AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF PARENT EMIGRATION ON THE SOCIAL SECURITY OF CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND: THE CASE OF HIGHFIELD, HARARE IN ZIMBABWE

By

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A dissertation submitted in accordance with the requirements for
The degree of

Master of Arts in Development Studies (98412)

In the

Department of Development Studies

At the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor: Dr. Aneesah Khan

February 2022

DECLARATION

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Degree: **MA (DEVELOPMENT STUDIES)**

Exact wording of the title of the dissertation as appearing on the electronic copy submitted for examination:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF PARENT EMIGRATION ON THE SOCIAL SECURITY OF CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND: THE CASE OF HIGHFIELD, HARARE IN ZIMBABWE.

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

28 February 2022

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

KEY TERMS DESCRIBING THE TOPIC OF A DISSERTATION

Zimbabwe; Children left behind; Caregivers; Parent emigration; Social welfare; Social security; Teachers; Social Workers.

<u>Title of the Dissertation</u>

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study examined the perspectives of caregivers on how parental emigration impacts the social security of children left behind in Highfield, Zimbabwe. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews with caregivers, as well as focus group discussions with teachers and social workers respectively, were used to obtain qualitative data. To select the research participants, the study employed a non-probability sampling technique through purposive sampling. The study drew upon three theories as a theoretical lens to contextualise the findings: Bowen's Family Systems Theory, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Family Systems Theory, and the theory of motivation from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. As part of the qualitative research, thematic analysis was used to describe the effects of parental emigration on the social security of the children left behind. Findings reveal the varying, complex, and perpetual social security challenges children face in the absence of their parents since, in Zimbabwe, there are no specific social security policies in place for such children who are left behind. Various stakeholders, including caregivers, communities, emigrant parents, government, and non-governmental organisations, must play a leading role in protecting the children left behind, as the social security that they can provide guarantees that the children will thrive, even when their parents are absent due to parental emigration.

KEY TERMS: Zimbabwe; Children left behind; Caregivers; Parent emigration; Social welfare; Social security; Teachers; Social Workers.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie studie is by kinderversorgers verneem watter invloed ouers se emigrasie op die bestaansekerheid van hulle agtergeblewe kinders in Highfield, Zimbabwe uitoefen. Kwalitatiewe data is verkry deur in lewende lywe halfgestruktureerde onderhoude met kinderversorgers te voer en groepbesprekings met afsonderlik onderwysers en maatskaplike werkers te organiseer. 'n Doelgerigte onwaarskynlikheidsteekproef is gedoen om deelnemers aan die navorsing te kies. Die bevindings word volgens drie teorieë vertolk: Bowen se Gesinstelselteorie, Bronfenbrenner se teorie van Ekologiese Gesinstelsels, en die Motiveringsteorie wat uit Maslow se hiërargie van behoeftes spruit. As deel van die kwalitatiewe navorsing is die uitwerking van hul ouers se emigrasie op hulle agtergeblewe kinders se bestaansekerheid tematies ondersoek. Daar is bevind dat verskeie komplekse en ewigdurende bestaansprobleme agtergeblewe kinders in die gesig staar. Aangesien Zimbabwe geen welsynsbeleid vir hulle het nie, behoort emigrantouers, kinderversorgers, die samelewing, die staat en nieregeringsorganisasies hulle kragte saam te snoer om die bestaan van agtergeblewe kinders te verseker.

SLEUTELBEGRIPPE: Zimbabwe; Agtergeblewe kinders; Kinderversorgers; Oueremigrasie; Maatskaplike welsyn; Bestaansekerheid; Onderwysers; Maatskaplike werkers.

KAKARETŠO

Dinyakišišo tšedi hlahlobile diponego tša bahlokomedi mabapi le gore phalalo ya batswadi e huetša bjang tšhireletšego ya leago ya bana bao ba šetšego kua Highfield, Zimbabwe. Dipotšišo tšeo di lokologilego tšeo di botšišitšwego bahlokomedi ka o tee ka o tee, le dipoledišano tša dihlopha tša dikgahlego tša go swana gammogo le tša barutiši le badirelaleago ka go fapana ga bona, di šomišitšwe go hwetša tshedimošo goba datha ya boleng. Go hlaola bakgathatema ba dinyakišišo, nyakišišo ye e šomišitše mokgwa wa go kgetha batho ka go lekana, ka go ba kgetha go ya ka lebaka. Dinyakišišo di šomišitše diteori tše tharo bjalo ka Teori ya Mananeotshepedišo a Lapa a Bowen, Teori ya Mananeotshepedišo a Tikologo ya Lapa a Bronfenbrenner, le teori ya tlhohleletšo go tšwa go Maemo a Dinyakwa a Maslow. Bjalo ka karolo ya nyakišišo ya boleng, tshekatsheko ya dihlogotaba tša diteng e šomišitšwe go hlaloša ditlamorago tša phalalo ya batswadi go tšhireletšego setšhabeng ya bana bao ba šilwego morago. Dipoelo di tšweletša dihlotlo tša go fapafapana, tše di raraganego le tše di tšwelago pele tša tšhireletšego setšhabeng ya bana, tšeo bana ba lebanago le tšona ge batswadi ba se gona, ka ge kua Zimbabwe, go se na dipholisi tše di itšego tša tšhireletšego setšhabeng ya bana tšeo di lego gona mabapi le bana bao ba šilwego morago. Bakgathatema ba go fapafapana, go akaretšwa bahlokomedi, ditšhaba, batswadi ba bafaladi, mmušo, gammogo le mekgatlo ye e sego ya mmušo, ba swanetše go raloka karolo ya boetapele ya go šireletša bana bao ba tlogetšwego morago, ka ge tšhireletšego ya leago yeo ba ka fanago ka yona e netefatšgo gore bana ba tla tšwela pele, le ge batswadi ba se gona ka lebaka la phalalo ya batswadi.

MAREO A BOHLOKWA: Zimbabwe; Bana bao ba tlogetšwego morago; Bahlokomedi; Phalalo ya batswadi; Pabalelo ya setšhaba; Tšhireletšego ya leago; Barutiši; Badirelaleago

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABDG   African Development Bank Group

ESAP   Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

HIV/AIDS   Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ILO   International Labour Organisation

MP   Member of Parliament

IOM   International Organisation for Migration

UN   United Nations

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Emergency Fund

ZANU-PF   Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Children's welfare and social security should be the top priority in every country since it shapes the foundations of future leaders. Every child has the right to grow up and become the best person they can be, provided that their socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-political environments allow them to be themselves without fear of abuse and violence, starvation, neglect, and lack of access to basic services. Food, shelter, education, and healthcare are all requirements for personal security and well-being. Parental emigration has been prevalent in Zimbabwe, with both positive and negative effects for children, especially those who are left behind. Millions of people have left the motherland to better their economic status and livelihood standards. The International Labour Organization (2001) defines social security as the protection that society provides to individuals and families to ensure access to health care and income security, particularly in cases of old age, joblessness, poor health, deficiency, physical harm, and injury, maternity, or the loss of a primary source of income. Migration is a key trend in Sub-Saharan Africa, and it includes migration within the region, within a particular country's boundaries (internal migration), periodic migration, and external movement of people (outside of the Sub-Saharan region).

The many forms of migration have a significant impact on society, especially on children. But, people's development is often discussed from a financial point of view, with foreign currency as a benefit that provides good monetary advantages and advancement. As a result, the impact of parental migration on the social security of children has been overlooked in these debates. Parental absence, on the other hand, is traumatic for most children, regardless of the cause such as emigration, imprisonment, death, military mission, divorce, or separation.

Most children have a number of coping mechanisms to help them survive. This study intends to assess the effects of parental migration on children's social security, with Highfield as its specific context. The study will focus on households whose parents have emigrated outside of Zimbabwe and have not returned in over a year. While the purpose of this study is to discover more about the social security challenges that impact children left behind, the children will not be involved themselves as research participants.

