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RESEARCH TOPIC

The impact of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the ALMIGHTY GOD, and to the children with parents in the Diaspora.

Also to the Mabharani Family which was committed to the attainment of this honours degree.

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of parental migration on the left behind children in Dzivaresekwa 3, a high-density suburb in Harare. The area has experienced parental migration due to socio-economic hardships and political instability in the country. Twenty-five respondents from the sixty households identified with either one or both parents in Diaspora were selected as the sample of the study. Five out of the twenty-five were the caregiver of the children. The researcher used interviews and structured questionnaires as the data collection tools. The findings are grounded on the structured questionnaires directed to the children and interviews to both children and the caregivers. The study found that parental migration has positive and negative effects on children. Through migration of parents, children have accessed better education, better healthy services, foodstuffs, better housing among many other basic needs. The children's standards of living have improved. However, 76% of the respondents approved that parental migration has brought good than harm. The negatively affected children highlighted issues like household duties abuse, lack of proper housing, lack of money, not going to school, do not have enough food and psychologically affected. They are getting married, begging, stealing, and vending just to mention a few, as survival means. Large number of the children have affected negatively regardless of the positive effects obtained by other children from parental migration.

Acronyms

CRIC.....Child Rights Information Centre

GAPUWZ.....General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union.

GCN.....Girl Child Network

ILO.....International Labour Organisation

NGO.....Non-Governmental Organisation

UNICEF.....United Nation International Children's Education Fund

ZIMVAC.....Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

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Introduction

The research examined the impacts of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3 a high-density suburb in Harare the capital city of Zimbabwe. Parental migration comes up as a way of meeting the socio-economic challenges facing their families in the country. One can define parental migration as the movement of parents from their country of origin to another seasonally or permanently. Parents usually migrate to other countries seeking employment and better living condition. They leave their children in the country of origin and remit them back for their survival and development.

The economic and political hardships from the beginning of the 21st century in Zimbabwe have led many parents to leave the country to other countries around the globe seeking employment and better living conditions. One can understand migration as parents' way out from the family poverty and unemployment troubles. Often, parents have migrated in order to provide their children with a better future by sending remittances back to them, raising their standards of living. Parents who migrate leave their children in the custody of their relatives or friends. The remittances have improved their children's socio-economic status. They are able to go to school, to buy food and other basic needs. However, according to Filippa, (2011), although the financial advantage that migration delivers the psychosocial costs are big and might disrupt development, survival and education of children. In addition, the absence of the parents has increased the vulnerability of the children to many forms of abuse such as sexual abuse, exploitation as well as child labour among many others.

Therefore, the study looked at the positive and negative impacts of this parental migration on children particularly in Dzivaresekwa 3 and as well as the coping mechanisms, which have been implemented by these children in the absence of their parents.

Background of the study

Zimbabwean parents have, and are still, migrating to neighbouring countries and as far as United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia because of the economic crisis in the country. Makina (2012) states that following state-sponsored farm invasions and the collapse of governance in Zimbabwe in 2000, a political and economic meltdown ensued, resulting in wide-scale migration to South Africa and other countries. They are migrating in search of employment to reduce the socio-economic effects of the hardships in the country, which is characterised by hyperinflation that reached an annual rate of 89.7 sextillion percent on 14 November 2008 (Hanke and Kwok, 2009). Unemployment is high and still rising in the country, which has contributed the most to migration of the Zimbabweans. According to Bulawayo24News (2013), Zimbabwe's unemployment rate remains very at more than 70% with less than 900 000 people formally employed out of a 13 million population. Both the migrant and their families in the contemporary Zimbabwe have considered migration to other country for employment and better living standards as the better option for survival.

According to Shaw (2008) estimations are that four million Zimbabweans have migrated through both legal and illegal route. According to Shaw, (2008) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Zimbabwe chief representative, Dr. Festo Kavishe pointed that many parents were failing to be responsible for their children's basic needs. Thus, many parents are convinced to work abroad to support their families back in Zimbabwe.

Parents are migrating leaving their children behind in the hands of one of the parent or relatives and friends whilst few are taking their children with them. To those who left behind, their parents send remittances to support their day-to-day living. According to Filippa (2011) some children are lucky enough to find themselves in a domestic situations which foster a positive environment in which they receive the necessary support from a family system that in part compensates for their parents' absence. However, not all children will be so lucky to find themselves in such positive environment. Some are being abused in different ways.

Parental migration has become disadvantageous to other children. They are heads of families, taking the roles of their parents in the family. Their education has been affected. Some do not go to school because their parents do not send money for their wellbeing. Others have been affected psychologically because of parents' absence and some are vulnerable to many forms of abuse. Some other children are child labourers in order to find money for school fees and other basic needs the likes of food, shelter and clothing. These children are also being discriminated in the society because they do not have power to make their own decisions. In addition, some of the children are staying with their grandparents who are old and could not manage to take care of the children as well as closely supervising them.

Dzivaresekwa is a high-density suburb in Harare. This suburb lives many people who are unemployed who spend the whole day sitting at bridges, streets and at their gates. Few people are employed formally. Informal businesses like tuck shops, vending and part time jobs as well as urban farming are common. The residents earn little income from these kind of businesses resulting to low standards of living. This has perpetuated parental migration from this area to raise family income. The economic environment is not permitting the parents to support their

children, thus they choose to migrate abroad. Some children have benefited economically whilst others have not from the migration of their parents. Cross borders, seasonal and permanent migrant parents are all found in Dzivaresekwa 3.

Conceptual Framework

Migration can be conceptualised as the movement from one place to another. Pull or push factors can result to the movement of people from one place to another. These factors determine the destinations of the migrants. This concept, involves the movement of people within or beyond their country of origin for different reasons. Some migrate for political, economical or social reasons. The concept of migration has open up some routes for development in developing countries.

Parental migration can be understood as the concept whereby parents migrating from one place to another either as a result of pull or push factors. Parental international migration can be conceptualised as the movement of parents beyond their country of their origin because of either pull or push factors. In this conceptualisation, parents migrate for better employment and livelihoods opportunities in the host countries so that they can be able to support their families back home. Usually parents leave their children with either one parent or relatives or their friends as caregivers. Economically the left behind children can be well but socially and psychologically they can be affected negatively with the absence of their parents. Therefore, parental migration has positive and negative impacts on the left behind children. The family system will be affected leaving the child vulnerable to changes in the family setup and the outside environment.

Parental migration has managed to improve the health status of children, access to better education facilities and foodstuffs, better housing and income. The living standards of these

children have improved. However, not all children have benefited from parental migration. Some children have suffered. They are facing abuse. They become child labourers, getting married and suffer domestic violence in those marriages. Some children do not access basic needs and are going to school because their parents are not remitting at all or not remitting enough and regularly. This, therefore, means that parental migration has both positive and negative effects on children.

Statement of the Problem

Migration has both positive and negative effects on development. Parental migration, a form of migration, involves the movement of parents from their place of origin to a foreign place. The remittances have improved health status, foodstuffs, better housing and education among many other basic needs of children . However, other children experienced the opposite. They are not accessing these basic needs, and psychologically affected due to parental absence. Therefore, the research seeks to examine the effects of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3. The area has experienced a lot of movement by parents to the neighbouring countries, Australia, Europe and USA leaving children behind. It is the interest of this research to examine the effect of such movement.

Theoretical Framework

In the study, the researcher used the systems theory. A system contains linked organised parts that are compiled together to achieve a common goal. There is interaction within the system among its components. Therefore, a family is a system that consists of interrelated components of individuals.

The understanding of individuals needs not to isolate but to include everyone because family is a system that is composed of interrelated and mutually dependent individuals. Pryor and Rodgers (2001) states that this theory posits that within each family there is an underlying infrastructure of dyadic relationships and other sub-system relationships, comprising members of, for example, the same generation, the same sex, or function. Therefore, the child's wellbeing relies on the components operation of the family system as a whole. This means that if the family affected the child also affected since is part of the family system.

In the systems theory, family members influence each other in a circular style that is circular causality. In the case of parental migration, the children will be affected by the absence of their parents since they will be trying to adapt the situation in which the family system has its parts moved out of the system. In a system if one related part moved the whole system will be affected.

The systems theory suggests that sometimes our actions are connected to the system that we are in as it may shape the individual character within the system.

According to Patton and McMahon (2006), fundamental to understanding the systems theory is the notion that each system is an open system, which is subject to influence from outside and may also influence that which is beyond its boundaries. In this case, the outside environment might affect the child left behind, or the child affect the outside environment since will be trying to adjust to the new environment.

This theory, therefore, links with the research in the sense that parental migration involves the movement of individuals, parents who are the pillars in a family system. The absence of parents

has positive and negative effects on children left behind. This movement of parents will affect the proper functioning of the entire family system and the child, in particular, will be affected with the changes in the system itself and the outside environment. Children feel safe within their family system.

