 to 2008/2009*

Academic year	First and Second year students taking Psychology courses		Third and final year students taking at least one Psychology course		Total		Third and final year students who registered for Psychology courses	
	BSOC	BAH and others	BSOC	BAH and others			Total Frequency	Students with two or more courses
	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)			Frequency (% based on total frequency)
1990/1991	123 (68.0)	35 (19.3)	14 (7.7)	9 (5.0)	181 (4.4)		23 (1.7)	7 (30.4)
1991/1992	142 (65.7)	36 (16.7)	21 (9.7)	17 (7.9)	216 (5.3)		38 (2.8)	16 (42.1)
1992/1993	192 (55.8)	41 (11.9)	82 (23.8)	29 (8.4)	344 (8.4)		111 (8.1)	53 (47.7)
1993/1994	198 (62.5)	32 (10.1)	71 (22.4)	16 (5.0)	317 (7.8)		87 (6.3)	45 (51.7)
1994/1995	143 (54.4)	46 (17.5)	61 (23.2)	13 (4.9)	263 (6.4)		74 (5.4)	33 (44.6)
1995/1996	88 (37.1)	46 (19.4)	78 (32.9)	25 (10.5)	237 (5.8)		103 (7.5)	42 (40.8)
*1997/1998	56 (33.9)	43 (26.1)	40 (24.2)	26 (15.8)	165 (4.0)		66 (4.8)	45 (68.2)
1998/1999	74 (48.7)	40 (26.3)	15 (9.9)	23 (15.1)	152 (3.7)		38 (2.8)	16 (42.1)
1999/2000	54 (48.2)	35 (31.3)	9 (8.0)	14 (12.5)	112 (2.7)		23 (1.7)	23 (100.0)
2000/2001	43 (36.4)	42 (35.6)	12 (10.2)	21 (17.8)	118 (2.9)		33 (2.4)	11 (33.3)
2001/2002	46 (47.4)	21 (21.6)	5 (5.2)	25 (25.8)	97 (2.4)		30 (2.2)	1 (3.3)
2002/2003	47 (44.3)	10 (9.4)	17 (16.0)	32 (30.2)	106 (2.6)		49 (3.6)	0 (0.0)
2003/2004	93 (58.9)	36 (22.8)	13 (8.2)	16 (10.1)	158 (3.9)		29 (2.1	1 (3.4)
2004/2005	145 (60.2)	50 (20.7)	22 (9.1)	24 (10.0)	241 (5.9)		46 (3.3)	5 (10.9)
2005/2006	127 (55.7)	53 (23.2)	34 (14.9)	14 (6.1)	228 (5.6)		48 (3.5)	10 (20.8)
2006/2007	130 (41.1)	86 (27.2)	61 (19.3)	39 (12.3)	316 (7.7)		100 (7.3)	13 (13.0)
2007/2008	104 (36.4)	132 (19.9)	72 (26 .0)	88 (17.7)	396 (9.7)		160 (11.6)	21 (13.1)
2008/2009	85 (20.3)	97 (15.3)	105 (27.6)	150 (36.8)	437 (10.7)		255 (23.2)	39 (15.3)
Total	1890 (45.6)	881 (21.2)	732 (18.7)	581 (14.5)	4084 (99.9)		1313 (100.3)	381 (29.0)

* *1996/1997academic year the college was closed*

Appendix D: *Student enrolment at Chancellor College from 1990/1991 to 2008/2009*

Academic year	College		Faculty of Humanities		Faculty of Social Science		Faculties of Humanities and Social Science minus Psychology		Department of Psychology	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1990/1991	1234	4.1	133	2.7	396	5.5	348	4.3	181	4.4
1991/1992	1332	4.4	150	3.0	417	5.7	351	4.3	216	5.3
1992/1993	1438	4.7	128	2.6	507	6.7	291	3.6	344	8.4
1993/1994	1263	4.2	125	2.5	485	6.7	293	3.6	317	7.8
1994/1995	1491	4.9	174	3.5	486	6.7	397	4.9	263	6.4
1995/1996	1434	4.7	186	3.7	446	6.1	395	4.8	237	5.8
*1997/1998	1395	4.6	279	5.6	308	4.2	422	5.2	165	4.0
1998/1999	1377	4.5	196	3.9	339	4.7	383	4.7	152	3.7
1999/2000	1340	4.4	196	3.9	281	3.9	365	4.5	112	2.7
2000/2001	1467	4.8	241	4.8	316	4.4	439	5.4	118	2.9
2001/2002	1517	5.0	227	4.6	310	4.3	440	5.4	97	2.4
2002/2003	1696	5.6	246	4.9	318	4.4	458	5.6	106	2.6
2003/2004	1735	5.7	332	6.7	371	5.1	545	6.7	158	3.9
2004/2005	1909	6.3	334	6.7	405	5.6	498	6.1	241	5.9
2005/2006	2203	7.2	302	6.1	356	4.9	430	5.3	228	5.6
2006/2007	2563	8.4	423	8.5	453	6.2	560	6.9	316	7.7
2007/2008	2195	7.2	660	13.2	533	7.3	797	9.8	396	9.7
2008/2009	2857	9.4	661	13.24	534	7.4	758	9.3	437	10.7
Total	30446	100.1	4993	100.1	7261	100.1	8170	100.0	4084	99.9

ZIMBABWE SOCIAL SCIENCES REVIEW (ZSSR) is issuing a call for papers.. ZSSR is the journal of the Social Science Research Consultancy Trust (SSRCT). It is an online journal published four times a year and it seeks to analyse social science issues in Zimbabwe and beyond. The editors are seeking articles that critically examine various issues pertaining to social sciences fields in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Manuscripts and enquires should be sent to:

Tobias Guzura

Editor in Chief

Zimbabwe Social sciences Review

 waguzura@gmail.com or guzurat@yahoo.com

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