1.2 Background to the problem

The socio-economic and socio-political insecurity that has defined Zimbabwe from the year 2000 has resulted in a large exodus of Zimbabweans. Many Zimbabweans have escaped the nation as a consequence of the economic plus political crises, but the estimated numbers are not backed up (Madzvivadondo, 2012). According to the current estimates, between three and four million Zimbabweans are living outside their country (Pasuwa 2008:98). This equates to a quarter of Zimbabwe's people residing elsewhere outside the country. According to the South African Immigration Services (2018), there may be one to three million Zimbabweans resident in South Africa, though the figure could be bigger.

Zimbabweans have benefitted from high educational standards since the country's independence in 1980, and other countries have jumped at the opportunity to utilise the expertise Zimbabwe has produced. For example, there are medical doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, technicians, and a variety of other skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled people who are working in other countries. The destination countries range from neighbouring African countries to far-flung destinations such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and many others.

Parental emigration happens as a result of individuals' efforts to address socio-economic and socio-political challenges in their home country. Emigration, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is the act of leaving one country to settle in another. Parents immigrate to other countries in search of work, protection, and better living conditions for their families, leaving their children and loved ones behind. Emigrant parents send money back home as remittances to support their families' daily survival, welfare, and development (IOM, 2018).

Makina (2012) believes that a political collapse occurred after state-sponsored land invasions across Zimbabwe and the disintegration of governance in the early 2000s, prompting large-scale emigration to South Africa and other countries. Many children were left in the care of one parent, grandparents, or guardians who could be extended family members such as aunts, uncles, and cousins. According to Kanyenze (2004), the migration to South Africa resurfaced in the late 1990s (after the fall of apartheid), with most Zimbabweans emigrating for employment, business, medical treatment, vacations, visiting relatives, and studies.

As a result of parent emigration, there are an increasing number of children who are affected by short, medium, and long-term family separations, which can have a negative impact on

children's development (Crawford-Brown & Rattray 1994; Pottinger & Brown 2006). Children are entitled to personal safety and security, as well as a stress-free and resilient, compassionate, and dependable primary caregiver to reach their maximum potential physically, cognitively, socially, and internally.

1.3 Problem statement

Children with parents who have emigrated and reside in the diaspora are typically thought to be well off in society. In general, people in Zimbabwe, as well as other developing countries in the Global South, feel that because their parents have emigrated, the children left behind would not require any more attention or support. This perception has ramifications for the social security of these children, and the relevant authorities have paid little or no attention to it. Whereas the ILO conventions and several United Nations (UN) instruments clearly describe social security as a human right, it has become a universal challenge in a globalised world (ILO, 2014). The lack of adequate research into the effects of parent emigration on the social security of children left behind contributes to the lack of awareness of the children's social security needs in Highfield and how these needs can be met.

As such, parental emigration provides the parents' prospects to make considerably higher wages for the advancement of their families; yet, it is characterised by long periods of family separation, which can have direct and negative effects on the development and future of the children. When parents are not able to visit family back home or bring their children over to visit, they must endure long periods of separation, which can result in feelings of shame and frustration (Mazzucato & Schans 2011:709). As a result, it is essential to gain a complete understanding of this phenomenon, since very little is documented about the social security effects of parent emigration on the children left behind.

This study examines how the emigration of one or both parents affects the social security of children left behind, as well as how government welfare policies can help to mitigate the consequences of parental emigration on children's well-being. These challenges are especially pressing for children, who require safe surroundings (households), as well as effective policies that promote and secure their education, health, food, shelter, and overall well-being. The psychological well-being of the children left behind may be impacted by a variety of issue

s they confront throughout their lives. As a result, this study will add to the growing body of knowledge about the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left

behind. This study also intends to increase awareness and encourage policy changes in Zimbabwe's social welfare system for children left behind. According to Yeoh and Lam (2006), labour-sending countries have almost no policies in place for children who are left behind.

1.4 Importance of the study

The purpose of this qualitative interpretive study was to analyse the effects of parental emigration on the social security of the left-behind children in Highfield, Harare. The intention was to highlight the vulnerabilities of left behind children due to parental emigration. The importance of this study is to raise awareness about the social security issues that affect children left behind. While there are many economic benefits to migration, such as remittances, the social cost is immeasurable and negative. I believe that there are vulnerable children in the country for a variety of reasons, but parental emigration has one of the greatest negative consequences for children, particularly those who are orphaned, have divorced parents, or have incapacitated parents. Raising policymakers' and other key stakeholders' awareness, such as caregivers, teachers, emigrant parents, and social workers, may help to expedite or steer the implementation of policies that will mitigate the effects of parental emigration on the children left behind.

1.5 Research objectives

In order to inform and understand the trend of parental emigration and the challenges faced by the children left behind in Highfield, the study was guided by the following objectives which aimed to:

- ascertain the causes of parental emigration and its impact on the children left behind.
- identify social security issues that affect children left behind in Highfield.
- explore the adapting techniques embraced by the children left behind to deal with parental absence.
- determine whether the economic benefits of parent(s) emigration outweigh the social security risks faced by the left behind children.
- evaluate if government poverty reduction strategies and social protection policies contribute to lessening the impacts of parent(s) emigration on the rights and well-being of children left behind.

1.5.1 Key research questions

The study had the following questions:

- What are the causes of parental emigration and how does it impact the children left behind?

- What are the social security issues that the children left behind have to deal with?

- What adapting techniques do the children left behind embrace to deal with parental absence?

- Do the economic benefits of parent emigration outweigh the social security risks faced by the children left behind?

- Can government poverty reduction strategies and social protection policies contribute to lessening the impacts of parent(s) emigration on the rights and well-being of children left behind?

1.6 Area of study

Figure 1. Map of Highfield

Source: https://www.google.com/maps/place/Highfield,+Harare,+Zimbabwe/@-17.8881004,30.9643787,14z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x1931a15a1e26abb3:0x4736e5629c787b13!8m2!3d-17.8817488!4d30.9818962 [Accessed 25 February 2022].

This research will be conducted out in the Harare Municipality, in the Highfield area. Highfield was the second township developed in the 1930s, after Mbare/National, both of which were built to house mostly black Africans in Apartheid Rhodesia (Chikede, 2015). I identified this municipality because it has experienced a lot of outward mobility in the form of emigration; thus, Highfield is both relevant and important to the study.

From the community of Highfield in Harare, forty participants were selected as study participants. The chosen forty participants included twenty-seven face-to-face participants and two focus group discussion participants, one with seven teachers and the other with six social workers. These participants assisted in contextualising the children's social security issues caused by parental emigration. Purposive sampling strategies were used to select participants for this study. The participants in the face-to-face interviews were chosen using the school social database provided by the administrative officers at the schools, with permission for my access granted by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Harare Provincial Office. I began contacting the willing participants who had agreed to take part in the study for an interview schedule using the list of caregivers with children left behind that had been made available to me.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The objective of a qualitative study is to establish a participant's perspective on the phenomenon under investigation; as a result, the sample size is small, and the findings must be generalisable to the study area. According to Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter (2006), there are often strong cut-off points on the generalisability of the results of discoveries when addressing the relevant concept of the subjective research approach. Another limitation of this study is that, while the social security challenges and effects of parental emigration to the children left behind is the primary focus, the children themselves will not be able to express their opinions because they are not research participants. Another limitation of this study is that caregivers may not objectively highlight the circumstances of the children in their care because they may be the actual perpetrators of gross misconduct.

1.8 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter One is an introductory chapter that provides a brief overview of the study's background. The objectives and rationale of the study are explained. From chapters two to six,

the study will be presented in significant detail. The structure of the five chapters is outlined below.

Chapter Two is the literature review chapter and provides a broad global historical context of parental emigration and then narrows it down to Zimbabwe. The socio-economic context, migration causes and consequences, social security concerns, and children's coping mechanisms are explored extensively. This synopsis assists in the depiction of how parental emigration has had a range of effects, especially for the children left behind.

Chapter Three, the theoretical frameworks used in this study are presented. This research is influenced by Maslow's theory of human motivation, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, and Bowen's family systems theory. The three theories served as a theoretical basis and a guiding framework for understanding the data.