Justification

The research paper seeks to unearth the impacts of parental absence due to international migration on left behind children. The research was conducted in Dzivaresekwa 3 community a high-density suburb in Harare. The researcher found interest in this area because the area has experienced parental migration and children have left behind. The research will benefit the government and the civil society involved in child protection to know the problems being faced by the children left behind and to come up with solutions and policies that will safeguard the wellbeing of these children in an economic crisis facing Zimbabwe today. It will also benefit academia on knowing the impact of parental international migration on children left behind.

Objectives

- To examine the effects of parental migration on children in Zimbabwe
- To examine the effects of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3
- To examine the coping mechanism adopted by these children in the parental absence.

Research Questions

- What are the effects of parental migration on children in Zimbabwe?
- What are the effects of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3

- What are the coping mechanisms adopted by these children to deal with situation in the absence of their parents.

Research Methodology

A qualitative research design was used in the study by the researcher. Research design can be defined as an idea, arrangement and approach of examination that considered to attain answers to study demands or problems (Kerlinger, 1986). It includes an outline of what the researcher did from writing the hypothesis and their operational implications to the final analysis of data. Qualitative research method was used because, according to Mounton J. (1996), it aims at gaining the subject's firsthand experience of the phenomenon using flexible methods such as interviews and questioners. In this respect the researcher was able to retrieve the relevant information from the respondents in this study. New theories, ideas, and perceptions raised by respondents were adopted by the researcher because of its flexibility. Therefore, this research design was suitable in studying the impacts of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3

Data Gathering Instruments

The following data gathering tools discussed below were used by the researcher that is structured questionnaire, interview schedules.

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a form of a structured interview. It contains designed questions that are used to retrieve the necessary information for the study from the respondents. The questionnaires were used to gather information and data. The questionnaires gave the respondents the autonomy to answer without bias. Green (2002) upholds that questionnaires are less intrusive than face-to-face surveys and respondents can complete and answer the questions at their own space and time.

However, some respondents misinterpreted some questions and had no room to give supplementary information, which to some extent limited the findings of the study.

The questionnaires were specifically designed to gather primary data from the children with their parents working or stay abroad only.

Interviews

Interviews are oral forms of questionnaires. Children with parents out of the country were interviewed on how they are being affected, and survive, in the absence of their parents due to migration. In addition, interviews were conducted with the present caregivers because they know how these children are affected and coping with the absence of their parent or parents. Interviews have allowed the researcher to get first-hand information and able to understand the behaviours of his respondents by capturing their own words as far as the effects of parental migration are concerned. The researcher was able to give explanation of meanings and attachment of individual conclusions of the respondents. Unanticipated results are tracked up by conducting interviews (Cohen and Manion, 1994). However, some respondents were not feeling free to pour out some information that was sensitive, which also limit the research findings.

Sampling

Cohen and Manion (1994) defined sampling as “the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected”. The researcher used a sample of 40 children and 20 caregivers from the identified population from different households. The selected individuals represented the population under the study. The sample was manageable and not time consuming. It was unbearable for the researcher to study more than 60 participants. Choosing many participants might become

unmanageable and too few people might be unrepresentative as highlighted by Cohen and Manion, 1994).

Sampling Method

The researcher used snowballing technique. It is method of identifying key participants rich in information needed by the researcher. In this research, the researcher contacted a few respondents and asked if they know of any child with either one or both parents migrated to other countries. This sampling technique has helped the researcher to determine and increased the number of the participants. It also helped with defining participants not known by the researcher as well as builds on resources of existing networks.

Target Population

According to Dooley (1995) population is “the whole set of entities that decisions relate to.” Population also refers to all possible units of analysis. The researcher identified sixty participants, at most two per household, from Dzviresekwa 3 with children whose parents are working abroad. These children and their caregivers were the target population of the researcher in the study. It was difficult for the researcher to have a specific target population since there is no database of the either the parents migrated or the children left behind. Thus, the researcher opt to use the snow bowling sampling technique.

Literature Review

This section reviewed the literature on the impacts of parental international migration on children who left behind by their either one or both parents. Though calculating the number of children with parents working abroad is difficult, estimation shows that the number is at least tens of millions (Yeoh and Lam, 2006). Some countries have the statistics of children left behind, for example, 31 percent and 27 percent of children in Moldova and in the Philippines (UNICEF-Moldovia, 2007) respectively, have either one or both parents working abroad. In Moldova the school system is used once a year by the Ministry of Education and Youth to record the children with parents employed out of the country and the estimation is about 177,000 children (Salah, 2008).

Cortes (2008) pointed out that parents' migration requires changing previous arrangements concerning the division of care and other domestic responsibilities within the left-behind households. However, the characteristic of these alterations differs with the length of migration, and the features of the community of origin. The responsibilities of the children with parents who migrate for long time increase comparing to children with parents who migrate for short time.

According to Salah (2008) migration of one or both parents results to the obvious reallocation of sexual categorisation of roles and demands the reorganization of these household tasks. Increment in these household duties will be overwhelming on children. According to Salah (2008), the survey by CRIC (2006) shows that in rural areas, these children of emigrants are involved more in family farming activities than their peers. However, Salah (2008) highlighted that information gathered from the qualitative surveys states that children perceived their own status as improving: 90 percent think that they have better clothing, for 61 percent the most

positive outcome is the financial support, 75 percent have better housing and 74 percent have better food. Therefore, parental migration has both positive and negative on children.

Salah (2008) states that the surveys by CRIC figured out that almost all the respondents in the survey are of the view that parental migration has produced significantly lower performance than children staying with their parents. The children have suffered psychologically due to lack of parental supervision and the more household duties have affected their education negatively. Moreover the paper shows that children with both parents are physically healthier compared to 69 percent of children in families of migrants.

Evaluating migration's effects on left behind children needs consideration of the causes and features of their parents' migration, answering the question why these parents left their children behind (Cortes, 2008). Therefore, there is need for the consideration of the roles played by the social, economic and political institutions concerning the parents' conclusions and in influencing the effects on children. Thus, Yeoh and Lam (2006) argues that the links between migrants and the left behind requires taking into account a broader institutional context. Pertaining to the determinants of the leaving, the decision for parents and not children does not emerge exclusively from decisions within the household; for example, restrictive migration policies or limited access to basic welfare in host countries can discourage family migration as noted by Cortes (2008). On the other hand, the living conditions of the remaining members of the household are influenced not only by migration but also by the prevailing conditions in the area.

Bryant (2005) reviewing literature discovered a mixture of outcomes on the impacts of parents' migration on children in the Philippines. He found that part of the studies showed that the remittances were used in health issues and in educating their children whilst the children living

with their parents were not accessing basic needs. However, other set of studies concluded differently pointing that the parents' absence has put at risk educational successes.

A survey by Save the Children in 2006 in Sri Lanka, conducted in 1,200 households with migrant parents which were absent for more than six months investigated school attendance and performance of three groups comprising children of migrant mothers, children with mothers working in Sri Lanka, and children of non-working mothers, all from the same socio-economic background. The migrant mothers children performed worse than with parents in Sri-Lanka. These outcomes can be related with the impacts of mothers' absence on children's psychological wellbeing.

Research has shown migration negative effects on families. The plight of the children left behind in the care of others has also been extensively highlighted, particularly in the case of those who, due to unsuitable caring arrangements and unable to join their parents, fall prey to child abuse of every description (Shaw, 2008). James Elder of UNICEF, speaking on the Zimbabwean situation said that when parents leave their children behind, particularly in difficult times where there is a need to cushion families against poverty, it increases the offspring's vulnerability. According to Save the Children (2006), research on children left behind states that child abuse in Sri Lanka is acknowledged to be an increasingly serious problem. The mothers nonexistence in the family has increased the children exposure to abuse due to lack of female parent traditional household responsibilities. The research paper pointed out one instance of abuse of a girl child by a close relative (father's brother) and two instances where the girl children complained that they were in imminent threat of being raped or sexually abused either by a father or other relative were present in the study sample.

The literature also shows that adults in charge of children often face increased responsibilities without having the necessary tools to overcome new challenges posed by migration. The absence of a breadwinner can increase the work burden for remaining family members and family separation can have other disruptive effects (Scalabrini Migration Center, 2003).

