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**MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**THE ROLE OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN  
UPHOLDING MARRIAGES IN ZIMBABWE. A CASE STUDY  
OF ZAKA DISTRICT (2005-2016)**

**BY**

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN HISTORY HONOURS DEGREE**

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RELEASE FORM

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The undersigned certify that, they have read and recommend to the Midlands State University for acceptance of a research project entitled: **The role of indigenous knowledge systems in upholding marriages in Zaka district. (2005-2016)**

By Fungai Muzvarwi (R134239Q) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree in History.

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DECLARATION

I, Fungai Muzvarwi, do hereby declare that, the content of this dissertation is my original work and has not been previously submitted anywhere for any degree purposes at any other university.

I certify that, all literature consulted and interviews have been identified and acknowledged. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts Honors Degree in History at Midlands State University.

Signature .....

Date .....

## DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my lovely parents, Mr. and Mrs. Muzvarwi, Tinotenda, and my siblings Edmore, Delight and Panashe.

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, particularly love potions (mupfuhwira) in upholding marriages in Zaka district. Marriage institution has been and is still under crisis because of economic and social factors and this has triggered high divorce rate in Zimbabwe, as a whole. The purpose of this study is to highlight how love potions are helpful in sustaining marriages. The research has revealed reasons why people utilize love potions, names and types of love potions have also been identified. The experiences of the many of women interviewed for this study showed that, there are negative and positive results of using love potions. Factors for the little recognition or just, alternatives of love potions have been outlined in this study. Love potions have been regarded by Christians and others, as archaic and heathenish, and as a result, modern and holistic approaches such as counseling and praying have been used to uphold marriages. However, the study assesses whether these approaches are successful in upholding marriages compared to the use of love position, or are people really sticking to these or are secretly resorting to love potions. The findings of the research are that, both men and women make use of love potions, thereby nullifying the notion that women are the mere users of love potions. Also the study has found out that, people really use love potions to uphold their marriages, though they do not want to be known or exposed. The study suggests that, incorporating or integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the marriage sector can help solve marital problems, thereby making marriage a lifetime commitment as was in the past.*

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ATR.....	African Traditional Religion
AIDS.....	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HIV.....	Human Immune Virus
IKS.....	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
NAC.....	National Aids Council
STIs.....	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TMPC.....	Traditional Medical Practitioners Council
ZINATHA.....	Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association

## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage as an institution is under crisis, with catastrophic consequences on women. As a result, women are running up and down searching for solutions. It is true that, several women in Zimbabwe are seeking solace and refuge in indigenous knowledge systems in order to sustain their marriages. Mararike defines indigenous systems as knowledge of local environment and how people try to put the world around them, in some kind of order, some kind of system which is intended to assist in making decisions on appropriate ways of planning survival strategies<sup>1</sup>. This study explores traditional methods which are being employed by rural couples, mainly focusing on the use of love potions or taming herbs to cement their relationships. Hannan states that love potions are medicine that attract husband's affection and are designed to control husband's behavior as well as promote love and harmony in marriages<sup>2</sup>.

The utilization of husband taming herbs is not witchcraft as many may perceive it. It should be noted that, Gordon Chavhunduka the late president of Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association (ZINATHA) placed love potions under the category, "Instruments of law and order or for the preservation of morality."<sup>3</sup>This study seeks to highlight factors behind the massive use of love medicines. Women do not tame their husbands just for the sake of taming, but there are a number of pull and push factors, ranging from economic, social as well as health ones. Infidelity by men, fear of divorce and polygamy, financial issues, domestic violence, jealous and competition as well as fear of ravaging sexually transmitted diseases(STIs), HIV and AIDS. The study also seeks to discuss different types of love medicines, their effectiveness as well as risks associated with the use of these love potions.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

Zaka district is commonly known as the area full of herbs, traditional healers and witchcraft, but little or none has been documented on the use of traditional herbs to uphold marriages. Previous researchers have been focusing on the use of IKS on climate change, environmental management, and natural disaster management among a host of others, neglecting a very crucial aspect, that of marriage. The other problem is that, the so called civilized people perceive the use of IKS as backward, primitive and demonic. It is argued that, modernity is editing African traditional practices, as in the past traditional healers and elders were regularly consulted<sup>4</sup>. This explains why in the past marriages lasted for a long time.

However, it should be noted that, due to economic crisis, high divorce rate as well as AIDS pandemic the use of love medicines has mushroomed as people, especially women are seeking refuge and fidelity in herbs. Both rural and urban women are going traditional when it comes to upholding their marriages, as they fear the results of divorce, polygamy, responsibility and AIDS. Also, the fact that, the use of love potions is still a debatable subject lured the researcher to carry out the project so as to find the truth of the matter. The researcher carries out the research to demystify the notion that, women are the mere users of taming as men also blind fold and take love medicines to lure and satisfy their female lovers thereby upholding their marriages.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To assess the usefulness of traditional love medicines by Zaka residents in upholding marriages.

- ❖ To examine reasons behind the use of love potions by local people in sustaining their marriages.
  
- ❖ To identify types and names of love potions and examine benefits and risks associated with the use of love potions.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✓ What are the factors behind the use of love potions?

The researcher asks the targeted informants the reasons why they are using love potions or taming herbs. This helps the researcher to find out the pull and push factors for the use of love potions.

- ✓ What are the types and names of the taming herbs that are used and what do they do to the recipient. This helps the researcher to know the names of the traditional herbs used in the area. This also assists in finding out what love potions do to the victim. Is the use of love potions a blessing or a curse in the marriage institution? The researcher finds out whether the use of these love medicines has advantages to the people. The negative effects of the use of traditional love herbs are also to be highlighted.

- ✓ Are these taming herbs helpful in sustaining marriages?

The researcher asks whether the use of *mupfuhwira* is cementing relationships in marriages. The researcher assesses whether the practices are successful in upholding or are ruining marriages. It is the duty of the researcher to find out factors for the little recognition of love potions, or alternatives of love potions. The researcher assesses whether these alternatives are helping upholding marriages or are just used as smoke screens by people.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Continent wide, several people in general and women in particular, make use of taming herbs in order to cement their relationships in marriage, which are at stake not only because of increased number of sexual partners, domestic violence, financial crisis, but also with the AIDS pandemic. African countries such as Malawi and Nigeria are also at the forefront of using love herbs as they are naturally known to be full of herbs and witchcraft. Ndlovu asserts that, South Africa is of no exclusion with the familiar love potion known as *mabhebheza*.<sup>5</sup> The area under study, Zaka district is situated in the Southern Eastern part of Zimbabwe, eight-six kilometers from the provincial city, Masvingo. It is found in the agro-ecological zone five in the lowveld of Zimbabwe which receives between 600-800mm of rainfall. The rainfall received is suitable for roots, barks, leaves and grass which are very important in the preparation of the love potions which are mainly used by the Zaka residents.