Chapter Four provides a comprehensive overview of the study's research design and methodology. The research methods, as well as my research journey and experiences while collecting data, are discussed. There is also a discussion of ethical issues.

Chapter Five presents interprets, and analyses the data collected in the field on children left behind due to parental emigration and the resultant social security issues that the children experience. The findings are presented thematically and presented accordingly. This chapter will combine data findings with literature to understand the study's findings.

Chapter Six comprises of the conclusions and recommendations emerging from the research objectives. A summary of the findings is included, and lastly recommendations are given.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.   Introduction

To understand the effects of parental emigration on left-behind children's social security situation in Highfield, Harare, this chapter provides a detailed global synopsis of the phenomena. Based on different literature from several regions of the world, detailed literature reviews from Asia, the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Zimbabwe were conducted to understand the full extent of this phenomenon of parental emigration. The data collected will provide some information for policy guidance to the responsible authorities, identify potential services required, and help analyse the impacts of parental emigration on children left behind. This chapter aims to provide an overall view of the fundamental issues of parental emigration and its consequences on the social security of children left behind at the global, continental, regional, and country-level in Zimbabwe.

2.1 Global context of parental emigration and the children left behind

The global impact of parental emigration differs from nation to nation, from financial advantages to family members, nation, and the left behind social security for the family. Globalisation is argued to have facilitated emigration and migrant labour. Globalisation, according to the United Nations (2017), is a mechanism of establishing an environment in which people may reach their full potential and live productive, innovative lives to satisfy their needs and aspirations, as well as expanding people's choices to live lives they appreciate.

Emigration has undoubtedly turned out to be easier, cheaper, and faster for those seeking education, careers, prospects, and an improved standard of living due to this interconnectedness (United Nations International Migration Report, 2017). However, in the same light, developmental issues such as conflicts and wars, disparity, poverty, and the lack of sustainable livelihoods have forced people out of their homes to pursue better tomorrows for themselves and their families (UN International Migration Report, 2017). The World Bank (2017) stated that migrants sent to their countries around US$ 413 billion in transfer payments in 2016. As noted in the International Migration Report of the United Nations (2017), migration can lead to extensive and sustainable economic development and advancement where suitable strategies are in place in sending and receiving countries. International migration numbers continued to climb from 173 million in 2000 to 191 million in 2005 to 220 million in 2010 to 258 million in 2017 more than a quarter of a billion (International Migration Report,

2017). As shown by Reyes (n.d: 1), migration should not be classified as a recent phenomenon, it is neither a developmental catastrophe nor a substitution for development

2.1.1 Asia
China has 69.7 million left-behind children (Tong, Yan, & Kawachi, 2019). According to the All-China Women's Federation (2013), China has undergone the biggest internal migration in modern history, with hundreds of millions of migrants flocking every year to main metropolises. It is estimated that there were 105,5 million children belonging to migrant families, accounting for about one-third of the total Chinese population of children below the age of eighteen (All-China Women's Federation, 2013).

As shown in the United Nations Migration Report (2017), Asia is the source of many individuals living outside their birth region, and of those, 42 million individuals born in Asia, live in other nations. Statistics indicate that eleven countries in Asia are among the twenty biggest countries of the descent of global emigrants (UN Migration Report, 2017). The Philippines is one of the world's two largest migrant countries and the highest in Asia, with an estimated 7.4 million Filipinos out of the country, representing 9 percent of the total population of the Philippines (Maimbo & Ratha, 2005). According to the United Nations Migration Data Portal document (2018) of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), around 31% of the global migration inventory resides in Asia, 30% in Europe, 26% in the Americas, 10% in Africa, and 3% in Oceania. As a result, Jampaklay, Richter, Tangcholatip, and Nathamongkolchai (2018:210) noted that Thailand has a high magnitude of international as well as internal migration and thus the scope of separation between parent and child is high.

Thus, statistics have shown that an astonishing 42.4% of children below the age of 18 live separately from one or both parents and 21% live without either parent while they are still alive (Jampaklay et al., 2018:210). Jampaklay et al., (2018) estimated that children aged between 0-4 years that live without one or both parents are at 40%, representing two-fifths of the total population of children less than 4 years of age. Compared to 5% in Lao People's Democratic Republic, 4.4% in Vietnam, 3.4% in Costa Rica, and 6.5% in Nigeria, the figures of children left behind in Thailand, are comparatively higher at 42.4% (Jampaklay et al., 2018:210).

2.1.2 Americas and the Caribbean
Latin America and the Caribbean are the second largest group after Asia, with populations over 32 million living outside their birth region (United Nations Migration Report, 2017). Of these 32 million emigrants, 26 million live in North America and 5 million in Europe (United

Nations Migration Report, 2017). Europe has seen a 5.7 percent increase from Latin America and the Caribbean (+ 2.8 million emigrants) since 2000.

Notably, the Caribbean geographic area has approximately 10-20 percent of children who do not live with at least one parent and have the highest level of intra-regional and international human movement (Walsh & Dillon, 2012:871). The United Nations Secretariat (2002) cited Caribbean immigration numbers as the highest in the world, with the preferred mode of the region by far being worldwide migration. It was eventually acknowledged that both push and pull factors inspired migration of both men and women and that improving their economic well-being and security for the other migrants were important justifications (Walsh & Dillon, 2012).

2.1.3 Europe

According to the United Nations Migration Report (2017), Europe has 20 million emigrants living in North America (8 million), Asia (7 million), and Oceania with the third-largest number of people living outside their birth region. One of the fastest-growing destinations for European-born emigrants was Africa from 2000 to 2017 at 3.5 percent per year (UN Migration Report, 2017).

2.1.4 Africa

The UN (2017a:13) stated that in some regional corridors, the number of international emigrants has grown rapidly. With an average annual growth rate of 4.9 %, representing 1.5 million emigrants, North America has turned out to be one of the African migrants' fastest-growing destinations (UN, 2017). On the other hand, African-born Asian emigrants rose by 4.2 percent to over 2 million between 2000 and 2017 (United Nations Migration Report, 2017). According to Filippa (2013:37), it is difficult to measure or give a precise figure for the number of children left behind by emigrant parents in Zimbabwe. She claimed, nevertheless, that looking at numbers from other nations affected by out-migration can provide some insight. As shown in a study conducted by Bryant (2005) in Thailand, the number of children left behind is estimated to be around half a million for children under the age of 14. On the other hand, a study conducted by Yanovich (2015), shows that the UNICEF 2012 report puts the number of children left behind in Moldova at 100 000, whereas the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport in Ukraine reports that there are 200000 children left behind.

2.2 The Zimbabwean socio-economic context

Zimbabwe is an inland, small country in Southern Africa covering an area of 390 757 km2 with an overall population of about 13 061 239 million (UN Country Analysis Report, 2014). Zimbabwe is bordered to the west by Botswana, the eastern side by Mozambique, the southern side by South Africa, and to the north by Zambia. Zimbabwe confronted a serious financial downturn from 2000 to 2008 and its real GDP growth in 2013 was 4.5 percent (United Nations Country Analysis Report, 2014). Once the official inflation rate reached a peak at 231 million percentage points (UN, 2014), the national economy reached a catastrophe-level in 2008/2009. According to the United Nations Country Analysis Report (2014), in 2013 external debt stood at a colossal US$ 8.934 billion, while the national poverty line in 2013 stood at 72.3 percent of the total population. Although the literacy rates for people aged 15 years or older remain high at 91.3 percent (UN, 2014), the HIV / AIDS epidemic continues to threaten human capabilities and advancement and is responsible for the decrease in the average lifespan to 51 years in 2011 (World Bank, 2013).

According to the Southern African Report on Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (2012), Zimbabwe is confronting and experiencing climate change and erraticism composed mainly of temperature rises, frequent droughts, and unpredictable trends of rainfall. As a result, 70% of the country's population derives their livelihoods from farming, with many farmers living in semi-arid vulnerable areas (SARUA, 2014). After several years of highly unstable economic and political lackluster performance, Zimbabwe is suffering from a confluence of problems that have helped make the country a known migrant supplier country in the sub-Saharan region and globally.