Children left behind in their attempts to adapt to life without their parents and in harsh living conditions employ various coping mechanisms. Coping mechanisms, as described by Grasha (1983), are conscious ways of trying to deal with stress and anxiety in a positive manner. These processes use thoughts and behaviours to search for available problem-solving strategies, to seek help from others, to acknowledge feelings and to set goals and objectives. Life in the absence of one or even both parents triggers a great upheaval in a child's life. They live under constant stress, overwhelmed by emotions and new, unknown situations they are not ready for Filippa (2011). Therefore, they are forced to get into inappropriate and dangerous situations as a way of coping with the environment they are in. UNICEF (2007) found that increased in juvenile crime in Moldova was positively correlated with the number of children left behind who accounted a disproportionate 60 percent of juvenile offenders. In addition, Perla Aragon-Choudhury (2010) states that Thailand and the Philippines have also a rise in juvenile crime associated with children left behind and the absence of adult supervision. This result as a decrease in remittances and children want to maintain the same level of consumption. Left behind children also engage in drug abuse. For instance, the Asia-Pacific Policy Centre has concluded that teenage pregnancy and drug abuse has become rampant in the Philippines due at least in part to children left behind.

The literature illustrates the broader social and community implications related to migrating parents. Studies shows that left behind children who have navigated difficult life decisions alone,

are easily manipulated, and are lured into dangerous and unlawful activity. Moreover, increased crime drug abuse and teenage pregnancy can have a destabilising effect within the society, threatening long-term economic development and potentially even undermining institutional building.

Migrating abroad by parents have affected positively and negatively to many children left behind economically, socially as well as psychologically. However, Filippa (2011) reviewing literature states that there is dearth of African research on parental absence effects on the children left behind. The literature on migration has dealt mainly on different aspects of the economic impacts of migration on the household; few studies have looked at the changes operated in the household structure, or at the links and relationships between absent parents and left-behind children (Cortes, 2008). In Zimbabwe, studies specifically on the effects of migration on children are very few or unavailable (Filippa, 2011). According to the University of Witwatersrand (2007) background presentation paper, "although much attention has been paid to estimating the number of Zimbabweans currently in South Africa, most of the commonly quoted statistics, which range from one to three million Zimbabweans, are extrapolated from ungeneralisable data or are based on conjecture". Although these figures are not conclusive, the paper states that parental migration affects tens of millions of children globally and possibly even several million in Zimbabwe alone.

However, with the lack of literature on the children left behind in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular, it is the purpose of this research to examine the impacts of parental international migration on children in an African context to add on the scarce literature available. The literature above reveals the effects not from an African country. This study will examine the

effects of parental migration on children in the economic and social hardships facing Zimbabwe. The study shall be conducted in Dzivarasekwa 3 a high-density suburb in Harare, the capital city of Zimbabwe.

Chapter 1

Parental Migration and Its Effects on Children In Zimbabwe

Introduction

This chapter will look at the impacts of parental migration and its effects on children in Zimbabwe. The emerging of parental migration and its positive and negative effects on the children left behind will be discussed in the contemporary Zimbabwe.

Parental Migration in Zimbabwe

According to Madzivadondo (2012), Zimbabweans from all walks of life experienced a period of economic malaise between the years 2000 and 2009. Scones et al (2010) cited in Madzivadondo (2012) highlighted that the country's economic reforms and political instability could be attributed as the causes of this economic crisis. Cultural factors also contributed to the quantity, period and destination determination by the migrants. The causes of large emigration in Zimbabwe can be attributed to the political and socio-economic crisis in the country.

The economic crisis, characterised by high inflation rate, resulted in the deterioration of the living standards, shortages of basic needs such as food and income. This environment was and is still sour to most families in the country. As highlighted earlier, according to Shaw, (2008) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Zimbabwe chief representative, Dr. Festo Kavishe pointed that many parents were failing to be responsible for their children's basic needs. As a result of this, millions of Zimbabweans migrated into neighbouring countries and overseas in search of greener pastures (Madzivadondo, 2012). According to Crush et al (2012), recent migration from Zimbabwe has been dubbed "survival migration" which is said to occur when

people flee an existential threat to which they have no domestic remedy, for example state failure, severe environmental distress or widespread livelihood collapse. Parental migration to other countries started as a way of responding to and meeting the socio-economic problems their families are facing in the current Zimbabwe situation. According to Makina (2012), the political and economic decline just after the farm invasions supported by the government and the collapse of governance in Zimbabwe in 2000, resulted to the mass emigration to South Africa. Muzondo (2012) mentions that the economy decline, forced people to migrate to other countries for greener pastures or do any unskilled jobs that supports themselves and their families. The neighbouring countries, the United Kingdom, United State of America and Australia are the main destinations of the Zimbabweans.

There are a number of different types of emigrants in Zimbabwe. Kiwanuka (2009) highlighted that there is cross-border shoppers who migrate for short time. The group consist mostly of women, though men can be found in large numbers. She also said that there is medium-term labour migrants who are involved in menial and temporary 'piece-jobs'. The skilled and permanent workers who usually employed by NGOs and governments are categorised as long-term labour migrants. Self-employed personals who are in various formal private business also fall into this category. There are also cross-border informal traders, which involve women who trade homemade goods from Zimbabwe, and purchasing groceries, clothing and other goods from the destination country for reselling in the country (Kiwanuka, 2009). These migrant parents, whether they migrate for short or long period of time they leave their children either by one parent or family relatives or trusted friends.

Parents leave their children with one of the parent or with other relatives or friends. Most families in Zimbabwe are either affected positively or negatively this mass migration (McGregor, 2009). Some families had both parents left the country leaving their children alone. According to Madzivadondo (2012) some families disintegrated completely as the parents take different directions out of the country and this social disintegration had far reaching effects on the family unit. Muzondo (2014) single-parent families have increased in Zimbabwe because some couples have divorced and failed to reunite due to different migration destinations. Therefore, family disintegration has affected the complete family system's functionality. This rather brought more harm to the children's development.

In a report by Gonese (2014), many parents and guardians have left Chiredzi, hoping to beat poverty by seeking employment in neighbouring countries, particularly South Africa and Botswana. They leave children hoping that they will send back remittances. James Elder commented that the issue of parents trekking to the diaspora without their children is part of the bigger problem (IRIN-News, 2007). This, therefore, shows that parental migration has negative effects as well as positive effects.

Effects of parental migration on children in Zimbabwe

As highlighted earlier the statistical data on the number of children with parents in the diaspora is unavailable or inaccessible in Zimbabwe. Estimations are that more than million children have affected with parental migration in Zimbabwe. Therefore, this means that the actual number of the affected children is not known. The researches by Madzivadondo (2012) and Filippa (2011) also highlighted that the statistics on the affected children with parents working abroad are not known. According to Madzivadondo (2012), it was discovered that more than 80 percent of

children with migrant parents are better off economically, and this can magnet other more advantages. However, these are the statistics from three Masvingo town residential areas only and cannot show the exact number of the affected children in Zimbabwe. However, other researches show that children left behind have affected psychologically, are not going to school, child headed families, increased cases of child labour and abuse among many. This section, therefore, will discuss the positive and negative effects of parental migration on children in Zimbabwe.

Parental migration increased family income levels because of the remittances. From the research by Madzivadondo in 2012 in Masvingo town one can deduce that most families with their parents or any member of the family out of the country are much better economically than those without any member who is out of the country. Bloch (2005) found that 85 percent of Zimbabwean migrants have remitted in order to support family members left at home. They remit through banks and mobile money agents such as Ecocash. However, Makina (2007) found that only a minute 2 per cent reported that they were using official banking channels whilst many, about 60 percent reported that they remit through informal routes such as taxi/bus drivers and friends and relatives visiting home. More so, some parents send goods such as clothes and groceries so that the family in Zimbabwe would sell and make profits that would sustain the family for a longer period. This has allowed the children of migrant parents to be financially stable than those with parents staying in Zimbabwe. They have access to basic needs such as education, healthy, food among many since they got the money.

Zimbabwe is one of the countries in Africa recognised with the highest levels of literacy. Though Zimbabwe is being faced with economic crisis, the government, the civil society and people are

maintaining the literate rate in the country. Education is a priority to every child in Zimbabwe. Parents in the Diaspora are providing money for educational expenses to the children back home. In a study by Madzivadondo (2012) in Masvingo town, it was established that 60 percent of the children with parents in the Diaspora attend private schools, traditionally meant for the elite class. Generally, private schools are expensive than government schools. Private schools in the current situation in Zimbabwe provide better education than the government schools. This is because some qualified teaching staff are moving to these private schools, and as well as to other countries, because they are remunerated well than by the government. According to Madzivadondo (2012), 70 percent of the guardians indicated that at primary school the children are generally performing exceptionally well.

Children of migrant parents access better health services. The money remitted by the migrant parents has also increased the children health status. Private hospitals are the ones that are providing better health services in the country for example the West End private hospital and clinic in Harare are providing better medical services than government hospitals and clinics as well as those run by councils. Moreover, they manage to buy from the pharmacies the medicines that are not available in the government and councils hospitals and clinics. In addition, children as well as households with migrant parents have better access to quality and quantity foodstuffs. In his study, Madzivadondo (2012) found that more than 50% of the cases observed revealed that children with parents working in the Diasporas are generally looking healthier, taller and heavier than their fellows with parents working in Zimbabwe. This could mean that the Diaspora has contributed positively to the health of the children in the country despite the recession of the health status in the country.