Several men in the area, especially in ward 24 and 18 are migrant workers in South Africa and are commonly known as *majoni majoni* and others work in cities far away from the area. This has increased infidelity between the couples, which has led to lack of conjugal rights and financial entanglement, hence the incorporation of love potions in their marriages. Love potions are prepared by traditional healers and elders. Some are being sold at market places, especially at Jerera growth point. It is argued that, elderly women in this trade usually conduct business in public toilets. It should be noted that, although some people denounce the use of love potions, the study revealed that, several people make use of love potion though not publicly.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Anika Wilson, in the article, 'Of Love Potions and Witch Baskets' says that, Malawian women's reliance upon love potions to control their husbands is centered upon gendered labor, migration patterns, marital obligation and woman's entanglement with husbands and in laws.<sup>6</sup> She asserts that, once forgotten women no longer receive cash and conjugal rights. Wilson's work was an eye opener to the researcher as she points out the reasons why women rely on love potions to control their husbands. The author also points out the purpose of love potions as well as the consequences of these medicines<sup>7</sup>. She argues that, if not used properly love potions may be dangerous causing madness and or death. However, the author attributes the use of love portions to men's activities when they are away, not knowing that even when partners stay together, infidelity always happen.

Allison Goebel, in the article, “Men These Days, They are A Problem” brings to light a bigger picture on the use of husband taming herbs<sup>8</sup>. The author highlights economic, political, legal as well as health factors as driving forces why women use love potions. Goebel went on to say that, high rates of divorce, high frequency of sexual partners, high rates of marital discord which resultantly lead to financial issues and domestic violence. The author’s work was very useful to this research because it helps to come up with sound background information. Goebel asserts the importance of traditional healers in the use of love potions<sup>9</sup>. This is an eye opener to the researcher on which type of informants to approach. The author also addresses the issue why male infidelity has increased. The author argues that, cultural and social change has increased women’s mobility in beer halls, work place and roads which means that more women are around. Also, girls no longer make their virginity important and this has increased infidelity. Goebel points out a very interesting point that, cash based economy has aggravated marriage crisis as extended families have no longer have a say over marriage issues, a part which other authors have turned a blind eye on. It should be noted that, although Goebel worked very hard, he paid much attention on the use of love potions by women, hence the title, “Men these days, they are a problem”: Husband taming herbs and gender wars in rural Zimbabwe.

Ruganga and Pitts, in their article, *The use of herbal and other agents to enhance sexual experience*, assert the issue of dry sex<sup>10</sup>. They argue that, drying herbs are placed in the vagina to promote male pleasure. The authors point out the idea of traditional networks that are aunts and grandmothers as the suppliers of the herbs. Keller declares that, women are searching for love and luck in taming herbs<sup>11</sup>. He also highlights the dangers of love potions if not used properly, thereby awakening the researcher of the risks associated with the use of love potions.



Chavhunduka's work is also an eye opener to this study as it points out the reason why people are not putting much faith in traditional healers<sup>12</sup>. He affirms that, ZINATHA is becoming worried about the trend towards do it-yourself love potions containing ingredients that might blanch even an adventurous apotherapy. He complains that, amateurs are giving the association a bad name. This gives light on risks and advantages of the use of love potions.

Musalo, on the other hand argues that witchcraft has never been a solution to couples who have issues in their marriages<sup>13</sup>. He advocates for couples to seek assistance from professional counselors. Musalo went on to argue that, most people do not take counseling seriously, there are other issues that couples cannot tell each other because each other's egos, but with the help of a counselor, they can air them out and get help. However, it should be noted that, Musalo's work is biased as he totally rules off the power of love potions in upholding marriages. One should also bear in mind that, some couples would not agree to get assistance from counselors and others might not change the behavior even after counseling.

## SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Bryman believes that, a research's credibility and comprehensiveness is pegged on the methods employed in data collection and analysis. The researcher made use of qualitative approach, employing contemporary techniques such as interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted and informants were chosen according to age and social standing. In this study, traditional healers, elders, married couples were interviewed. These groups of people were very useful because they provided needed information, especially traditional healers and some of the

women who have been using *mupfuhwira* to sustain their marriages. However, as the topic is a bit sensitive, the researcher made use of random selection of the interviewees

The researcher also employed participant observation as a tool to get information from the informants. The technique was used to identify the types and names of love potions used by Zaka residents in upholding marriages. The researcher questioned traditional healers and elders already in the industry. Participant observation permitted lack of artificiality as the observer can ask for further explanation. Direct observation helped to gain insight into love potions being used by various people.

The researcher made use of newspaper articles. Secondary sources were imperative to this study as other ideas from different intellectuals around the area of study were exposed. Midlands State University library provided information on the background of the study as well as on literature review. Books, journals and desktop research were very important in soliciting information on the use of love potion. Primary and secondary sources supplemented each other in acquiring information on love potions.

## DISSERTATION LAYOUT

### INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

This chapter is the introductory chapter which houses the background information, research objectives and questions. Research problem, sources and methodology, literature review as well as dissertation layout are also presented in this chapter.

## CHAPTER 1. REASONS BEHIND THE INCREASED USE OF LOVE POTIONS.

This chapter focuses on the factors behind the use of love potions. The researcher explores a number of pull and push factors behind the use of taming herbs. Ranging from economic, social and health factors, evaluating which ones are luring a lot of women and why? The researcher assesses whether these factors are genuine or are just scape goats used to justify the use of love potions.

## CHAPTER 2: RISKS AND BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF LOVE POTIONS.

The chapter focuses on whether taming herbs are a blessing or a curse to the marriage institution. The researcher discusses the advantages associated with the use of love potions, for instance, everlasting marriages, fruitful household budgets, financial stability among others. The researcher does not turn a blind eye on the risks linked to the usage of love potions, for instance divorce, poverty, madness and even death.

## CHAPTER 3. AN ASSESSMENT OF LOVE POTIONS ABILITY IN UPHOLDING MARRIAGES.

This chapter focuses on the analysis whether love potions are helpful in upholding marriages or are worsening the situation. If it is not, what are the challenges behind the failure? The researcher discusses why the use of herbs is still a debatable issue and the use of love potions is on the rise?

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter gives the concluding remarks of the study on the role of love potions in upholding marriages. It gives the summary of the whole study and conclusion of the study. This chapter also contains recommendations

## ENDNOTES

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## CHAPTER 1: FACTORS FOR THE INCREASED USE OF LOVE POTIONS.

### 1.0. **Introduction.**

This chapter focuses on what love potions are, as well as their use in upholding marriages. Emphasis of the chapter is also on the reasons behind the increased use of love potions in the Zaka district, ranging from economic, social and health factors. In this chapter, taming herbs are categorized and the effects of love potions to the recipient are identified.