For the years 2019 and 2020, the African Development Bank Group (2019) estimated growth of 4.2% and 4.4% respectively, even with impediments such as policy-related macroeconomic solidity, lack of funding, land tenancy, investment guidelines, high input prices, outdated machinery, incompetent government administration and insufficient infrastructure (notable energy) that remain vital issues for growth. With one of the youngest people in Zimbabwe representing more than 36 percent of the overall population, people between the ages of 15 and 34 have reverted to informal trade as they are out of work (ADBG, 2019).

The Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee calculated that food insecurity figures were expected to increase among 28 percent of people in rural areas between July 2018 and March 2019 (World Bank, 2015). Zimbabwe's economic situation begun a decreasing trend that has seen a significant decrease in national productivity (GDP) development owing to the dry season and a tumble in raw material costs, an accommodative monetary policy approach

that has led to a growing monetary insufficiency, increased disempowerment and neediness due to environmental and regulatory stunts, and chronic external money deficiencies that lessen demand and supply (World Bank, 2015). However, the Zimbabwean economic situation was at crossroads in 2015, following a brief period of recovery (from 2010 to 2014).

As noted by the World Bank (2015), the country was facing significant problems trying to identify with the balance of fiscal consolidation and the financial services sector, encouraging development and expenditure to improve revenue collection and foreign exchange generation, guaranteeing social benefits, and improving the results of administration through ongoing legislative and organisational improvements. Consequently, the long-drawn economic disproportions have adversely affected government expenditure on development as well as providing social services to the public, thereby subverting measures to reduce inequality (African Development Bank Group, 2019). Meanwhile, the economic woes of Zimbabwe continue, with the current account deficit estimated at 3,7% of gross domestic expenditure (GDP) in 2018, with imports of products higher than exports, creating a negative balance of payments and a shortage of foreign currency reserves for the country (African Development Bank Group, 2019)

2.3 Reasons for emigration from Zimbabwe: push factors

To explain parental emigration from Zimbabwe, it was important to provide a backdrop by examining the problems associated with parental emigration from countries in the global south (developing countries). To get an overall and rather accurate portrayal of the phenomenon, the context in which parental emigration takes place should be looked at from the variables responsible for this movement and the overview of the major population out movement from Zimbabwe. Migrations are driven by both push and pull factors. Push factors are experienced as unwanted issues in the country of departure with pull factors being the issues that attract the emigrant to the country of destination (Serumaga-Zake, 2017).

Pasura (2008) confirmed that the new monetary and political calamity (2000-2015) prompted an influx of 3-4 million Zimbabweans to emigrate. As Adepoju (2010) indicated, economic and demographic reasons such as human poverty, unemployment, poor wages, lack of essential education and health care and (accessibility, affordability, and better quality) push emigrants to different parts of the world for possible outcomes of increased income-generating activities, employability, a better quality of life and the seeming prospects for individual and professional advancement. Adepoju (2010) contends that push factors are potential dangers to individual

security, safety, and party-political freedom due to conflict, uncertainty, violence, bad governance, corruption, and violations of human rights.

Makina (2009) notes that there are between one and three million estimated Zimbabweans living or working in South Africa. The IOM (2013) Philippines report categorises global migration as a confluence of issues and processes related to supply and demand. However, in the context of Zimbabwe, this study focused on the factors and processes of push and pull, paying attention to the variables found in Zimbabwean society that contribute to the problem of parental emigration. There are three dimensions of the crisis which are continuously cited as causes of the problems in Zimbabwe in most of the literature, namely economic, political and social dimensions which are closely intertwined as events occurring in the political landscape which significantly impact citizens' social and economic well-being. However, Sachikonye (2011), highlighted government support for violence as the chief driving force behind the mass exodus in Zimbabwe, either directly or indirectly. Sachikonye (2011) further stated that emigration was a result of tyranny, brutality, injury, and fear and such emigration should not merely be understood in terms of exploring greener economic pastures elsewhere.

In Zimbabwe, there are three historical and documented phases of migration that are fundamental in explaining and understanding Zimbabweans' exodus. The political and economic circumstances, as well as other factors, inspired Zimbabweans' desire to emigrate, contributing to a surge in Zimbabwean parental emigration. The period of the early 1980s and late 1990s (Zinyama, 1990), marked the genesis of Zimbabwe's brain drain issues and affected engineering and related fields, medical and related occupations, and secondary school science educators. Therefore, Zimbabweans' subsequent large exodus consisted of professionals and other skilled personnel affected by the 1991 Economic Structural Adjustment Program (Tevera & Crush, 2003).

ESAP thus compelled qualified professionals to emigrate from Zimbabwe to have a decent living standard. In the same vein, the education and healthcare sectors saw enormous brain drain rates for qualified professionals who left for countries like South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. Lastly, Macgregor (2008) and Tevera and Crush (2003) noted that the general elections of 2000 set off the largest and third wave of emigration as a culmination of deteriorating economic and political conditions affecting skilled and unqualified workers who left in numbers for South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada and Australia.

2.4 The emigrating parents

This section contextualises the factors that contribute to families living apart, especially because of parent emigration across borders, leaving their children in the care of selected caregivers to provide the children left behind with daily care and support. According to Parreñas (2001), people migrate from countries with weak, unindustrialised economies to work in more developed areas as elderly care workers, nurses, surgeons, babysitters, nurses, or domestic workers. The emigration phenomenon in Zimbabwe is far from being a new occurrence. Zinyama (1990) confirmed that at the start of the twentieth century in South Africa, Zimbabweans used to work in mines. Due to the country's socio-economic and political trials, migration has gradually become an existing strategy in Zimbabwe (IOM, 2010). This has steadily shifted the country from being a migrant-receiving country to a predominantly transit as well as migrant-sending country.

According to the Zimbabwe country profile of the IOM, the teaching and health sectors symbolise the degree and outcome of brain drain in the economic sectors to both neighbouring and overseas countries (IOM, 2010). Crush and Tevera (2003) echoed the sentiments that healthcare and education seemed to be the hardest hit sectors. Important professions of highly qualified Zimbabwean citizens who have left and are leaving the country comprise of, but are not limited to, engineers, surveyors, architects, audiologists, veterinarians, and forensic scientists (the Republic of Zimbabwe, 2009a:27). As noted by Chetsanga and Muchenje (2003), nearly 80 percent of Zimbabwe-qualified doctors, nurses, pharmacists, radiologists, and therapists had left the republic since 1980 and settled in nations such as Australia, Botswana, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

2.5 Reasons why children are left behind

Demurger (2015) stated that domestic and global emigrants combined provide for one in seven individuals worldwide. Whenever these emigrants migrate, they do not and cannot move with the entire family, so the rest or some of their household members are left behind including their partners, children, and parents (Demurger, 2015). As such, Demurger (2015) noted rigid migration policies, uncertainty about living conditions in the recipient country or region, and high immigration costs as possible explanations for not emigrating with the whole family.

2.5.2 Children's social security in developing countries

The Longman South African School dictionary (2017:647) defines social security as a "system run by the government to provide money for people when they are old, ill or cannot work." In the context of this dissertation, social security refers to the children's well-being in Highfield, as measured by their access to housing, food, clothing, education, health, and overall well-being. As a result, in this study, an increase in social security is linked to an increase in personal security, food security, educational security, as well as overall welfare. When it comes to social security as a basic human right, social assistance and economic support targeted at families or individuals, as well as family and community support, are critical. Children, according to Kamerman and Gatenio-Gabel (2006:30), are the most susceptible group in most countries; yet social protection for children is significantly less developed than for the elderly. In addition, the terms "social security" and "social welfare" and "social protection" are often used interchangeably in the literature.