However, parental migration has also resulted to negative impacts on the children in Zimbabwe. The left behind children is misusing the money being sent by the parents working outside the country. Betty Makoni in an interview with IRIN news (2007) said that the migrant parent children are involved in the black market foreign currency exchange and thus learning the dynamics of illegal transactions whilst young. In an essay by Mhlanga (undated) give an example of two children who were misusing the large amount of money from their mother in the UK. Financially, the children have been well provided for but their social development has been stunted and this is evident in their behaviour now. To be financially stable is good for the children but without parental supervision children might go wild and being stubborn to their caregivers.

Children with parents migrated abroad are also vulnerable to child labour. One can define child labour as the condition whereby children work for profitability, whether working for themselves or used by people, parents or guardians. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) the term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development (<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>). However, there is no clear distinction between child labour and child work. It is the subject of debate among scholars in differentiating these two concepts. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will use the above definition of child labour by ILO.

The migration of Zimbabwean parents as economic migrants has increased the prevalence of child labour in the country. According to Gonese (2014) their departure as economic migrants, has left scores of children behind who have no choice but to become child labourers in order to

fend for themselves and the remaining family member. The children have no option but to work on nearby farms and plantations to look after their siblings and, in some case, grandparents. There is no statistic on the children involved in child labour as noted by Gonese (2014), that the full-time workers in Chiredzi estates were not willing to discharge out information concerning these children.

The General Agricultural and Plantations Workers Union (GAPUWZ) Masvingo Provincial Officer, Merenziana Chikonzi, blamed the massive labour migration as the cause of the increasing child labour in the agriculture sector in the area (Gonese, 2014). No one is looking after them so they end up working for a living. Some government officials are attributing the prevailing child labour mostly to HIV/AIDS that has claimed family heads, rather than labour migrations as noted by Gonese (2014). This could mean that the government or any civil society organisation would give not much attention to those children with parents living abroad. Therefore, the recognition of these children in the society will be very little and they become more vulnerable.

According to ILO, child labour is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children to children's development and survival. It interferes with their schooling by depriving them the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work (<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm>). The children in Zimbabwe with parents working abroad have experienced this as noted above. Lack of literature on the impacts of parental migration to the left behind children in the country has hindered the consideration and attention to children with migrant parents.

Parental migration has also negative impacts on children's education. Access to education to many children has been violated due to many factors such as lack of school fees because some parents do not send the money for the child's education. Gonese (2014) mentioned that adult migrants from Chiredzi town struggle to get gainful employment and go for long periods without remitting money back to the children. Some parents have failed to return back to Zimbabwe due to failure to raise bus fare. This resulted to financial instability to the left behind children to cater for their educational expenses. Therefore, this contributed to increase the number of school dropouts due to lack of fees and stationery. According to the ZIMVAC 2013 report Zimbabwe has a national school dropout rate of 11.5 percent and the main cause is poverty. This increase in school dropouts can also attributed to parental migration since these children are also failing to get money for school fees. Some other children are doing piece jobs to raise money for school fees. To those who are accessing education they are not performing well at school due emotional reasons (Filippa, 2011), and do not care about going to school because their parents are sending them huge sums of money which can cover what their needs and wants (Mhlanga, undated). Some other children are becoming truant because of lack of parental supervision and not respecting their caregivers or guardians.

According to the Zimbabwe National Strategic Plan for the Education of Girls, Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (2005-2010), both sporadic and prolonged absence of parental guidance leads to an increased risk of children dropping out of school to care for their younger siblings, and risk of abuse, especially girls. Since girls are recognized as the mothers of tomorrow and they have to practice reproductive and productive roles before they get married. Migration of parents has increased girls' domestic duties. The girls have failed to do their schoolwork because of the overwhelming household duties within their caregiver's households.

This has compromised their education and work that reduce their performance at school as well as dropping out from school.

The issue of child headed families was, and is still, mainly attributed to death of parents rather than migration in Zimbabwe as pointed out by Foster et al (1997) that child headed households result from the rapid increase in numbers of parental deaths. Child headed families result from parental migration has not been put into much consideration. For example as highlighted earlier that some of the senior government officials in Chiredzi has attributed child headed households to the parental death due to HIV/AIDS. This is because people believe that these children are receiving remittances from their parents, therefore, they are not vulnerable, of which it is not the case. They are also vulnerable.

Some parents do not remit at all which has led the children to be child labourers, domestic workers, prostitutions, begging, migrate on their own among many as coping strategies to survive. For example, according to Refworld (2008), Zimbabwean children are crossing the border into Mozambique in search of work in market vending, selling firewood, and harvesting crops. These children have also migrated to South Africa alone at very young ages, where they engage in street vending, cars washing and off-loading of goods, (Refworld, 2008). Some children with parents abroad are taking the roles of their parents in the family especially those with parents who do not support them. Due to the fact that, in Zimbabwe child headed families are mostly known as the result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, there is no statistics that shows the number of child headed families as the result of parental migration.

Some other children with migrant parents are not accessing health services, healthy food as well as conditions that promote good healthy. This is due to many factors such as being deprived the

money to access health services by the caregivers and some do not have the money because the parents do not send the money. Some other children do not have access to health food stuffs, which is resulting to the deterioration of their health status. In fact, the some caregivers are neglecting these children.

Children left behind in the care of their relatives and friends of their parents are also prone to sexual abuse. According to the Zimbabwe National Strategic Plan for the Education of Girls, Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (2005-2010) when children left in vulnerable situations such as rented accommodation, especially in mining settlements, girls often become victims of sexual abuse and subsequently get pregnant.

According to IRIN-News (2007), the Girl Child Network (GCN) director Betty Makoni, "horrific trend" of parental migration has increased the children's vulnerability to abuse. The GCN recorded that one out of ten cases of reported abuse is a child with parents out of the country. Children's plights have not worsened due to long absent of parents only but also on short period because abuse can happen in minutes. According to IRIN-News (2007), GCN had dealt with many cases in which fathers had sexually abused their children or failed to adequately fend for them, choosing instead to squander money remitted by their wives on beer and women, and hence the children suffer the consequences.

The inter-ministerial cabinet team mandated by government to look into the reasons behind the high incidence of rape in the country revealed that girls have exposed to male sex predators back home because some of Zimbabwe's enterprising mothers traverse borders trying to fend for their children (<http://www.zimbabwesituation.com>). Parents should then consider the vulnerability of children when leaving the country either for long or short period. According to the same report

the police statistics indicate that 7,411 female juveniles were raped between January 2013 and the first quarter of 2014. Due to lack of the mechanism of categorization in collecting the statistics, it is difficult to know the actual number of sexual abuse due to parental absence as a result of parental migration. In addition, boys are vulnerable to sexual abuse such homosexual, and sexual assault by women.

As a coping mechanism, some girl children resort to sexual activities as a way to get money for their basic needs such as food, shelter, income and money for school fees. According to Gwirayi (2012), girls as young as 13 years old, are increasingly exploited in prostitution, including in rural Matabeleland South Province due to poverty, high food prices, increasing rates of inflation and to pay for school fees. Some reports indicate that Zimbabwean girls are being sexually exploited in exchange for passage across the border to South Africa (Refworld, 2008). Gwirayi (2012) study established that, some survivors of child sexual abuse were living on their own because their parents were either away on work-related business, were cross-border traders, or had migrated to the Diaspora, leaving them on their own. Due to lack of parental guidance, supervision, and protection, some children ended up active in sexual activities as a means of survival.

The separation of children from their parents was also creating a window of opportunity for child traffickers, who assisted parents attempting to bring their children to the country they had settled in. GCN once reported that there was a girl who sexually abused in Malawi by a Malawian trafficker after her mother told her to travel there from Zimbabwe so as to attain Malawian passports which are considered as better travelling documents to England (IRIN-News, 2007). Though few cases are being recorded and made known to the public, it is evident that these left

behind children are too vulnerable to such trafficking. They can be trafficked as child domestic labourers, prostitution, working in farms and mines whether within the country or out of the country. Child trafficking has also witnessed in Zimbabwe whereby the children are being taken from their homes to provide labour in the farms, domestic services and commercial sexual exploitation. According to Refworld (2008), there are reports that traffickers offering to transport the children to their parents' countries of resettlement have exploited children left by emigrating parents in Zimbabwe.