### 1.1 **Love potions.**

Love potions, better known as *mupfuhwira* in vernacular, are herbs that are designed to control husband's behavior, especially infidelity, and to promote love and harmony in marriages, as noted by Hannan<sup>1</sup>. Goebel also defines love potions as medicine to attract a lover's affection<sup>2</sup>. As for Chisanyu, love potion is medicine that makes love real and he argues that, some call it marriage security<sup>3</sup>. It should be noted that, love potion is a spell that is used to unite families, and are meant to help a situation. Love potions are made from plants and animals for instance tree leaves, roots, barks, grass, as well as some animal parts such as lizard tail, heart of a pigeon, dog brains, baboon urine, human blood and excretion among a host of others. These love potions are prepared and sold by traditional healers, herbalists and some elders in the society and are either secretly slipped into food and drinks or applied on body parts. Hannan confirmed that, love potions refer to a large number of herbal preparation and regimes that women may purchase from traditional healers and herbalists or be given by natal families or friends<sup>4</sup>. It should be noted that, the concoctions are sold at healers' homesteads as well as at market places. However, it is argued that, in big cities such as Harare and Bulawayo love medicines are being sold in public toilets and peddlers do door to door selling to housewives in the comfort of their homes while husbands are at work.

## **1.2 Reasons behind the use of love potions.**

### **1.2.1 Economic factors**

Reasons behind the increased use of love potions vary from economic, social and health factors. Zaka residents, especially women have been physically and emotionally abused in marriages, and as a result, they have resorted to indigenous knowledge systems in order to maintain their relationships. Mrs. F. Mawadze said that, “my husband used to beat me up every time he came home for no apparent reason, he would just use anything near him to flog me” , and several other women confirmed that, their husbands used to come home drunk and hit them, until they found refuge in love potions. Economic deterioration that the country has been experiencing impacted negatively on rural women. Retrenchment of their husbands from work resulted in financial constrains, which often led to quarrels, thereby triggered domestic violence in marriages. Goebel affirms that, women are limited and disadvantaged by state and customary laws, practices and policies which indicate that women can gain access to arable land mostly through marriage<sup>5</sup>. This has been a disadvantage to rural women because it makes them vulnerable after divorce and deaths. One may argue that, some of the customary laws, for example that all property is owned by the husband have been modified, but it should be noted that, in rural areas the law is still viable as some of the in-laws are greedy and selfish to the extent of leaving the wife and children without land and property. As a result, rural women are seeking refuge in love potions to avoid divorce, thereby upholding marriages. Wilson argues that, economic meltdown in Zimbabwe from the year 2002 has given birth to migrant laborers, who look for greener pastures mostly in South Africa and Botswana, thereby increasing infidelity between married couples. It is argued that, a man would spend several years without returning home, and once forgotten women no longer receive cash, conjugal rights and opportunities to bear legitimate children. Therefore,



women are making use of love potions to avoid infidelity, polygamy and divorce, thereby sustaining their marriages.

### 1.2.2 **Health factors**

Health factor is another driving force behind the use of love potions. Fear of ravaging STIs and HIV/AIDS has triggered a lot of women to utilize love potions that enforce fidelity, in order to avoid being infected, as the husband would be having one sex partner. Keller argues that, social and cultural change has increased women's mobility in beer halls, work places and pavement, and this has increased male infidelity, thereby putting the lives of married women at stake<sup>6</sup>. It is argued that, male infidelity has increased because there are more women around and girls no longer value their virginity. It should also be known that, unmarried girls and sex workers also make use of husband taming herbs to run off with married man. As a result, women are competing for men, hence the need to incorporate indigenous knowledge systems in upholding marriages. The study reveals that, traditional healers are concerned with HIV/AIDS and see taming herbs as a method of preventing high frequency of sexual partners, thereby curbing the spread of the virus.

### 1.2.3 **Social factors**

Social factors are also contributing towards the increased use of love potions. Marriage institution is under crisis due to high rate of divorce in Zimbabwe. Zaka residents have been subjected to hasty marriage ending, thereby heightening divorce rates. Divorce has detrimental effects especially to women. Bourdillon says that, Shona marriage contains a gendered construction of property ownership such as cattle, land, property and other material goods<sup>7</sup>. Divorce leaves the wife vulnerable, hence people are utilizing love potions to make love strong at the same time avoiding divorce. Socially, divorce reduces the status of women in a society as

divorced women are looked down upon and considered to have loose morals, as a result, women are fighting by every means to strengthen their relationships in order to uphold their marital status. Allison attributes sour relations with the in laws as another push factor for the use love potions. The enmity between women and their in laws, especially mothers in- law has also prompted the use of love potions, so that the partner would be blinded and stop listening to the family member's advice, therefore cementing the bond in the marriage. Domestic violence and drunkenness have also ensnared women to exploit love potions as they are believed to stop the husband from cheating, being drunk as well as flogging the wife.

However, it should be noted that, some of the women utilize love potions in order to have power over their husbands. Scholars like Ruganga, nullifies the fear of AIDS and divorce as push factors for the use of love herbs, attributing money as the driving force. It is argued that, wives want to control household budgets as they take themselves as better planners than men. It should be noted that, wives make use of love potions to starve the rival woman or girlfriends and prostitutes use them so that they can be supported financially or to fix those who refuse to pay agreed fee. However, the research exposed that, those who utilize love potions mainly for money are 'small houses' and sex workers as they are more concerned about money and nothing else.

### **1.3Uses of love potions**

Love potions are used for various reasons. Wilson argues that, love medicines work as prophylaxis against extra marital and polygamous relationships<sup>9</sup>. Some potions are used to increase the measure of love the recipient has for the giver and simultaneously decrease the recipient's interest in having other sex partners. Other love potions render the recipient physically unable to have sex with anyone else, women are referred as 'being locked' and men

are mainly associated with penis failure. It is argued that, love potions are used to stop the progress of an existing affair or to prevent an affair from occurring. Love potions are also used to enforce submissiveness and are also used to hasten the onset and enhance the enjoyment of romance. It is important to note that, one cannot separate the uses of love potions from the types of potions as the use is determined by the type of the love potions, as discussed below.

#### **1.4 Types of love potions**

There are numerous kinds of love potions and different ways of preparing them. It is argued that, love potions are prepared according to the type of the problem. There are taming herbs designed for bedroom, kitchen, communication, adultery, responsibility among others. Chisanyu argues that, there are taming herbs for falling in love, staying in love as well as fanning the flames of a waning relationship<sup>10</sup>. In this study, the researcher categorizes the types of love potions in the following manner:

##### **1.4.1 Enforcement of submissiveness**

A number of traditional healers and elders pointed out that, there are love potions that enforce submissiveness, even at the early stage of courting. It is argued that, a certain plant root is put under the tongue as well as in pockets and this helps a man to successfully propose to a woman. It is known that these potions would blindfold the women to the extent that, she only sees and hear sweet words from the man. *Mbuya* Chisango, an interviewee said that, women apply bathing and skin preparation herbs so that they can be noticed by man. In Zaka district, love potion made from smashed roots of *mupwezha* tree is applied by some young girls in order to lure men. It is argued that, they would look more beautiful before the men and as a result, men would not resist proposing, hence the wish of girls would have been fulfilled. However, the study reveals that, this kind of potion is mostly used by men and very few girls. Love potions that are

meant to enforce submissiveness are also employed by married women in order to control their husbands. Women in the local area said that, they make use of potions mixed with water previously used to bath the corpse, so that the husband would listen to her every time and even when man's relatives try to advice, he would not listen because of the charm. The intention of the potion is to make the man act like a dead person, who neither think nor feel, he would just dance according to the wife's tune. It should be noted that, women also make use of pounded leaves and roots on *Muzhanje* tree in order to get financial support from the husband, as it is argued that the potion makes a man to be generous with his pocket, thereby submitting to the woman's needs. The idea of using *Muzhanje* tree is that it is known for being generous with its fruits. Some healers call the potion, 'stay soft' because the man would stay soft and calm thereby falling for the woman's demands. Goebel asserts that, submissiveness may stretch to the extent of doing household chores. However, this kind of submissiveness is questioned by many and it even leads to the debate on whether love potions are good or bad. This also may be the reason why men take counter love potions, these are potions which men use so that women's love potions would be powerless when used on them.