The goal of state social security schemes is to secure the disadvantaged and the weak to guarantee they have an appropriate lifestyle (Ahmad, 1991). Thus, Ahmad (1991) guaranteed that public social safety can be provided in developing economies, such as Zimbabwe, and is essential to an impartial economic growth strategy. Ultimately, social welfare and safety programs in countries of the global south should closely evaluate program approaches to attain positive outcomes.

Countries of the global South generally face expenditure constraints as some countries' defense forces expenditure accounts for up to a third and even up to half of the total budget, mostly at the cost of the public at large that are disadvantaged and susceptible, for instance, children (Ahmad, 1991). Therefore, Patel (2005) stated that integrating social and economic development can improve the welfare of all in society and is a key tenet for developmental social welfare. Consequently, Ahmad (1991:110) advised governments in developing nations to learn from extremely developed nations that cooperation between many various programs has implications for the overall design of social security systems. Therefore, national policy on social security in developing nations should be built on what people and families are doing to secure themselves, mainly in financially constrained economies like Zimbabwe (Ahmad, 1991:110).

There are at least two prevalent social security schemes in South Africa, namely social insurance and social assistance. Social assistance is a government-funded system, also known as non-contributory social grants, financed entirely from federal revenue (Triegaardt,

nd: 1). South Africa has, according to Triegaardt (nd:2), a relatively advanced social security system for a middle-income developing country inspired by both the European and British social security schemes. This system is tested by means, and it is the responsibility of people to demonstrate that they are impoverished. Social assistance is in money or in-kind to allow people to satisfy their fundamental requirements. As of the year 2006, over 10 million poor individuals in South Africa were getting social grants.

2.5.3 The link between social security and development

It is considered that emigrating without their children is a common occurrence for parents for a variety of reasons and that this has social security implications for the children. While the restructured dynamics of the relationship revolve around the children left behind's reactions to parental emigration and separation, there is an enormous burden on the parent to provide care and social security from afar. With millions of children globally left behind due to parental emigration, the connection between migration and the children left behind is a basic issue of politics and human development. To react to social issues in society, social security policies should be responsive or developed. Social security/protection provides efficient support for broad development goals.

This is based on allegations that, for example, social security is used to advance access to education and health, sectors that are similarly vital in any nation for socio-economic growth. Consequently, the recognition of the impacts of social security is the first step towards the approval of measures and policies that are essential to alleviate the effect of parental emigration on the population (UNICEF, 2011). The link between the social security of children who are left behind and their development demonstrates the need to protect them from the negative impacts of parental emigration.

2.5.4 The most prevalent social security issues

In several pragmatic types of research, the social security costs borne by the children left behind have been outlined. Bvunzawabaya (2015) observed that children left behind are susceptible to multiple types of psychological problems; Filippa (2011) revealed that children are susceptible to feeling depressed, deserted, dismissed, with a lack of social support and had challenges with caregivers and some were sexually abused; Mackay (2005) found that separation of parents and children led to depression and anxiety that lasted up until children's adult years. Makoni (2007) asserted that parental emigration resulted in adverse psychological impacts such as lack of attention at school; Zirima et al. (2016) found that children were left with acute emotions of rage, loneliness, helplessness, confusion, anxiety, and a decrease in

academic accomplishments. Shaw (2008) noted that all types of child cruelty were subjected to children left behind.

2.5.5 The caregivers

Because of the loss of physical closeness to their parents, children who are left behind often need appropriate and alternative care agreements and support to address social security well-being and difficulties. The willingness of non-parental caregivers is therefore certainly essential as quickly as one or both parents leave the nation to work in another country.

Children who could be subjected to certain vulnerabilities because of parental emigration need additional support and care in the form of extended family and/or communities, hence teachers and social workers (Owusu, 2011). As mentioned by Zhao, Wang, Zhou, Jiang, and Hesketh, (2018) in a qualitative study in rural China, grandparents are almost always the main caretakers who handle the day-to-day lives of children left behind, although they are often unable to accomplish the difficult function of protecting them. The extended family members regularly play a basic role in helping which varies from emotional to physical resources (Padi, Nduna, Khunou & Kholopane, 2014). Thus, grandmothers, elderly sisters, aunts, and foster carers become prominent figures in the life of some children left behind (Yeoh, 2009).

Though child-headed households are relatively rare as a result of parental emigration, Tawodzera and Themane (2019:7) think that the recent surge in child-headed households can be linked to parental emigration, particularly in situations where both parents would have left children in the primary care of one of their siblings. For example, one of the learner participants in Tawodzera and Themane's (2019:7) study on "*schooling experiences of children left behind in Zimbabwe by emigrating parents: Implications for inclusive education*" stayed with her siblings for four years while their parents had been overseas. Relying on the findings of this study by Tawodzera and Themane (2019), it is evident that, despite the lack of literature and the perception that it is unusual, older siblings are sometimes left to care for their younger brothers and sisters.

Professional community social welfare officials known as social workers assist students in overcoming social challenges at home, school, and in society. Teachers, on the other hand, help kids with their academic and educational lives in the schools where they work, and they spend significant time with children who are left behind at the schools. Parental emigration requires dynamic previous agreements within left-behind families to separate care and alternative domestic tasks. Zimmerman, Litt, and Bose (2006:19) suggested that in time,

different support technologies could replace "a mother's hands-on caregiving" and promote the growth of new care relationships and linkages.

In their interactions with substitute caregivers, children left behind can also cultivate and continue to function well in their daily operations. As Graham, Jordan, Yeoh, Lam, Asis, and Su-Kamdi (2012) have stated, children commonly look from a co-present carer for physical articulations of adoration and affection, and the connection with anybody who is thinking about their daily requirements is fundamental to their comprehension of 'family'. This research will deconstruct the understanding of micro-level parental emigration issues (families, personal relations and individuals) in Zimbabwe, through the immediate household caregivers, teachers as well as the social workers as the voice of the children left behind. The household caregivers, teachers, and social workers will provide a comprehensive understanding of the children's micro-level social, cultural, and economic context of parental emigration and the social security issues affecting the children left behind.

2.5.6 The burdens placed on caregivers

Since parenting itself is challenging, it is even harder to replace it, thus caregivers must be supported both emotionally and financially by the community and parents of children left behind (Casale & Crankshaw, 2015). Unfortunately, because work sends many emigrants, most of whom are parents, away from their homes and families, most children grow up without their father or mother and are cared for by caregivers or close family members. As stated by Jampaklay et al. (2018), the development of children in their early years of life is most important and a significant factor is the mental growth environment of children and caregivers to whom they are exposed, for providing the right stimulation and interactions. This was reiterated by Boyden and Dercon (2012:13) asserting that child development entails a complicated transaction between genotypic, biological, and maturational procedures moulded by their experiences, actions, and interactions of children and other wider environmental factors, such as the cultural values embedded in different contexts of their caregivers.

2.5.7 Children's ways of coping with parental emigration

As indicated by UNICEF (2008:9), children often have difficulty familiarising themselves with the new family rearrangement as well as the new division of responsibilities within the left behind household. Children who are left behind are often at the end of the effects and impacts of parental emigration. According to UNICEF (2013), the early years of life are critical not only for individual health and physical development but also for mental and social-economic advancement. First-year events are formative and play a crucial part in constructing human capital, breaking the cycle of poverty, encouraging economic productivity, and eliminating

social disparities and inequalities (UNICEF, 2013). There is a lot of debate about whether parental emigration benefits or affects the children left behind, or whether the economic benefits, which are considered to be positive, are far more valued than the negative repercussions of parental absence. It is observed that although parental emigration will result in enhancing the left behind household revenue and the accessibility of other critical assets, it might be harmful to the social security and advancement of the children left behind (Yanovich, 2015).

Hoang, Lam, Yeoh, and Graham (2015) have indicated that as individual members review their roles and functions in the context of transforming family environments, children also meet and experience changes in material, social and psychological terms and respond to the way everyday placement and care interactions are reshaped. The International Organisation for Migration World Migration Report (2018) indicated that if the migration event is shared together, psychological health and nutritional issues resulting from parental departure owing to emigration may not be as traumatic. The study indicated that if adequate support structures are in place, children can grow along adaptive paths (IOM, 2018).