The absence of parents had negative psychological effects on children, manifested in the loss of concentration at school, particularly among elder siblings given the responsibility of heading the family (IRIN-News, 2007). According to Filippa (2011), the separation from parents experienced by children, coupled with the need for major family restructuring and adjustments is a stressful life event. Filippa's 2011 research found that a number of the participants of the study exhibited some of the symptoms required for a diagnosis of depression. For example, some of the children were tearful during the interviews. When asked about how the children generally feel being left by their parents, most of the guardians outlined that these children endure emotional sufferings due to separation from their parents (Madzivadondo, 2012). These children are generally being affected psychologically with the parental absence.

Moreover, the divorces among migrant parents have also affected children psychologically. Many couples have different destinations and some have either husband or wife migrated. Living apart have caused some couples to divorce. According to Gonda (2013), minister Patrick Chinamasa said that divorce and other civil lawsuits increased by at least 50% in 2012 in which social workers attribute this growing number of these cases to economic challenges and long

distance relationships. The parental divorce has resulted to negative effects on psychological wellbeing of the children.

Children are the biggest casualties of all this and they suffer depression and living a stressful life without both parents as found by the research done by Filippa (2011). Although loss of a parent through separation or divorce has been associated with child distress in the short term, it is not considered to have deleterious long-term effects (Wise, 2003). However, this is not the case to the children in Zimbabwe with migrant parents who are employed out of the country. In a study by Filippa (2011) reveals that the adolescents, known as Diaspora orphans in that research, were affected emotionally by the absence of their parents and staying with their extended family, though they are receiving remittances. Thus, some of the children would engage into drug abuse and bad behaviours so as to cope with the emotional depression resulted from the absence of parents for long periods.

Some children resort to drug abuse as coping mechanism to reduce stress and loneliness because of parental absence due to migration and as well as separation and due to migration. Lack of supervision from parents has given a room to these children to take alcohol, marijuana, tobacco among other substances. Illicit drug use among school going children is associated with poor academic performance and may be a risk factor for cigarette smoking and unsafe sexual behaviours (Rudatsikira et al, 2009). Parents migrate leaving their children in the care of relatives or friends, the children may not receive adequate protection, which let them resort to drug abuse. Drug abuse and other behaviours might be the result from peer pressure from other children. This links with the systems theory, which states that a system is an open system, which is subject to influence from outside.

According to Sibanda (2011) child marriage is, “Any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically, physiologically, and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing.” This means that any child who is under the age of 18 years is not mature enough to have a family of their own, despite the body development of that child. Child marriage has increase in the country due to economic hardships and sometimes girls became pregnant because both boys and girls just need to experience sex. Pre-marital sex among most teenagers has perpetuated by the absence of parents due to international migration. The money being remitted to these children has exposed them to drug abuse and sexual activities which later result to pregnancy to the girls. Supervisions from parents are very crucial to children than from relatives and friend since some children would not respect the caregivers.

There is a minimum marriageable age law in Zimbabwe, under general law of the country, which is 16 for girls and 18 for boys, but the practice of early marriage continues as customary law, which is also part of the legal system and is followed by any in personal matters, does not have a minimum age for marriage (Sibanda, 2011). The minimum marriage law has been undermined since many children are getting married as early as twelve years both girls and boys though girls are more vulnerable than boys are. The reason some children get married, especially girls, it is because they have practiced reproductive and productive roles for a long time since when they were left by their parents. So they might feel that they are mature enough to be responsible and handle marriage, and have their own family. Some children would feel that they are already parents by looking after their siblings for long time. This would mean that they are experiencing parenthood whilst they are still children.

Child marriage is common in Zimbabwe, and 21% of children (mostly girls) are married before the age of 18 (Sibanda, 2011). Early marriages might be a coping mechanism of some children. They might be running away from long period of depression they suffer from the absence of their family pillars that is parents. Also, they might be running away from the long period of responsibility burden at home.

Conclusion

The enormous parental migration from Zimbabwe to other countries has evolved as a result of the political and socio-economic problems since the year 2000. Parental migration brought positive effects on the well being of the left behind children in Zimbabwe. Remittances has contributed to development of these children through allowing them to access education, food stuffs, shelter, healthy services among many benefits. However, parental migration has left these children vulnerable to much pressure from the outside environment in which they could overcome if the family system was still intact. Children change their behaviours, vulnerable to exploitation as well as depression among many factors. Left behind children have affected more negatively if one is to consider the socio-economic hardships facing Zimbabwe today, despite the remittances provided. However it is difficult to know the statistics of the affected children in Zimbabwe in general because of lack of researches on the topic.

Chapter 2

The impact of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3

Introduction

The chapter presents an analysis of the data collected and findings arrived at from the different interviews with the targeted sample. The findings present how parental migration evolves in Dzivaresekwa 3. The findings also present the wellbeing of the children before their parents leave the country for greener pastures. The findings presents whether parental migration brought positive or negative impacts on the children in Dzivaresekwa 3. 10 girls, 10 boys and 5 caregivers from different households participated as the respondents in the research.

The situation of children before parental migration in Dzivaresekwa 3

The research respondents acknowledge that before parental migration, children were feeling good and comfortable staying with their parents. The presence of their parents means a lot to their everyday life. The children themselves acknowledge that they feel the presence of love when their parents were there. They said that their parents did everything for them despite the hardships they faced before they left Dzivaresekwa. *“Vabereki vangu vaindiitira zvese zvandaida vasati vaenda kuBotswana kunyangwe zvazvo vakanga vasina mari.”* One of the children responds as the researcher was interviewing her. She was comparing her life before her parents left for Botswana and the present life in the custody of her paternal aunt, sister to her father.

Another one said that, *“My mother used to wake up early in the morning cooking for me, prepare my lunch, and making sure that my uniforms are clean before I go to school and sometimes drop me off at the school gate.”*

The children acknowledged that their parents played a very important role in their life before they left for Diaspora. The children said that they performed well at school because their parents used to help them their homework. A form 3 student among the respondents said that, *“At my primary level my parents used to instruct me to do my homework before I hang out with my friends or before I sleep, and when I’m stuck they helped me.”*

Some other guardians also acknowledged that their parents usually monitored them very closely than what they do and there are some changes they have noticed especially their behaviours.”

One of the guardians said that, *“Vabereki vake vaimubata zvakana. Vaimupa nguva yakakwana kuti aite zvaanoda uye vaikwanisawo kugara naye pasi vachikururirana zveupenyu. Ini nokuda kwokuti ndinorwara uye ndine vana vashanu naiye wechitanhatu handikwanisi kuti ndiite sezvaaitwa nevabereki vake.”*

However, other children refuted the view that the presence of their parents was better. The children acknowledged the migration of their parents because of the economic bonus associated with migration. Some of the children were quoted saying, *“Mukoma, (referring to the interviewer), isu takamborara nenzara muna 2008 tashaya chikafu ana mudhara namhoz vese varipo. Takangonwa mvura chete. Hope hadzibate kana usina kumbodya.” (My brother we slept without eating anything in 2008 but only drink water, and we failed to sleep because we were hungry, of which my father and mother were there.)*

Some of the respondents including the guardians are of the view that the situation before the migration of the parents was not good for the wellbeing of the children. A mother of five was quoted saying that, *“Their father could not find another job since after he lost one in 2007. We could not support our family. We ventured into vending business but there was little profit in that kind of business that could sustain the family.”*

The respondents had pointed out different views as they were comparing the situation before parental migration and the present situation. Those who were supporting that the presence of their parents was better than the present situation are the one who are being mostly affected negatively by the migration and they consist of 76%. About 24% are happy with the current situation because their parents are supporting them regularly and are in a positive domestic environment.

The evolution of parental migration in Dzivaresekwa 3

The respondents highlighted many issues concerning the migration of their parents, friends and relatives. Some children do not even know why and when their parents left Zimbabwe because they were very young. From the study, the researcher found that the socio-economic hardships and the political instability in the country have contributed to many of the Dzivaresekwa 3 parents to join other Zimbabweans in the Diaspora. About 56% of the respondents pointed the socio-economic reasons and 32% pointed the political side whilst the other 12% they actually say “I don’t know.” The 12% comprise of the children, under the age of 10, who does not know why their parents left Zimbabwe. The socio-economic reasons include unemployment, lack of income and shortage of basic needs particularly food stuffs whilst on the political side was the political violence prior to the June 2008 elections.

According to the respondents, migration of parents started as early as 2000 up to the time of the study, that is 2014, as deduced by the researcher from the interviews and questionnaires used to retrieve information from the respondents. Many of the respondents highlighted from the year 2007 up to the time of the study that parents have migrated in many numbers than before. 84 percent of the respondents acknowledged that most of the parents migrated from the year 2007 due to prevailing socio-economic hardships and the political violence prior to the June 2008 election, up to the year this research was conducted, that is 2014.