#### **1.4.2 Enforcement of fidelity**

The rise of use of love potions in rural Zimbabwe is centered at enforcing fidelity, thereby avoiding the spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS as well as divorce. *Runyoka* is one of the common love potion administered to unsuspecting lovers to prevent them from being unfaithful. *Runyoka* or human central locking system is usually administered by jealous and over protective man over their young and beautiful wives. The study reveals that, even women use this type of potion in order to starve their rival woman and girl friends. Prostitutes also make use of *runyoka* to fix clients who refuses to pay agreed fee. It is argued that, this potion enforce fidelity in the sense

that, the locked love would not have sex with another partner as the organ may fail to erect or sometimes disappear. It should be noted that, the potion effect differently, depending on what the administrator wants. Some potions, does to the unfaithful partner what is called ‘men dog inseparable syndrome’ whereby the two would be inseparable till the partner who administered it deems it necessary to disconnect the charm. This kind of potion is mostly used by migrant workers and long distance truck drivers to ensure that their wives are faithful when they are away. It should be noted that, these potions are used to ensure that cases of adultery are limited in this era of incurable pandemics.

Besides the use of *runyoka*, there are other love potions that are used to avoid infidelity between married people for instance, the use of the heart of pigeon is smashed and mixed with other roots and mingled with meat so that the recipient would not notice. This kind of potion ensures that the lover is always in company of her partner, as is the habit of pigeon to walk and fly with its partner. It is also argued that, a lizard tail makes a good love potion especially for enforcing fidelity in marriages. It is believed that, lizards like to hang around walls of thatched huts all day and if a man is fed with lizard tail, he will behave just like a lizard and stay around the hut next to his wife all day, and this man is commonly known as ‘*chipotanemadziro*’ in Zaka, the one who likes to hang around walls. Men also make use of lizard tails, as noted by Chavhunduka, as it ties a woman to the house after finishing her duties at home instead of going out to look for boyfriends and gossiping. Therefore, the use of love potions can be helpful in upholding marriages, especially when administered very well.

#### **1.4.3 Exceptional performance in bed**

One of the most important and mostly used love potions are that of enhancing sexual performance in bed and this helps in sustaining marriages. Different herbs and concoctions are

prepared so that partners could have enough power and zeal to have sex, thereby upholding their marriages as sex is a unifying factor in a relationship. Ruganga argues that, several women utilize herbs to make their organs sweet and tight<sup>11</sup>. In Zaka district, a lot of women make use of *mupfura* barks to tighten their sexual organs. They use the method of pounding the tree barks, mix it with water and sit on the bucket or dish, it is believed that the liquid would penetrate the private parts, thereby tightening them. Women in the local area also make use of tree roots such as *ndorani* and are inserted into the vagina to tighten it. By making the parts tight, women would be trying to please their husbands, as it is believed that, for men, tightness is associated with sweetness. Wilson affirms that, the woman's exceptional performance will deter a man from having multiple sex partners, thereby safeguarding their matrimonial rights. It is argued that, some people make use of body fluids such as saliva, menstrual blood, vaginal fluids, and semen among others to invoke physical fitness. By so doing, women would be preventing polygamy and divorce.

On the other hand, men also make use of love potions to enhance sexual appetite and power to please their wives on bed. Men in the local area under study make use of potions commonly known as '*wekusimbisa musana*' medicine to strengthen the back. Barks, leaves and roots of trees like *mukamba*, *mupangara*, *mupambangoma*, *muzavazava* among others are prepared to strengthen backs, as these trees are believed to be strong. Traditional healers said that, these stimulate erection as well as prolonging time of sex before ejaculation, thereby pleasing and satisfying the wife, resulting in upholding marriages. It should be known that, things like *mazondo*, and head meat are also consumed to strengthen men's backs, enhancing their sexual activities thereby deterring wives in engaging in extra marital affairs.

#### 1.4.4 Boosting fading relationships or restoring lost love

Married people are also employing love potions that are meant for boosting and restoring lost love. It should be noted that, this type of love potions are the most used, as people would seek for traditional love potions after realizing that their love has faded. It is argued that, Zaka residents would resort to love potions after facing challenges in their relationships. Some of the healers pointed out that, several people prefer treatment to prevention. It should be noted that, women make use of love potions through bathing and skin preparation, so that they look young and beautiful, and as a result, men would become attracted thereby maintaining love and peace in marriages. Baboon urine is one of the ingredients used to make love potions for fading relationships. However, this type is not commonly used because of scarcity and the means of collecting the urine, but it is said to be effective as it is believed that, a baboon has the tendency of urinating only in one place without forgetting the spot, as a result this will restore love as the husband would not forget his wife just like a baboon does.

Ndlovu argues that, in South Africa the well known love potion is called *mabhebheza* that is used to bring back lost lover<sup>12</sup>. It is argued that, the potion is mixed with tea and it makes a man to have strong love for the woman as well as supporting financially. In Zaka district, some wives place love potions in underwear and even inside pillows in order to boost fading relationships. Hence, one can say that, the category of boosting waning relationships or restoring lost love is very helpful to the society as it contributes towards upholding marriages by avoiding polygamy, divorce and sexual diseases. There is also love potions used to maintain communication within relationships, and this upholds marriages as communication is a very important aspect.

However, one should bear in mind that, there are some love potions which are meant for hastening the end of marriages. It is argued that, some people approach traditional healers and

herbalists asking for love potions for divorce. A traditional healer, *sekuru* Nhidza said that, some people would want to walk out of marriage, not because of challenges they encounter, but because of greediness and being loose, hence they seek for charms to make their lovers divorce them, as they would not want to be blamed for initiating divorce. However, it should be noted that, it is not common because several women try by every means to avoid divorce, and as a result upholding their marriages.

#### **1.4.5 Conclusion**

The chapter analyzed different meanings of love potions and the various uses of these love especially in Zaka district. Different categories of love potions have been mentioned which helps in sustaining in marriages. It should be noted that, if administered very well, love herbs can pull women out of the pools of polygamy and divorce.



## ENDNOTES

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## CHAPTER 2: BENEFITS AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF LOVE POTIONS.