No incident or circumstance is inherently stressful, instead, the source of stress is described as threatening, dangerous or taxing the available resources by the subjective interpretation of the scenario. Lazarus and Falkman (1988) believed that coping is not just a reaction to tension. Alternatively, coping is affected by the cognitive assessment of experience by individuals, and subsequently, one's cognitive assessment affects emotional arousal (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Some coping strategies such as pursuing social support can accomplish both emotional and problem-focused roles concurrently (Vitaliano, Maiuro, Russo, & Becker, 1987).

Through direct action, problem-centered adaptation strategies work to change the source of stress. These problem-focused strategies typically involve acquiring new skills, discovering alternative gratification channels, or creating new behavioural norms. On the other side, emotion-centered adaptation strategies concentrate on inner states instead of the emotional reactions triggering the situation. Focused emotion is most probable to happen when there is an assessment that nothing can be done to alter harmful, threatening, or difficult environmental circumstances.

This type of coping is aimed at changing the emotional reaction of the individual to the issue and involves strategies such as wishful thinking, minimising, or avoiding it. Psychological stress was regarded by Lazarus and Falkman (1984) as a connection between the individual

and the environment that is considered possibly hindering one's well-being. According to Enns, Eldridge, Montgomery, and Gonzalez (2018), the adoption of various coping techniques influences the eventual set of outcomes of life events, resulting in a variety of emotional and psychological experiences for individuals. Thus, coping strategies that are more emotion-centered in a scenario of an uncontrollable issue (such as parental emigration) may be more advantageous in decreasing stress, as one's inner state may be more changeable than the scenario itself (parental absence).

Cui, Cheng, Zhang, Zhang, Yuan, Huang, Zhang, and Zhou (2021:2) studied teenage children left behind in rural China and found that they used help-seeking and problem-solving behaviours as coping strategies as they had low self-esteem as well as social support. Fundamentally, Cui et al. (2021:2) agrees that each child has a unique set of coping mechanisms which they use when confronted with challenges. According to the caregivers, teachers, and social workers, the children left behind in Highfield experienced numerous social security issues. Children's reactions to some of the obstacles they faced, for example, differed and were influenced by their own means of coping based on individual circumstances. As a way of coping, the children in this study were found to have reached out for help, be obedient, keep to themselves, build attachments, be rebellious and sometimes simply be kids, respect and trust the caregivers as well as the emigrant parents.

According to Cui et al. (2021:2), coping methods include problem-solving, rationalisation, help-seeking, fantasising, avoidance, and self-accusation. Tawodzera and Themane (2019:7) had a learner who said she did not want to discuss her challenges with anybody else and instead chose to suffer in silence, bottle up her feelings and detach from others as a way of coping to deal with the reality that her parents had left her. Students employed religion, active coping, planning, and the use of instrumental support given to them in the community, according to a study conducted in the Philippines by Navarez and Diaz (2017:100).

2.6 The impact of emigration on the family

Migration has a tremendous impact on the family's system and its development. The effects of migration on families in sending nations or communities are complex, multi-faceted, and context-dependent (Demurger, 2015). However, due to the increased and additional income, remittances can encourage household consumption and investment, according to Demurger (2015). Therefore, because of the increased income, child labour is reduced significantly, and children's educational possibilities, particularly for girls in the global south, improve (Demurger, 2015). Moreover, transfer payments enhance the hygiene, healthcare, diet, and

remittances of the family for the absence of short-term health cover. Similarly, the family's remaining members in the home nation may try to invest in higher-risk, higher-reward industrious enterprises.

As the duties of those who emigrated are placed on those who remain behind, children and certain members of the family suffer a variety of negative consequences as a result of parental emigration. Demurger (2015) expressed concern that the absence of the main caregiver (such as a parent) increased the likelihood of dropping out of school and delayed educational progress. Furthermore, interrupted family life can lead to deprived diets and increased psychological issues and decrease the inspiration to obtain an education as the return on academic achievement is low in comparison to the anticipated outward migration (Demurger, 2015). In conclusion, migration can encourage women, for example, who are left behind by family members to not participate in the economy through paid work because of the cash transfer payments.

The absence of parents has significant effects on family relationships, especially when the mother is absent for extended periods, which has an important effect on the whole family (Jacobvitz, 2014). Parental absenteeism may become a significant deprivation for children due to a lack of supervision, support, encouragement, and role models (Bvunzawabaya, 2015; Mackay, 2005 & Makoni, 2007). Children whose parents are absent also have limited places and roles in their communities and their rights to participate are not respected. This can affect their advancement, socialisation, relationships, and self-reliance (Zirima, Mtemeri, & Mtemeri, 2016). The family's new reorganisation requires changes in the responsibilities and tasks by members who are left behind.

2.7 Remittances

Remittances may be described as financial transfers sent by emigrants employed in a foreign nation to family or friends remaining behind in nations of origin (IOM, 2009). Common family care is, therefore, a significant motive for transferring funds from overseas, as remittances are essential economic assistance to family members left behind in different developing nations (Chami, Fullenkamp & Jahjah, 2005). Thus, financial transfers are the main source of external financing for nations with lower to upper-middle revenue (Lubambu, 2014). The World Bank (2016) indicated that there was a huge increase in revenue, a double school enrolment rate, a

decrease in infant mortality rate, and an increase in wealth rates among emigrant households from the sending nations.

According to the World Bank Migration and Remittances Factbook (2016), the top emigration countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2013 were Somalia, Burkina Faso, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Sudan Cote d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Mali, and South Africa. As a result, these countries are known as labour sending countries because they receive remittances from emigrants who provide labour in other countries. Adams and Cuecuecha (2013) agreed that transfers would reduce poverty, boost capital funds, finance, and reserves for households. In reality, according to the World Bank (2016), migrants are currently transferring more than $600 million in remittances to their relatives in impoverished countries, which are three times the volume of official development assistance In addition, Maimbo and Ratha (2005) argued that remittances are the most measurable and useful elements in which worldwide migration change the receiving nations. As social protection, remittances play a basic role in ensuring a substantial effect on both poverty and equity (Maimbo & Ratha, 2005).

2.7.1 Remittances as a family sustenance and development tool

The most immediate link between migration, poverty alleviation, and growth are financial transfers sent to family and friends. The difficulties associated with these financial transfers are how to improve their potential effect on the growth of migrant-sending nations, target nations, and individual emigrants (IOM, 2009). The IOM (2009) argued that remittances placed families firmly in the comparison of growth even though they cannot fully resolve the needs of the global south requirements or be a development solution. According to the article on remittances and development of IOM migrants (2006), remittances have a positive effect on the family level as they help enhance the education of children and decrease child labour, contribute to better well-being, housing, family welfare and genuinely promote the improvement of human resources.

Azam, Haseeb, and Samsudin (2016) have stated that remittances are related to enhancing human development outcomes in many areas, such as schooling, health, and sexual equality. According to the country profile (2010) of the International Organization for Migration Zimbabwe, official remittances to the nation achieved an approximate US$361 million, adding 7.2 percent to the Gross Domestic Product of Zimbabwe in 2007. Tevera and Crush (2008:21) estimated that Zimbabwe would receive roughly US$ 260 to US$ 490 million annually in

remittance revenues. Remittances sent back home in macroeconomic terms represent an important financial stream to Africa (Maimbo & Ratha, 2005).

According to Tawodzera and Themane (2019:2), millions of citizens have left the nation for a better quality of life elsewhere because of the financial and political crisis in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the remittance market value has risen exponentially and remittances play a key role in supporting the cash-strapped economy. Maimbo and Ratha (2005) concluded that the quickly growing volume of global migrant remittances has emerged as a potential base of development resources as well as micro-enterprises that are currently part of the development plan for many unindustrialised nations. Countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and the Philippines have benefited in setting up remittance-funded initiatives and many community developmental projects (Maimbo & Ratha, 2005).