“Mwana wangu akatiza kurohwa muna 2008 nemayouth ayo aimutsvaga nokuti akanga aramba kuvajoina. Aivhimwa husiku nesikati. Anga asisarare pamba kana kudya. Akazotizira ku South Africa. Akazongotifonera aveko achiti mukadzi vake ngaatevere. Akandisira vana vake vatatu. (My son vanished after he was being hunted day and night prior to the June 2008 elections. He later phoned us saying that he was in South Africa and wants her wife to come along. He left his three children with me.)”

This was the respond from a 79-year-old grandmother, who is taking care of her three grandchildren; two boys aged 17 and 7, and a girl who is 13 years old.

The other 16% highlighted the period before 2007. The 16% highlighted the Operation Murambatsvimba that left many people who had invested in the informal sector and those employed in the sector in poverty. *“Tsunami ndoyakaita kuti vabereki vangu vaende kuSouth Africa muna 2005 mushure mekunge maTuckshops edu apwanywa. Takanga tisisina chinotipa mari.”*(My parents went to South Africa in 2005 after the Operation Murambatsvina destroyed our tuckshops. So we had no any source of income.” This was a response from a 15-year-old boy with both parents living in the United Kingdom now.

Generally, the information from the respondents shows that the parental migration in Dzivaresekwa 3 started as early as the year 2000 with few parents living the country. Large number of the parents migrated from the year 2007 due to combination factor of political and socio-economic instability. With the liquidity crunch in the country parents are continuing to leave the country.

Effects of parental migration on Children in Dzivaresekwa 3

The respondents have highlighted both positive and negative effects of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3. 44% of the respondents (including the caregivers) pointed that parental migration has affected children negatively and 24% highlighted the positive. Some other children are affected partly negative and partly positive consist of 32%. These children are benefiting whilst at the same time facing challenges.

Parents left the country leaving their children in the custody of other family members and friends. Some other parents left their children in the hands of a maid as highlighted by a 12-year-old girl. She said that, *“Mhamha vakatisiya tichigara nasisi Brenda (pseudo name) pavakaenda kuSouth Africa. Vakatisiya tichiroja one room.”* The child’s father died in 2009 and her mother left for South Africa in 2010 for employment reasons. Some other children who stay with maids said that their parents provide everything they need but the maids sometimes give their relatives some of the stuff. Though their parents are sending remittances, the children are not accessing the stuffs.

Some parents do not even know how their children are coping without them because of lack of communication and visiting. A 17-year-old girl pointed out that, *“It’s very hard to stay without my parents. My parents usually visit me after a while because they are in the United States of*

America. I do not remember how many times they visited me but my mother last came here when I was in grade 7. She promised to take me when I finish my Ordinary level.”

Other girls, mostly the teenagers, were very worried because they are not feeling free to discuss their problems. They lay emphasis on issues concerning their physical development and needs. They said that they feel so comfortable and free to talk to their parents, especially their mothers, rather than their guardians who are not their parents. This shows that parental presence is very important especially for the girls who need guidance from their parents on their physical development.

Some children in Dzivaresekwa 3 have emphasised on the parental roles they are playing. Children in this area have taking over the roles their parents used to play in the family. They are now acting as head of their families in the absence of their parents. An 18-year-old girl was quoted saying that, *“My parents moved to the United Kingdom in 2008 and we were staying with our paternal grandmother who died in 2011. I’m the eldest girl in the family and I’m taking care of my two siblings.”*

The roles are too many for them as one boy states that, *“As a first born it is my duty to take most of the household duties because my sister is still young to take any. I clean the yard every morning, clean the house, cooking, washing for my siblings. Actually I’m responsible for everything at home.”* This is very hard for many child headed families in Dzivaresekwa 3. 20 percent of the respondents were children who stay alone though some had their extended family members chip in if they face bigger problems. Some of the problems they face they solve themselves without any assistance from anyone. This is a difficult life for many child headed

households in the area. They actually do not have recognition in the community since many people in the area have a belief that their parents support them.

The negatively affected children attributed to the household duties that they have affected their education. The duties are overwhelming them in such a way that they are failing to concentrate on their schoolwork. *“Ini ndakatofaira ‘form 4’ yangu ‘coz’ ndainge ndakakuwara ‘negrift paden’. Ndanga ndisina kana time yekuverenga. (I failed my form 4 final examinations because of the duties at home. I had no chance and time to study.)”* This can be categorised as child labour since it is compromising with the children’s education. These roles are different from child work since child work does not affect the children’s education. Some children said that they go to school less than half of the days that a school-going child supposed to be at school. The roles that were supposed to be done by the parents themselves, have affected the education of the children despite the fact that they are sending money for school fees and other needs.

Some children have affected psychologically which resulted also to poor performance at school and their relationships and the way they interact with other people in the society. One guardian was quoted saying, *“Kubva zvakaenda vabereki vake kuAustralia muna 2006 haachagone muchikoro. Aitambira panumber one kusvika panumber three. Izvozvi hameno zvirikuitwa kuSecondary ikoko, haambotauri kuti akaita number chii temu yakapera.”* 55 percent of the respondents agreed that children’s performance at school have been affected negatively with the parental migration. Some guardians said that they sometimes provide the children with money for extra lessons such that they can boost up their performance at school. According to the respondents, the extra lessons do help and some children changed their performance from bad to average.

Other guardians pointed out that, children always needs their parents regularly because they can understand each other better than they can and they know how to solve the problem together. The guardians also highlighted that there are some problems that needs to be solved at a family level rather than to be handled over by extended families members. The breakup of the family system due to parental migration has led the children to carry many problems since they could not share the problems they are facing. Children actually do not open up their problems easily to other people than their parents as one child quoted saying, *“I only feel free to talk to my parents about my problems because they understand me.”* Some children could not feel free because the caregivers are not friendly enough and take the problem as silly one. *“I once had a clash with my teacher at school because he found me among my fellow students who were taking drugs during break time. I was not taking the drugs even my fellow students defended me but no one at home believed me. They (caregivers) actually supported my suspension from school and reported the issue to my parents.”*

Some teenagers actually take illicit drugs because of the lack of close supervision from their caregivers. They take in marijuana, smoking cigarettes and drink alcohol. One concerned grandmother said that his grandson is taking in alcohol and marijuana. She does not know how and when he started but sometime after his parents left the country. She also mentioned, *“I couldn’t stop him because he is physically strong and so violent.”* Some children admitted that they take drugs because of peer pressure and they do not know why they are taking drugs and alcohol. One seventeen-year-old boy said that, *“My parents are in the UK and I started drinking beer in 2012. All my friends drink beer and are the ones who convinced me on one of my friend’s birthday party. No one at home is concerned about it and they actually know.”*

With this lack of supervision, children actually do what they want with their lives. This is dangerous pertaining to their future life. Also, a society full of drug abusers and people who are violent will be created. They will be addicted and will never stop as one quoted saying that, *“Mukoma wangu chamba hameno ndikachirega, asi kuti zvimwe vakasunga majezimani ose arimuno (I don’t think I will stop smoking marijuana/weed, maybe unless if all the ones who sell the drug are in jail),”* as he was being interviewed by the interviewer.

In additions, the children disadvantaged with parental migration often face different form of abuse. Sexual, physical and emotional abuses are almost common in the area. Many children have been faced either by one or all forms of abuse. 80 percent of the respondents agreed that the children either faced one or all forms of abuse. Some of the children, who once faced physical and emotional abuse, said that they did not know that it was an abuse, and how to report it, so that they can be assisted. One was quoted saying that, *“I thought that it was a way of disciplining me. But I wonder because my parents did not treat me like this.”* This could mean that these children are not aware on abuse issues.

Some children did not feel free to disclose to the interviewer issues concerning sexual abuse and they were not forced to tell the researcher. 20% of the respondents highlighted that some girl have experienced some form of sexual abuse and almost all children said that they once faced emotional and physical abuse. The perpetrators include both close relatives and the neighbours. The girls who reported the sexual abuse their cases were reported to the police and the perpetrators were arrested. Some other girls said they did not report the cases just after the incident but after a week or so because the perpetrators were threatening them. The girls said that

they are receiving counselling services from a non-governmental organisation known as Childline Zimbabwe.

Some of the respondents particularly the children are very concerned with their health issues. The children do not have access to health facilities and the food they consume is unhealthy. The children eat twice a day and they do not balance the diet because they do not have enough money to buy the food. Their daily meal is sadza and vegetables, which is not a balanced diet though in Zimbabwe it is the normal meal especially among the poor. However, this must be expected not from children with parents employed outside the country. Going to work in the foreign country means that that particular parent can remit back that the children would access health food and healthy facilities. Therefore, this will raise the living standards of the left behind children. This is not so in the case of children in Dzivaresekwa 3. It is the opposite. Children of the migrant parents have suffered.