### **2.Introduction**

Despite the criticism of the use of love potion among mainstream churches, Pentecostal churches and other people, it is wise to remember that several marriages in Zimbabwe are sustained by the use of love potions. It is very important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using taming herbs or aphrodisiacs in upholding marriages. The chapter explores the benefits of using love potions identified by a number of Zaka residents, for instance widespread availability and affordability, endorse faithfulness thereby limiting spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS, bring financial stability in marriages, maximize satisfaction in bed, command and control among others. The study also reveals the risks associated with the use love potions such as the fact that they do expire, may also lead to mental disorder, internal system disorder, divorce, death among other risks.

### **2.2. Advantages of using love potions**

Love potions are widely available and affordable in Zimbabwe and this is one of the reasons why the use of these taming herbs has gained more coverage in Zaka district. It is argued that, love potions are readily available at traditional healers, herbalists, and grannies' places, pavements as well as market places. Mrs Takaendesa of Zivenge village said that, some of the old ladies do door to door selling of husband taming herbs.<sup>1</sup> In some remote parts of Zaka district, where African Traditional Religion (ATR) is dominant, the use of taming herbs is very common as they are available to the majority. Another advantage of utilizing love potions is that of affordability. It should be noted that, the prizes of love potions in the area are reasonable compared to the high prices in cities, as a number of women in the area confirmed that some traditional healers and other love potion sellers even do barter trade with things like grain, thereby supporting the notion

that love potions are cheap and affordable. However, it should be noted that, some of the love potions are expensive, as stated by some women in Zaka, therefore raising an interesting discussion to be explored later, that is of, disadvantages of using love potions.

If used properly, some love potions can promote trustworthiness in marriages. As discussed in the previous chapter, there are some kinds of potions that make one's lover loves his/her spouse alone. *Sekuru* Nhidza, a traditional healer said that, "my love potions are meant for promoting fidelity among married people, and there is no marriage problem that I cannot permanently fix." Chavhunduka also noted that, love potions work as magnet, wherever one goes one's heart will be attached to the lover's heart and it will never be separated.<sup>2</sup> This is a clear indication that, love potions can promote fidelity in relationships and this cement and sustain marriages. It should be noted that, faithfulness is a core factor in marriages but, with the social, cultural and economic changes, this has been at risk as many people, especially men began to have multiple lovers and sex partners. As a result, considering a number of testimonies from women and traditional healers, the incorporation of love potions into marriages has reduced the number of infidels, thereby safeguarding the matrimonial relationships.

In line with the above, love potions bring about faithfulness in homes and this consequently limits the spread of sexually transmitted diseases in rural Zimbabwe. *Mbuya* Mazagara, a prominent traditional healer in ward 24, Zaka district, saw the use of love potions as a way of minimizing the spread of HIV/AIDS as she said that, with the use of love potions couples can decrease the plight of sexually transmitted diseases as some of love potions cannot allow one to have an extra marital relationship, which is the main source of HIV/AIDS .<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that, other ways that are considered to prevent the spread of HIV cannot be met by the majority, such as the use of condoms and having one faithful partner. Some argue that, condoms are not

user friendly and as a result, people shun them and as for having one faithful partner, several people cannot afford that, and love potions have proved to be the solution especially in rural Zimbabwe where ATR is still practiced. However, it should be noted that, even in Christian communities love potions are being utilized regardless of religious beliefs, as one of the members of Methodist church said that, “we use these things, but our church doctrine does not allow us.” Therefore, one can argue that, love potions are helping in sustaining marriages in Zaka district as they promotes fidelity, thereby taming herbs are a blessing to the marriage institution.

One of the benefits of using love potions is that, it brings financial stability in several marriages. It is argued that, some of the love potions that are being used by women make them to survive with the children as men would be generous with their pockets. It should be noted that, this type of love potions is wanted by the majority of the women as they would want to ensnare their selfish husbands to give them money. It is even argued that, under a love spell, men can give their valuable things to their wives. Monica Matambanadzo, in an interview said that, “I used not to know my husband’s salary, I didn’t know his pay slip till I visited my auntie who gave me a certain root I mixed with his favorite dish, and right now, I am the one who withdraws money every month at the bank.” Therefore, one can argue that, women can benefit from using love potions.

Control and power are some of the benefits attained from using love potions or aphrodisiacs. Wilson argues that, some love potions leave women in control.<sup>4</sup> Traditional healers in Zaka district confirmed that, love potions control the movement and even the friendship or social life of the recipient. It is argued that, love potions can make a man to be loyal and submissive to the extent that, he can perform household chores whilst the wife is relaxing. However, one can argue that, even in real true love without the use of love potions, a man can help his wife with

household chores, but in our Shona tradition and culture it is not that common. With some love potions, women can control the movement of their men, a man can either spend the rest of the day at home or if he goes to work, he would just return home after work. This also cuts off the bond between the husband and his friends. All these are advantages to several women as this make them control their husbands, thereby safeguarding their husband from being unfaithful, therefore upholding their marriages.

Love potions maximize satisfaction in bed and this is one of the advantages of using love potions. Nyakudya avers that, with the use of traditional aphrodisiacs the candle of love has been lit in many bedrooms.<sup>5</sup> Madazviro of Mawadze village said that, “men of today are very weak in bed and this has been destroying several marriages and the use of herbs has come to their rescue.”<sup>6</sup> It is argued that, men take chili herb infused food so as to strengthen their backs, thereby promoting activeness during sexual intercourse as well as prolonging the duration. Usman also argues that, love potions enhance intimate experiences and are aimed at keeping married couples’ love live lubricated.<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that, love potions are meant to ensure social stability by keeping couples happily married. On the female side, it is argued that, girls start learning about sex, discussing physical intimacy and its consequences at a very tender age, and this makes them to know how to handle household and bedroom issues. Therefore, it should be noted that, the use of love potions brings more good than harm in marriages in Africa.

Several couples benefit from the use of love potions as they bring about oneness in marriages. It is argued that, love potions are aimed at creating two love birds, not a scenario when one loving the other and the other is not interested that much. A herbalist, *sekuru* Chakona said that, love potions have the potential to help one find a special someone who is willing to listen to what one has to say and somehow know things one likes and do not like. Love potions also bring peace to

the married couples. One of the traditional healers pointed out that, love potions such as *runyoka* promotes security as it deter one from having sexual intercourse with another person who is not the spouse, through the central locking system. One can also argue that, this reduces the risk of sexually transmitted diseases and polygamy, thereby upholding marriages. Therefore, one cannot refute the idea that, the use of love potions has been and is still advantageous to married people, especially in Zaka district.

Another outstanding benefit of using love potions is that, it is profitable to sell them. It is argued that, engaging in love potions business is very lucrative as several n'angas, herbalists and old people proved that the business is well paying them. Gordon Chavhunduka former ZINATHA president at one time confirmed that, love potions were being sold like hot pies and was profitable. Considering the ingredients used for making love potions, for example roots, barks, leaves, body fluids among others, which are neither bought nor hard to find, one cannot underestimate profits made by traditional healers and other individuals. It should be noted that, although some love potions are cheap, some are expensive to the extent of costing fifty-dollars or more. Mbanje, a traditional healer said that, her potions though expensive (US50) guarantee all the happiness in a relationship and has never failed her clients. As such, one can argue that, business of love potions is profitable considering the amount of money customers pay in order to 'sort' their marriages. However, on the other hand, one can say that, it is only profitable on the side of the supplier, but expensive to the client, hence this can deter many from using love potions. The mushrooming of companies and websites that advertise and sell love potions is a clear indication that, the business is well paying.