For that reason, remittances increase emigrant families' household incomes, advance living standards, boost savings, and usually lead to domestic economic growth. According to the World Bank (2015), receipts increased from $325 billion in 2010 to $431.60 billion in 2015 representing an international increase of 75 percent over five years. Three-quarters of migrant families in Zimbabwe receive transfer payments, according to Crush and Tevera (2010:15), and almost all money goes to sustenance rather than development. Crush and Tevera (2010) observed that global food consumption takes the largest proportion of migrant remittances.

2.8 Government policies towards children left behind and their families

Governments around the world should recognise the significant contribution of overseas workers to both the family and the domestic economy and be able to provide support tools and guidelines for employees and children left behind within migrant and labour-sending countries. Parental emigration impacts the family structure, and it has far-reaching implications for a parent to play their role from afar. This eventually affects social security, and as the parent-child relationship is affected, this impacts child socialisation. To protect the children left behind, the absent parents, the sending country, and the receiving nation, governments must play the leading role of entering into social security agreements with other nations as a way of protecting all the parties involved. The susceptibility of children left behind from socio-economic decisions (such as parental emigration) can be compensated by policies that protect their livelihoods, boost their human capital ability and fulfil their roles as citizens of the world.

I assert that adequate and suitable child welfare strategies can be important solutions in the socio-economic and political growth of an unindustrialised nation like Zimbabwe.

Consequently, policies protecting human capital consisting of better access to health care through clinics and hospitals; food through better nutrition and enhanced access to schools through universal primary and secondary education must be passed (Justino, 2003). According to Justino (2003:10), the state is responsible for upholding and promoting social, financial and political human freedoms, hence the participation of the government becomes essential in providing appropriate incentives and applying the necessary pressure to achieve public good.

The following are the various statutory instruments used to protect the children: **Guardianship of Minors Act [Chapter 5:08] Act 34 of 1961**, which governs minors' guardianship and custody in the eventuality that their biological parents divorce, die, or become incapacitated and unable to care for them. **The Children's Act of 2001[Chapter 5:06]** was enacted to bring the various international standards for child care into Zimbabwe. A child under the age of 18 is also safeguarded under **The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children.** In this **Charter, Article 19** which is *"***Parental Care and Protection"** states that *"every child is entitled to parental care and protection and shall, whenever possible have the right to reside with his or her parents" No child shall be separated from his/her parents against his/her will, except when a judicial authority determines in accordance with appropriate law, that such separation is in the best interest of the child"*.

Section (2a) of Article [20] "Parental Responsibilities" in the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children** give emphasis "*To assist parents and other persons responsible for the child in the performance and in the case of need, provide material assistance and support programmes particularly with regard to nutrition, health, education, clothing and housing".*

Chapter 2 Sections 19, 21, 22, 23, and 30 of the Zimbabwean Constitution contains social security. As a result, section 19(2) (b) mandates that the state develop practical policies and steps to guarantee that children have access to housing, basic nourishment, healthcare, and social services while working within available resources.

The Zimbabwe National Orphan Care Policy of 1999 and the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), a program for orphans, vulnerable children, and children in school whose parents cannot afford school fees, are two more programs that have been used to secure children in need. The BEAM provision is given to the children in the form of a school fee waiver and other educational requirements being fulfilled by government.

In Zimbabwe, there are no policies that particularly address the social security issues that children left behind experience. Nevertheless, Articles and sections of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment [No. 20] Act 2013, Section 19, safeguards and fulfil the rights of children. As a result, there are programs, services, procedures, and structures in place to prevent and respond to all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, injustice, and violence. The Children's Act (Chapter 5:06), the Guardianship of Minors Act (Chapter 5:08), and the Maintenance Act (Chapter 5:09) are just a few.

Other nations, such as South Africa, have implemented a system based on constitutional Section 27 (1) (c) rights, which consists of non-contributory schemes, such as social assistance. The Ministry of Social Development oversees the Department of Social Development, which administers grant payments to citizens for a variety of social and economic needs, including unemployment benefits, child support, disability grants, care dependency grants, foster child grants, social relief in distress, and grants in aid. The Social Assistance Act, Unemployment Fund Act, Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, and Pension Fund Act are only a few of the provisions included.

According to Bryant (2005:10), when it comes to policy for migrant children, the Philippines have a comprehensive system in place to help them. The Philippines has a network of officers who plan initiatives, offer counselling, and act as advocates in places where there are a high number of migrants. Furthermore, the Labour Department in the Philippines provides information and counselling to migrant families, as well as a welfare fund and access to credit facilities for the family left behind. Also, Bryant (2005:10) stated that a religious body of Catholic Bishops provides migrants and their families with information about migrant difficulties, legal help, and counselling, as well as providing livelihood training and microfinance. Bryant (2005:10), on the other hand, points out that while Thailand and Indonesia have significant numbers of children left behind, their governments do not have the same vast systems of government and non-government programs that cater to the families of labour migrants and the children left behind.

Accordingly, government social security policies that are adequately and appropriately involved to shield children and their families from the impacts of parental emigration can enhance living standards and promote their way of life in Highfield, Zimbabwe. Consequently, government understanding that children left behind are fragile, as well a risk group, is one of the first measures to raise awareness among practitioners who cope with them and develop strategies that are responsive to their requirements.

2.9 Conclusion

The social security challenges that children left behind face as a result of parental emigration have received little attention from Zimbabwe's academics, policymakers, and other key stakeholders. The empirical literature has shown that even though the phenomenon of emigration is common in many developing countries in the global south, it has not yet been conclusively demonstrated that the benefits are worth the social costs and the implications it has had on children's social security. The global and national parental emigration contexts were discussed in this chapter, with the global backdrop briefly focusing on Asia, America, the Caribbean, and Europe. The conversation focused on the socio-economic and environmental conditions in Zimbabwe, as well as the factors driving emigration. The impact of emigration on families and the reasons why children are left behind have culminated in a scenario where children face major social security issues which serve a reminder of the sheer size and magnitude of this phenomenon. The link between social security and development, as well as the most common social security challenges, were also explored. Highlighting the caregivers and the obligations placed on them was critical to comprehending the topic of children's social security. The role of remittances and how they have supported families and promoted growth was discussed at length. Finally, the policies of the governments of some countries in the Global South regarding children left behind were discussed. The theoretical framework is presented in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3. Introduction

The chapter presents and discusses the theoretical framework supporting this research concerning parental emigration effects on the social security of children left behind in Highfield. The study utilises three theories to underpin and guide the study, namely: Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory of motivation (1943) Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1989, 2005), and Bowen's family systems theory (1985). In attempting to comprehend the phenomenon of parental emigration and its effects on the children left behind, I tried to determine their needs, family connectivity, and the environment that the children find themselves in.

For this research, these theories were crucial as they indicate the family dynamic shifts owing to emigration, and children often find themselves in a setting where some of their most fundamental requirements are not met, thus threatening their social security. Worldwide, 143 million children are projected to be split from their biological parents (McCall, 2011). Steenbakkers, Van Der Steen and Grietens (2018) noted that being able to select suitable caregivers who assist children is important for the parents who have emigrated. According to Steenbakkers et al. (2018), those assigned with caring for children left behind have a responsibility as caregivers to address the requirements of the children entrusted to their care. The theoretical frameworks enabled me to appreciate the essential ideas in this study, as well as providing an overall approach to the research methodology, research design, target population, research sample, data collection, evaluation, and in time lead the data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Imenda, 2014).

3.1 Defining Theoretical Frameworks

This research adopted three different theories to give consistency to the study design and so created a theoretical framework (Ngulube, 2018:11). A theoretical framework can be defined as the result of putting together many related concepts from theories to explain or predict an occurrence or to offer a broader understanding of the problem of interest or essentially an issue of research (Imenda, 2014:189). As a result, I concluded that using one theory to explain the complete phenomenon was inadequate and that no single theory could explain all of the social realities, so I used various concepts from the theories to investigate and clarify it. A theoretical framework is an argument based on theory and evidence that is developed to

justify the salience of the problem, to characterise appropriate constructs, to formulate theoretical and empirical justification, to steer the selection of suitable methods, and to assess, interpret and scaffold information (Antonenko, 2015:57).