The most affected children are the one with parents who does not remit at all and they depend on the extended family. Some parents do remit but not regularly. *“My parents remit after a while and we usually depend on the extended family on everything which is very hard for us. We need enough food and enough money to pay our hospital bills and we cannot always depend on the extended family of which we have our own parents.”* From observations, the interviewer found that the health status of the children was very low. Most of the houses they stay were very dirt and without floor, and the roofs were fragile. They were wearing torn and dirt clothes. The problem is that their parents are remitting very little money or not remitting them at all.

Moreover, some children said they do not have basic identity and civil registration documents. They highlighted that many reasons hindered them to own a birth certificate and a national

identity card. They said that their parents left before they took birth certificates for them. Some said that they do not have idea on how to access the registration offices and the knowledge on whole process to take birth certificates and national identity cards. In addition, they raised the issue of lack of financial resources for transport and to pay a fee at the registration office.

However not all children faced these problems. 24% of the respondents highlighted that they are enjoying the benefits of parental migration whilst 32% are on both sides that is negative and positive. From the study, children with parents in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Australia are the ones who confirmed the benefits of parental migration. Those children with parents got better paying jobs and permanent ones outside the country are the ones who are benefiting. They remit in time and support their children often.

The children and caregivers who are benefiting from parental migration acknowledged that there is lot of improvement since the year these children's parents left for work in the Diaspora. They are actually happy with that. From observations, the researcher found that the houses were modified and there were at least one car at the yard. Some of the houses were fenced with quality durawalls. The standards of living have improved.

Remittances in form of cash have been sent to these children and their caregivers. The amounts of money being send range from US\$500-00 to US\$700-00 per month. They have invested in some small businesses in Harare central business district such as small wholesale grocery shops, clothing shops, electronic gadgets shops and hair salons. The caregivers and some of the extended families are the ones who oversee these businesses. Some children receive below USD\$200-00 but their parents support them regularly. They are on average and they access the basic needs.

The health status of these children is much better than that of the ones who are being disadvantaged with parental migration. These children are accessing better quality food and health services. They said that they have three meals per day and eat different kind of foods. They afford private doctors and usually go to private hospitals for medical treatment. They can also buy medicine from the pharmacies. This shows that parental migration has mixed effects on children.

In addition, in terms of education some of these children have improved very well. This depends on which school is the child enrolled. Some children's parents afford to send their children to private schools and some to expensive government schools. However, very few are affording these expensive schools. Three boys and one girl acknowledged that they are going to private schools, and two boys and two girls at boarding schools, which cost more than US\$500-00 per term. They are performing very well at school as one guardian confirmed. He said that, "*She is performing very well at school. We were invited to the consultation day last term (second term), her teachers were proud of her. She participates in the class and she is one of the best students among her colleagues.*" Therefore, not all children are being affected negatively by parental migration on their education.

Some children are just adapting the environment in which their parents are absent due to migration. One child quoted saying, "*Its difficulty to live without my parents, but I am now used to it and I'm actually learning to be responsible in my life.*" Some of the children do not show any signs of getting worried about her parents' absence. They are focussing on their education and some want to become musicians as confirmed by their caregivers.

Conclusion

Parental migration, which is believed to have started from the year 2000 up to the recent years due to socio-economic and political reasons, has changed the life of the children in Dzivaresekwa 3. Both positive and negative effects have associated with this phenomenon of parental migration.

Some children are benefiting than others. They are accessing the basic needs as well as enjoying the life that is being enjoyed with those who are rich. Some other children are being disadvantaged emotionally and physically whether their parents are remitting them or not. Some children are being neglected and abusing drugs whilst others are just adapting the situation whereby their parents are overseas. Girls are more vulnerable to many forms of abuse than boys are. Some children might be benefiting in terms of going to school but they are psychologically affected. Most of the respondents pointed to the negative impacts because of parental migration as they considered the socio-economic problems in the country.

Chapter 3

Coping mechanisms adopted by children in Dzivaresekwa 3.

Introduction

This chapter will discuss various coping mechanisms adopted by children with parents living and working out of Zimbabwe. These children have taken up on different mechanisms such as vending, rank marshalling, commuter omnibus conducting and touting, child prostituting, theft, drug abusing, become musicians and getting married to defeat the problems they are facing in the absence of their parents. Parental migration has brought challenges and problems that are affecting the children's wellbeing. The challenges faced by these children in implementing the coping mechanisms will be discussed also. Therefore, recommendations will be suggested to reduce the impact of parental migration on children. The conclusion to the whole study will be included as well.

Coping Mechanisms adopted

Children in Dzivaresekwa 3 have engaged in many different types of mechanisms so that they can deal with the situation whereby their parents are out of the country. Putting in their mind the deteriorating socio-economic status, they find it better to engage in some activities that can improve their wellbeing such as vending, rank marshalling, prostituting, musicians among many. However, some of the coping mechanisms are very dangerous to their health and safety for instance taking drugs, engaging in prostitution and theft.

Some children in Dzivaresekwa 3 with parents who are not remitting or not remitting enough whilst being hit by the socio-economic hardships in the country have turn to compete in the vending businesses to increase their income and their wellbeing. These children are selling

vegetables, fruits, airtime, buns, drinks, car gadgets, movie and music discs, cell phone accessories such as screen covers, earphones and memory cards, among many items. They sell their goods both in the residential areas, in the Harare central business district (CBD), and also at Mbare bus terminus. They set up tables to display their items as well as street hawking to reach many customers. According to the respondents, children involved in vending make profits that can sustain their wellbeing.

The children also take on piece jobs. Most of the residents in Dzivaresekwa 3 practise rain fed urban agriculture. They grow maize in their fields during the rainy season. Some of the children do piece jobs in these fields. They do planting, weeding and harvesting, and in return get money or maize after the harvest. This has also contributed to food security to these children.

Some are becoming housemaids especially girls. Housemaids earn around US\$60-80 per month in Dzivaresekwa 3. Some other children work from home. They clean houses and wash clothes of other residents for \$10 per week. The money will then used to cater for their safety and wellbeing.

Some other children have become rank marshals as well as commuter omnibus conducting and touting. Male children aged between 14 to 18 years, are the ones who are engaging in these types of employment in trying to curb the problems they are facing due low income to support themselves. These children wake up as early as around 0400hrs to start their work and finishes at around 2100hrs. Some other children give themselves a day to rest per week but others do not because they want to maximise the income. According to these children, they earn between US\$20-50 per week, and around US\$70 if it is a busy week. This has also contributed to the

increase of income to these children. The money is being used to improve their development and survival. Some other children are using the money for their education. They go to night schools.

The children also are engaged in the music industry. They are involved in dancehall genre which is popular among youth in the country and particular among Dzivaresekwa 3 youths and children. The area has named 'Dangerzone' because of this type of music. Some children with their parents outside the country have also become dancehall musicians. Some are popular in the area and some are not due to lack of support from the extended families as well as their parents. Some of these children are promising to be great musicians if they get more support. However, these children earn little money in their music. They do shows within Dzivaresekwa residential area but not regularly. They usually accompany the well-known dancehall musicians. About 32% percent of the children participate in dancehall music.

The most affected children have resorted to begging for survival. The respondents pointed out that the children are begging for food, clothing and some money for their upkeep. They beg from the Dzivaresekwa residents who sometimes give them some food stuff and some old clothes. In addition, they can go in areas like Kuwadzana and Tynwald residential areas and as far as in the city centre of Harare. The children have no option but to beg as a means of survival.

Some children have engaged in bad coping mechanism such as theft and prostitution. They do so to support themselves to improve their wellbeing. They steal or venture into prostitution to have money to buy basic needs such as food and clothes. The children did not acknowledge this but it was disclosed by the guardians. The guardians said that they heard from their neighbours as well as suspecting due to their dressing codes have changed especially the girls.

Some of the girls opt to get married as early as 12 years. The respondents highlighted that some children have married because of burden household roles and poverty that has caused by parental migration in some families. The household roles experienced by the children, which suppose to be taken by the parents, have burden on the children. By taking up these roles, the children feel themselves as if they are already mature and can manage her or his own family. The other reason pointed out by the respondents was poverty that the parents are not remitting or are remitting little and irregularly. In addition, some children have been pressurised by their guardians especially those who are staying with their grandparents who are very old. These grandparents are not able to provide basic needs to their grand children. Female children are the most vulnerable to resort to this kind of coping mechanism. 20% of the respondents highlighted that their sisters have been married because of parental migration.

Challenges faced by children in Dzivaresekwa 3 with parents out of Zimbabwe.