### **2.3 Disadvantages of utilizing love potions.**

There are number of disadvantages associated with the use of love potions. Religious people as well as the so called civilized people view love potions as a crime as there is an issue of force, though not physical or visible force. It should be noted that, when one is using love potions he/she will be forcing the other person to love without his/her consent or approval, hence, some will end up in courts as in the case of ZESA manager who pressed an appeal after he assaulted his wife after discovering that she has been taming him.

One of the disadvantages associated with the use of love potions is that, they do expire. It should be noted that, once love potions expire, one is in trouble. It should be noted that, if it was a potion of enhancing and promoting fidelity, the man would become wilder than he was before. It should be noted that, some of the traditional healers do not tell their clients the expiry dates of their potions and this pose threats to marriages. There are many cases when love potions expire when the wife is unaware. Mr. Mugunzva of Zivenge village said that, love potions do not last for long and once they expire, women are in trouble. Musalo asserts that, love potions cannot be trusted as they are not for lifetime, so most probably things will turn the other way round.<sup>10</sup> Tendai Mazambara, a devoted AFM member said that, the expiry of love potions will make one disappointed on how she wasted her time on something that will never work out, and she went on to say that, wasting your time on the wrong person is not worth it. Therefore, one can argue that, using love potions is just a sheer waste of time as these would soon or later expire and turn and twist things in a marriage. A number of women said that, once love potions expire, they will be powerless and this is the time when the man would realize that he was 'sorted'. They said that, the man would become wild and uncontrollable to the extent that, he would call his wife names



like 'witch', and at times refuse to eat the food prepared by the wife. It should be noted that, this will eventually lead to divorce and that's where people start to see the dark side of love potions.

However, mbuya Mazagara, a traditional healer said that, "women of today are ignorant and they do not care about their marriages because we tell them that the love potion expires within six months or twelve months, so they should come and renew the potions but, they do not return." The old lady argued that, things will be flowing in their houses and they would forget or just ignore, thinking that it will continue like that. She pointed out another interesting idea that, "women will be thinking that we want to rob off their money, not knowing that we will be helping them." Therefore, one can argue that, this is a disadvantage to those who are forgetful and ignorant as this can be avoided by just renewing or topping up the potions.

Love potions lack dosage instructions and this is one of the disadvantages of using love potions. It is argued that, some love potions do not come with instructions and even if one is given instructions one may forget and this pose risks of overdose which is often connected to madness or even death. In Zaka district, there are many cases where people, especially men gone mad because of love potion overdose. According to Mataruse of Chikenen'ene village, a well known madman in Ward 18, *Nhuru*, is said to have started being crazy when her wife sorted him with *mupfuhwira*. It should be noted that, women sometimes may end up regretting why they had administered love potions, as their men would follow them everywhere they go, be it at female gatherings or toilets. This also threatens the wife as everyone would notice and even the in-laws would be suspicious, hence they can sometimes take their son and visit a n'anga for the 'throwing up' process, thereby exposing the wife. As a result, one has to be cautious when using love potions as there are dangers associated with the wrong use of them.

According to Chisanyu, one of the disadvantages of making use of love potions in relationships is that, some of these will not help if one wants to use it for revenge, to hurt someone or to improve one's financial situation at the expense of the recipient.<sup>11</sup> This seems to be a blow to several young couples in rural Zimbabwe who make use of love potions for revenge and for financial stability. Maposa, one of the interviewee said that, she once used love potion to fix his husband because he had hurt her for a long time but, it didn't work. She went on to say that, she later heard from her friends that the traditional healer's potions could not work for revenge and other bad things. It should be noted that, not all traditional healers give love potions to milk one's prosperity. *Sekuru* Nhidza, a traditional healer said that, love potions should not be used for controlling or manipulative purposes and are meant to help a situation. Chavhunduka in an interview with a news reporter, Sibanda, once said that, some unregistered so called traditional healers have tarnished the association's name as they are going around giving concoctions that are harmful and not for good intension.<sup>12</sup> Love potions are meant to cement relationships and uphold marriages and should be given to someone who loves for genuine reasons. It is argued that, some powerful love potions should be administered for valid reasons, because if used for unconvincing basis, it will eventually result in serious problems affecting one's life and teaching him/her a lesson. ZINATHA representative in Zvishavane said that, greediness and jealous have led to the mushrooming of fake traditional healers who sell love potions that are intended to control and manipulate the receiver. She went on to say that, this has led to the denouncement of love potions by several people in Zimbabwe. She encouraged people to seek assistance from registered n'angas who can give them potions which help them sustain their marriages, unlike those given by some heartless people who ruin their marriages. As a result, love potions are not that efficient and reliable especially when given by inexperienced traditional healers.

One of the negative effects of using love potions is that, they are difficult to remove. It should be noted that, some people utilize love potions out of frustration and they will be emotionally disappointed to the extent that they act before thinking. As a result, one would later want to remove the spell, and this would not be easy, as Chagonda, one of the herbalists said that, breaking love spells is difficult than casting them and some of the spell casters who could have casted the spell could not be able to remove the spell and this would need stronger ones and this means more money and time. Also, the fact that they need to be renewed here and there and there is need for money for removing the spells may lead one to shun love potions. Also, one may regret using love potions when wanting to move out of a relationship. One of the women said that, “after I have found someone who was better than my husband, I hoped to move out of the marriage but, I could not because of the love potion that I had used on him. Therefore, one can argue that, the use of love potions may bring more harm than good and that, true and natural affection is always the best option.

Another bad part of love potions is when one tries to unlock the *runyoka* thing and it fails. It is argued that, mess comes when one tries to move on with her life after the death of spouse as the husband would have died whilst locking the wife’s system. One widow in Zivenge village said that, she found that her husband had administered runyoka on her when she tried to have intimacy with another man and the penis could not function and tried again with another man and the same thing happened. It should be noted that, the use of love potions can make life a living hell especially considering the fate of this woman that, she will never marry again.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The chapter examined advantages and disadvantages associated with the use love potions in Zaka district. The study revealed that, there are a lot of benefits in utilizing love potions as well risks associated with love potions. However, one can argue that, disadvantages outweigh the advantages, but it should be noted that, the risks largely occur mainly because of the wrong use of love potions. It may be true that, there are no love potions that are not efficient, it's just only that they rarely work as intended.

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10. S.Chisanyu, "Tracing African Roots: Good, bad love potions", *The Sunday Mail*, Harare, 21 June 2015, p11.
11. An Interview with Maphosa of Mawadze village on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2017.

## CHAPTER 3: AN ASESMENT OF LOVE POTION ABILITY TO UPHOLD MARRIAGES.

### 3.0. Introduction

This chapter assesses whether the use of love potions is helpful in sustaining marriages or is exacerbating marriage problems, basing on the information gathered from Zaka residents. If it is worsening, it is the purpose of the study to find out why and how love potions are failing to uphold marriages. Reasons behind the failure or limited use of love potions are to be explored in this chapter. The so-called civilization and modernization, Christianity morals and beliefs as well marriage counseling have denounced and altered the use of love potions. This chapter also assesses whether these factors are really outweighing the use of love potions or are just smoke screens used by people. It should also be analyzed whether these factors are upholding marriages or people do not meet the demands required by these factors. The chapter also reveals why the use love potions is debatable and welcomed with mixed feelings by many.

### 3.1 Mupfuhwira as a contributing factor towards sustaining marriages.

The use of *mupfuhwira* by both men and women in Zaka district has been useful in upholding marriages. Several local residents in the district confirmed that, their marriages were on the verge of collapsing, but the use of love potion rescued them. It should also be noted that, the use of love potions has assisted several people, especially women, to defend their matrimonial rights as love potions fostered faithfulness and unity in marriages. Mararike noted that, out of love potions women created out of their husbands, clients who are subservient and serviceable to their agendas and interests<sup>1</sup>. This clearly indicates that, women benefit a lot from love potions, financially as well as attaining peace, harmony and unity in relationships. It is argued that, National AIDS Council (NAC) reported that, the percentage of people infected by HIV/AIDS has reduced in Zaka district<sup>2</sup>. Although it did not state the use of love potions as one of the

factors which contributed to the limited spread of HIV/AIDS, it is clear that, basing on the statics of people who utilize love potions, this also contributed to a larger extent.

However, people may argue that, love potions do not work mainly because of wrong use or misuse of love potions and also people do not have faith in love potions. It should be noted that, people may wrongly use the potions and this may have side effects to the victims for example madness and death. Also, some may misuse love potions to the extent of effecting no change in the marriage, hence they would argue that, love potions are not effective. Chisanyu asserts that, there are no love potions that are ineffective, it's just that, they rarely ever work as intended<sup>3</sup>. Also, it should be noted that, one should have faith in love potions so that they work. It should be noted that, one should have faith in everything he/she uses so that it works or happens, just like Christians have faith in prayers and anointing oils. However, it should be noted that, most love potions users have doubts and do not have faith in love potions. In addition, some of the side effects of love potions make several people to shun them preferring some other methods that can be used to save marriages such as counseling. Disadvantages such as internal disorder, madness, death, divorce when caught by the victim among others deter many from using love potions, hence some prefer other methods of sustaining marriages, which are discussed below.

### **3.2 Counseling**

Marriage counseling is one of the methods used by couples to sustain their marriages. Marriage counseling is when a couple seeks assistance from a professional, in the resolution of marriage problems. It should be noted that, in rural areas couples make use of elders, aunts and uncles to solve their marital hitches. Gottman in theJournal of Marital and Family Therapy reported that, through marriage counseling, seven out ten couples find great satisfaction in their marriages<sup>4</sup>. However, it should be noted that, this mainly happens in developed countries where there are

professional counselors. In countries like Zimbabwe, there are few qualified counselors and couples make use of relatives and elders and this has contributed to the ineffectiveness of counseling as they may lack qualities and tools of resolving marriage problems. The effectiveness of marriage counseling has been called into question as some argue that, it made relationships worse. Fertel argues that, 75% of people that go to marriage counseling report that they are worse off or divorced less than a year later<sup>5</sup>. Seligman also noted that, marriage counseling is not effective as other treatment modalities<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, one can argue that, counseling is very expensive and time consuming as compared to the use of love potions. It should also be noted that, counseling does not give instant results as the counselors just give couples problem- solving tools, which means that these tools may not work for every couple. Also, it is argued that, marriage counseling works depending on willingness to change, depth of marital problems as well as how couples respond to the therapist's techniques, and that is why marriage counseling may work wonders for others and worsen things for others. Therefore, one can prefer love potions as counseling is more expensive, time consuming, need for the couple to work together and do not have instant results. Also, considering the counseling done in rural areas which includes the interference of family members, it is clear that, there can be a lot of bias, thereby solving nothing, but rather fostering divorce. Therefore, one can argue that, utilizing love potions has some shortcomings, but it has also favorable results and that is why love potions are widely used in Zaka district. Fertel also asserts that, there is also what is called marriage fitness or enrichment which is for couples whose marriages are neither in serious trouble nor threatening to breakdown so that they will be more satisfying and enjoyable<sup>6</sup>. However, it should be noted that, several couples find it useless to try marriage enrichment when things are flowing in their marriages. As a result, one can argue marriage counseling is way



better off from the use of love potions as it has no side effects and is a holistic approach to marriage problems unlike love potions which are perceived to have a number of risks and are purported to be heathenish. However, on the other hand, it should be noted that, marriage counseling needs the couple to work together, time and money consuming, does not have instant results and may not work for other couples. Also, the fact that, in rural Zimbabwe there are no professional counselors may leave one with no option other than resorting to readily available love potions.

### **3.3 Christianity morals and values.**

Several churches in Zimbabwe and other individuals have expressed disapproval of the use of love potions arguing that, it is unholy and heathenish. Christians believe that, prayer is a ‘nuclear weapon’ which destroys each and every problem, be it political, economic and social. As a result, it is clear that, for Christians praying is the solution to marital problems and is the only tool of upholding marriages. Pastor Churu, an AFM pastor noted that, nothing else can change a man’s heart, but the same God who hung the sun and moon in the sky, certainly can. He went on to say that, it is always right to consult God for help in troubled times<sup>8</sup>. It should be noted that, prayers always restore love and reunite couples in marriages. It should also be noted that, the bible warns people against divorce and as a result, Christian couples shun divorce as the Bible is against it. Mark 10:11-12 says, “And he said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another one commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another one commits adultery.”<sup>9</sup>” Hence Christians, by fearing to sin they would try to make things right in their marriages. It should be noted that, early European missionaries tried to destroy African religion, culture and tradition as many African traditional religious rituals were regarded as against Christian morals and beliefs. Missionaries believed that, African religion promoted the

belief in witchcraft and encouraged people to worship ancestors instead of worshipping God. Therefore, it should be noted that, that is where African Christians assimilated these ideas and hence neglecting the use of IKS. However, according to Chavhunduka, missionaries had wrong ideas about African religion as it did not promote witchcraft but only worshiped God through ancestors<sup>10</sup>. It should be noted that, before the coming of missionaries people lived longer and even their marriages lasted lifetime through the use of IKS.

It is very correct that, prayer heals bleeding marriages, but it should be noted that several Christians have little faith, hence they mix Christianity and African Traditional Religion as Gozie purported that, faith alone is not enough for most Africans hence they need something touchable, thereby adopting some elements of traditional systems<sup>11</sup>. It is argued that, the missionaries regarded traditional healers which are mainly the custodians of IKS as heathen and African who were converted to Christianity were discouraged by the church from taking part in ATR as well consulting traditional healers. As a result, several Christians are bound by this missionary thinking and view the use of herbs, roots and barks as heathenish. However, one can argue that, the herbs and roots were created by God for a purpose, so there is nothing evil from making use of God given resources.