Although children have adopted some measures to reduce the negative impacts of parental migration, they have faced many challenges in implementing these measures. The measures have also affected their wellbeing. The vending business engaged by these children is failing due to lack of enough capital to keep on the small vending business growing and making profits. They do not have a proper source of income to fund their business. The profits are very little and could not cover both the vending business and the children's expenses. Therefore, the children are ending up taking that small business capital to cover their own expenses and resulting to the falling down of the vending business.

In addition, vending in the streets of Harare city centre is too challenging among the children. They are being prohibited to sell their stuff in the city. They are also chased away by the Harare

city council from the city centre. Sometimes their goods are being taken away from them and also detained by the city council officers and there will no compensation. This also results to the falling down of the business. It is difficult for these children to find other means to raise another capital to start again.

Also lack of money and resources has prohibited the children to participate very well in the music industry. They do not have the instruments, the money to hire the instruments and recoding their music. This has reduced their performance in doing shows because of the lack of resources. Therefore, could not stand with the competition from those who are well equipped.

The girls who resorted to marriage as a way of running away from poverty due to parental migration have faced many challenges. They are victims of domestic violence, they are becoming single child mothers due to divorce, and lack of resources for their welfare and of their children. Marriage has doubled poverty among these children.

The children with parents living outside the country do not have much social support. In Dzivaresekwa, there are organisations that help children with resources for their welfare and safety but they are not reaching these children with parents outside the country. Some are reaching but not as much as one could expect more attention to be taken. The belief that parents in the Diaspora remit back to the families in the country of origin has contributed to the lack of recognition of the left behind children. The children in Dzivaresekwa 3 are suffering because everyone in the society believes that their parents are remitting them. Some parents are remitting but some are not. Even though some parents are remitting, their children are suffering emotionally and the society never put effort in helping these children. Except the children have

faced the issues like sexual abuse they can help but not much as compared when the child's parent is there especially on the psychosocial support side.

The lack of research on the impact of parental migration on children in Zimbabwe has also contributed to the lack of social support of these children. The researcher could not find any statistics of children with parents in the Diaspora in the country and particularly in Dzivaresekwa

3. Lack of research in this field is not allowing the government and the organisations that participate in child protection system to recognise the impacts of parental migration on children.

Thus, the challenges facing these children are becoming more and intensely affecting their wellbeing.

Measures to improve the wellbeing of the left behind Children

The government and the organisation that are involved in child protection in Zimbabwe should also consider the children with parents who are outside the country. The children need support from the support from the available support system that is the police, the department of social services and the non-governmental organisation among other players. Their role will help the protection and participation of the children in the society and create a better future for them.

Information concerning the present wellbeing of the children should be provided to the parents in the Diaspora. The parents can be urged to take their children or provide enough support such that the children cannot be involved in activities that affect them such as vending as well as getting married. Regular visiting and communication between the children and their parents must also be encouraged to the parents.

The caregivers should also be supportive. They should be provided with information on challenges that the children may face in adapting the new family environment. Also they should seek help from the available support system when they have clash with the children interests. The clashes could devote the children to resort to coping mechanisms that affect their lives negatively for example dropping from school and choose to married or become a maid.

Conclusion

Due to the socio-economic and political instability in Zimbabwe has resulted to many people in the country migrate and seek better livelihood opportunities in other countries. Migration have increased income levels and raised standards of living among the families with a member of the family in the Diaspora. Parents have migrated such that they could support their families back home. This form of migration improved the wellbeing of the families and children left behind in the country since the migrated parents have been sending remittances in form of money and \\\

As found in the study, parental migration has increased access to better health services, foodstuffs, clothing, shelter, and education among other things on children. The housing improved and some own a car. The remittances have been used to start businesses, which cover up other expenses. These improvements have contributed to the wellbeing of the children.

However, parental migration has caused sufferings among the children as the study shows. The negative effects outweighed the positive contributions. Children in Dzivaresekwa 3 have been affected psychologically, socially and economically. They have been excluded in many circles of the society. They have become child labourers, participating in the economic activities, getting married, and drug abusers. Some girls resorted to marriage, as a coping mechanism, has become

survivors of domestic violence as well as becoming child mothers. The study has shown that 76% of the respondents acknowledge that parental migration has affected the wellbeing of the children negatively.

This has shown that if the any member of the family moves out, the family system will be affected and its members also affected. In this case, the movement of the parents to other country has affected the family system in which the child has been affected the most. The child become more vulnerable to the outside environment in which he forced to adapt to the prevailing conditions without the support from the system.

Though the separation of the members of the family system has positive effects, it has more harm than good to the parts of the system, which are vulnerable. In this case, children are the most vulnerable. It is shown by the research that separation of parents and children due to migration has brought harm than good to children.

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Appendices

My name is Bernard N. Mabharani. I am a student at Midlands State University pursuing an Honours Degree in Development Studies. I am conducting a research on the impact of parental migration on children in Dzivaresekwa 3. It is the requirement of the Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies Honours Degree that every student conduct a research on any area of interest.

The information provided in this research will remain private and confidential. The material will be used for nothing other than academic purposes by the researcher only. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

You are free to answer or not to answer.

Appendix 1

Section A: Interview Questions for the Children

Instructions: Please answer all questions

1. *How old are you?*
2. *Who is your caregiver?*
3. *Do you go to school and what grade or form are you?*
4. *Where did your parents migrate to?*
5. *Why did they go to that country and when?*
6. *How long they have been there?*
7. *Do they support you or visit you?*
8. *How are you coping with the absence of your parents?*
9. *How are you feeling staying without your parents?*
10. *What are you thinking about your future in the absence of your parents?*
11. *What are the challenges are you facing?*

12. *How are you dealing with those challenges?*

Section B: Interview Questions for the caregivers

Instructions: Please answer all questions

1. *How many children you are taking care of?*
2. *How are they coping with the absence of their parents?*
3. *Does the child/ren's parents remit and how often?*
4. *Are you capable of taking care of them?*
5. *How are they behaving in the absence of their parents?*
6. *What are the challenges being faced with the children?*
7. *Is there any support system for children?*

Appendix 2

Questionnaire designed for the left behind children

Instructions: Please answer all questions.

1. **How old are you?** 0-6 [] 6-12 [] 13-18 []
2. **Do you have siblings?** YES [] NO []
If YES, how many are they? 1[] 2[] 3[] Other (Specify).....
3. **Do you stay with them?** YES [] NO []
If NOT, (Tick all that applies):
Parent/s abroad [] Parents' friends [] Relatives []
Other (Specify).....

4. **Do you and your siblings go to school?** YES [] NO []
If NOT, (Tick all that applies):
 No school fees [] Too many household chores [] Looking after my siblings []
 Other (Specify).....
5. **Who is your current caregiver?** Father [] Mother [] Extended Family []
 Parents friends [] Self []
 Other (Specify).....
6. **Does your caregiver look after you very well?** YES [] NO []
7. **Who is responsible for the household duties?** My caregiver [] Maid []
 My Self [] Other (Specify).....
8. **What is your parent/s' country of destination?** Zimbabwe neighbouring countries []
 United Kingdom [] United States of America [] Australia [] I do not know []
 Other countries (Specify).....
9. **How long they have been there?** Less than 5 years [] 6 to 10 years []
 More than 10 years [] I do not know []
10. **How often do they visit you?** Less 5 times a year [] More than 5 times a year []
 Once after 5 years [] Never come home []
11. **Do they support and remit you?** YES [] NO []
If YES, Tick all that applies?
 They send money [] They send clothes and food stuffs []
 Other(Specify):.....
12. **How often they remit you?** Weekly [] Monthly [] Yearly []
 Other (Specify).....

13. *If the answer to (11) is NO, what are your survival means? (Tick all that applies)*

Vending [] Piece jobs [] Begging []

Other (Specify).....

14. *Do you feel safe in your current environment? YES [] NO []*

If NOT what challenges are you facing? (Tick all that applies):

Abuse [] Problems with the caregiver [] Problems with the neighbours []

Peer pressure []

Other [] (Specify).....

15. *Did you seek any help to overcome those challenges? YES [] NO []*

If YES, who is assisting you? (Tick all that applies):

Teachers [] Extended family members [] Friends [] Neighbours []

Non-governmental Organisations [] Other (Specify).....

If NOT, provide your answer below

.....
.....

16. *Do your views, decisions and your rights respected by the caregiver? YES [] NO []*

If NOT, provide your answer below:

.....
.....

17. *Do you and your siblings have basic identity and civil registration documents?*

YES [] NO [] *If YES (Tick all that applies):*

National Identity Card [] Birth Certificate [] Passport []

If NOT (Tick all that applies):

No access to office/s [] No Citizenship [] No transport []

No financial resources [] No information []

Other (Specify).....

18. *Have you ever been prevented from trying to obtain basic identity and civil registration documents?* **YES [] **NO** []**

If YES, what prevented you from obtaining the documents?

(Specify below):

.....
.....