It is interesting to note that, it is believed that prophets and traditional healers are two sides of same coin, so there is no need for Christians to denounce the use of charms and roots to uphold marriages. Mr Kandiero, current ZINATHA president reiterated that, the organization believes that, Pentecostal churches, prophets and faith healers should register with the organization of Traditional Medical Practitioners Council (TMPC) to operate in the country<sup>12</sup>. However, this was rebuffed by several churches and prophets as they argue that, they derive their power from different sources, as prophets heal with the word, the Holy Spirit and the power of God, while

traditional healers claim that ancestors are their source of power. It should be noted that, traditional healers give their clients charms to ward off evil spirits, prophets have bracelets and wrist bands that helps to attack when evil spirits confront, while faith healers might pray for water that their followers have to use for good luck or repel evil prophets, modern day prophets have various forms of anointing liquids which fulfill the same purpose. As a result, one can argue that, though different in style, prophets and traditional healers are similar in substance. According to Gozie, Africans find simple prayer inadequate for their problems, instead dramatic work of prophets appeal to them in the same way the quick fix roots and amulets of traditional healers do<sup>13</sup>. Therefore, one can argue that, Christians are no longer bound by their beliefs and morals as they now have faith in oils and bracelets instead of believing in prayers and Holy Spirit, hence Chavhunduka's assertion that, many Christians have dual membership in churches and ATR is very correct. It should be noted that, the divorce rate is high among Christians as it is among non-Christians and this may lead some Christians to turn to love potions in order to uphold marriages as they lack faith in prayers alone.

### **3.4 Civilization and modernization.**

Civilization is perceived to have been brought by the colonization of Africa, and this changed and affected Africans in all facets of life. Arowolo defined colonialism as an imposition of foreign rule over indigenous traditional settings and foreign dominance and subjugation of African people in their social, political, economic, religious lives<sup>14</sup>. As a result, one can argue that, colonialism, through the work of missionaries demonized everything African including ATR and Africans began to hate and despise their culture and tradition, like the use of charms and herbs, thereby neglecting the use of love potions to enhance and uphold marriages. It should be noted that, Africans have assimilated and indigenized Western lifestyles and values, and this

has led Africans to shun the use of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. It is perceived that, civilization made people to read and by this, Africans were exposed to western things as they could read and admire the colonial masters' religion which could not accommodate the role of traditional healers and their rituals. Also, civilization gave birth to modernization, and by this, Africans were caught in the race of dumping the so-called primitive ATR and embracing modernity which accommodated the use of marriage counselors and prayers to uphold marriages. However, the rebounding of IKS into African lives meant that, modernity has failed them. Hence, one can argue that, Africans cannot run away from the past. Chavhunduka asserts that, the traditional medical sector has continued to grow despite the attempts by early Christian missionaries and others to suppress it, and it has continued to grow because traditional healers are successful in curing several illnesses and wading off evil spirits<sup>15</sup>. He went on to say that, many Africans who became Christians found it difficult to abandon their religion and medicine completely, and therefore, Christian conversion was shallow as it did not always change the African people's understanding of life and their relationship with their ancestral spirits and God.

However, it should be noted that, the use of love potions is welcomed with mixed feelings as some argue that, they are not helpful as they have some adverse results and do not solve anything, rather, they worsen things. Internal disorders, madness, death, disabilities among others are associated with the use of love potions, but mainly because of the wrong use of them. As a result, people prefer friendly approaches such as counseling and prayers towards sustaining marriages. However, on the other hand, others consider love potions as helpful to bleeding marriages as they provide instant solutions to problems encountered by several couples.

### **3.5 Conclusion.**

This chapter analyzed the role of love potions in sustaining marriages, and found them helpful if used properly. However, there are number of factors which are contributing towards the little recognition or other alternatives of love potions which are marriage counseling, Christian values and beliefs as well as civilization and modernization. Although, one may argue that, these alternatives really work, it should be noted that, several people do not rely on them as some are either expensive, undependable, time consuming or do not have instant results among other shortcomings, hence people covertly prefer love potions.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.

### **Introduction**

This chapter gives the concluding remarks of the study on the role of love potions in upholding marriages. The summary of the entire study is followed by the conclusion of the study and ends by giving recommendations.

### **Summary**

The research focused on the role of love potions (*mupfuhwira*) in upholding marriages in Zaka district, Zimbabwe. The introductory chapter established the background of the study, research problem, research objectives and questions. The researcher adopted a case study research design and used interviews to solicit information from the informants as well as secondary sources such as textbooks and journals. International, regional and local literature was explored and linked to the study. Informants were mainly traditional healers and elders who are mainly the custodians of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, married people and single women were also consulted.

The second chapter focused on the uses and types of love potions. In this chapter, the researcher managed to achieve one of the objectives, that is, to examine the reasons behind the use of love potions in sustaining marriages in Zaka district. Information gathered from the participants revealed political, economic and social as the factors behind the use of love potions.

The third chapter concentrated on the benefits and risks associated with the use of love potions. The research exposed the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing love potions in marriages. The chapter revealed that, if well used love potions can be useful in sustaining marriages. In the fourth chapter, the researcher managed to achieve the main objective of the study, that is, to assess the effectiveness of traditional love potions. The research revealed that, love potions are



helpful to the marriage institution as they can avoid infidelity, the spread of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, financial crisis among a host of others. The chapter contained some alternatives to love potions which also aiding to the less recognition and limited usage of love potions, which are counseling, praying as well as civilization and modernization.

### **Conclusions.**

The study revealed that, love potions are being utilized by several people, although some do it covertly. The use of love potions is welcomed with mixed feelings among Zimbabweans, as some argue that, they are unholy and is a sort of bewitchment. They also argue that, love potions are now things of the past and have been replaced by modern modalities such marriage counseling and holistic approaches such as praying can be used to fix marriage problems, thereby upholding marriages. However, it should be noted that, several people have dual membership in both Christianity and ATR, and sometime some use Christianity as a smoke screen so that other people cannot smell that they are using love potions as they are said to be demonic and archaic.

The study also revealed benefits and risks associated with the use of love potions. One can argue that, disadvantages outweigh advantages, but it should be noted that, risks mainly occur because of the wrong use and lack of faith in love potions, otherwise if used properly, they can heal bleeding marriages and solve many marital associated problems such as infidelity, financial crisis, lack of communication, unpleasant sex life among others. However, the problem is that, people do not want to accept who they are and where they come from, otherwise if people would embrace their past and Indigenous knowledge systems they were going to flourish in marriages.

There is need for incorporation or integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in our day to day lives, especially in the marriage institution. Also, Zimbabweans should decolonize their minds from the thinking of the former colonial masters that, African tradition and culture are demonic and embrace our culture and religion which accommodates the use of our Indigenous knowledge systems and natural resources to cure diseases and maintain social relationships. People should not also label or look down upon those who consult traditional healers or use charms and herbs to save their marriages. Also, there should be more registered companies which sell and distribute love potions and herbs, so that people can be free and feel comfortable to use love potions, thereby eradicating problems affecting marriages.

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