3.2 Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation

Maslow's theory (1943) became one of the first philosophies/theories to accept human biological as well as psychological needs. In literature, needs are characterised as requirements for healthy functioning (Steenbakkers, Van Der Steen & Grietens, 2018). Therefore, fulfillment of needs is a continuous process, and successful needs consummation leads to even more advancement and well-ness (Maslow, 1943). Therefore, Steenbakkers et al. (2018) maintained that the concepts of this theory suggest the applicability of these concepts to the needs of children left behind, and to children who grow up in difficult and disadvantaged circumstances.

This study's use of Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation offered both benefits and drawbacks. The theory of human motivation identifies the various types of requirements and distinguishes between higher-order and lower-order needs (Maslow, 1943). Given this, caregivers and emigrant parents can provide the physiological and security requirements of the children left behind, which are lower-order needs according to the "Hierachy of Needs." In Maslow's "Hierachy of Needs," the children's safety needs are reflected in the second tier, and they include physical security, economic security, resources, family morality, as well as personal health and well-being.The use of the theory provided for the analysis of the children's physical and mental health, as well as the assessment of the social security of the children left behind in Highfield.

The difficulty in determining the level of requirements at which an individual is motivated at any one time was a weakness of this theory. Furthermore, Smit, Botha, and Vrba (2016:404) claimed that because people's subjective and individual opinions matter, people's judgments of how well a need has been addressed fluctuate from one person to the next.

3.2.1 Physiological needs

As Deci and Ryan (2012) have noted, the children's environment plays an important role in identifying the specific needs and how they can be addressed. Coholic, Lougheed, and Cadell (2009) argued that the well-being and everyday functioning of the children left behind is partly dependent on them improving their self-esteem. In other words, first, their basic human needs

must be met in order to satisfy their social security and safety. Basic human needs serve as a useful basis upon which other human needs in society are based and met. And as such, the multiple core human needs that are critical to human life are frequently referred to as food, water, clothing, shelter, sleep, and reproduction. These are the basic human needs, and human behaviour will be focused on their fulfillment. If parents and caregivers struggle to provide these needs for the children, they may find it difficult to function sufficiently in the household, school, and in society. Reasonably so, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is about exploring how the human desire to satisfy certain requirements in different groups in culture stimulates the behaviour of people (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017).

For this study, the realisation of human needs at an individual, household, and community level requires the application of the theoretical concepts from the hierarchy of needs of Maslow (1943), the socio-ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1989; 2005), and the family systems theory by Bowen (1985) with a specific focus on the basic needs, the ecological system in which development takes place and the entire family unit in which the child must thrive.

3.2.2 Safety needs or security needs

According to Onah (2015), safety needs or security needs are the protection from detrimental physical and social circumstances. Such circumstances include conflicts, political unrest, civil unrest, riots, strikes, and many other circumstances that could threaten children, families, and peoples' safety and security. Natural disasters such as floods, droughts, famine, disease outbreaks, fires, and earthquakes are other to safety and security.

Important to remember is that once the basic needs have been met and fulfilled, the need for safety and protection from physical and psychological distress is redirected. If there is a danger to the home, school, and community setting, children may become discouraged and insecure because they have not fulfilled the basic need to feel safe.

3.2.3 Love and belonging needs or social needs

Apart from physiological requirements such as drinking water when thirsty and eating food when hungry, the need for love and belonging, or social needs such as being a member of a group-family, peer-group, or group of friends, is critical (Onah, 2015). In general, children and individuals feel comfortable and secure in an environment that they recognise and belong to,

such as family in the home and community, friends, co-workers, and other community social organisations (Aruma & Hanachor, 2017).

The social needs in Maslow's hierarchy comprise such things as love, acceptance, and belonging. At this level of the hierarchy of needs, the need for emotional relations drives human behaviour, and some of the things that satisfy this need include friendships, family, social groups, community groups, church, and religious groupings.

It is important for people to feel loved and accepted by other people to avoid problems as loneliness, depression, and anxiety. Personal relationships with family, friends and loved ones play an important role, as does the involvement in other groups that might include religious groups, sports teams, book clubs, and other group activities. Children who are left behind need love, friendship, understanding, and tolerance from other people, particularly their household caregivers, teachers, and social workers for example.

Table 1: Example of practical conceptual application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to the children left behind in Highfield.

The need Level	Where Applied: Community/Household
Physiological needs	The provision of food, safe drinking water, clothing, shelter and sleep. Suitable living arrangements or environment
Safety needs or Security needs	Safe living conditions (at both household and community levels) Housing security (safe household for both physical and emotional well-being) Assurance and guarantee of protection from violence, criminals, disasters, conflicts, hunger and endangerment.
Love and Belonging needs or	Social interaction with their caregivers

Social needs	Social interaction with other family members
	Play and socialise with their peers in the community.
	Having a feeling of belonging to the family
	Having a feeling of belonging to the community

3.3. The Ecological System Theory

It is vital to consider the relationship between the family system and the environment as mutually beneficial, in which the family can be affected by external factors, but also moulds and chooses its environment (Ladd, Le Sieur & Profilet, 1993). For example, while children can learn social skills in family experiences, children's peer interactions can also be affected by the family's preference of neighbourhood, schools, and the use of support services for the children and family.

Urie Bronfenbrenner, an American psychologist, established the ecological system theory in 1979 to explain how children's fundamental features and their surroundings interact to determine how they change and develop. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theoretical perspective conceptualised the developing person, the environment, and their interaction. The socio-ecological theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1989) emphasises the idea that families are part of larger social systems in which the child may not appear to be active right away but has a significant impact on their lives. As a result, the entire ecological system in which child growth and development occurs must be considered. In the five layers of ecological systems, there are various extra-familial impacts, such as communal settings, local politics, the workplace, and the socio-cultural background.

Human development takes place in its immediate family environment, regularly over extended periods, through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interactions, according to the revised model. As a Process-Person-Context-Time model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), the later development of the initial structure provided various perspectives.

The ecology of human development, therefore, encompasses the scientific analysis of the progressive, shared accommodation between an active growing human being and the constantly shifting characteristics of the immediate settings where the developing person is living, as this process is influenced by the relationships between any of these contexts and by the broader context where the settings are integrated (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:21).

For this study, the four following components of the Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory namely, the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the chronosystem were used. These components were used as a guide because the goal was to analyse the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind and the connections between the children, the household caregivers, teachers in the school context and social workers in the community environment of Highfield, Harare. Bronfenbrenner's ecological components can show the variety of interrelated effects on the growth of children. Therefore, awareness of the situations in which children are raised can make us cognisant of differences in how the children may behave in different environments.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979:13), the nature of human evolution lies at a point of intersection between the fields of natural, psychological and social studies as they contribute to the growth, change, and development of the person in society. According to Hayes, O'Toole, and Halpenny (2017), ecological systems theory provides a holistic approach that includes all of the systems in which children and their families are involved, correctly representing the dynamic nature of actual families.The ecological systems theory has the advantage of allowing behavioural and environmental change to coexist; as a result, the theory accounts for the effects of social systems and their influence on child and human development.

Bronfenbrenner recognised that many parts of a growing child's life interact with one another. As a result, the primary benefit of employing this theory in this study was that the children who were left behind were exposed to a variety of environments, ranging from the smallest ecosystem at home to the larger educational system, and finally to the largest system that encompasses society and culture. On the other hand, in addition to the benefits described above, the theory has a weakness in that there is insufficient evidence that children are disadvantaged if they have poor environmental influence or lack a certain environment (Guy-Evans, 2020). Another limitation is that, while studies of ecological systems can show an effect, they cannot prove that the systems are the direct source of those effects.

3. 3.1 Microsystem

This is the most intimate, smallest yet immediate environment in which children communicate, cope, confront, change and generate objective circumstances and activities in their life (Bronfenbrenner, 1988:23). The microsystem, therefore, includes the children's daily home, school or daycare, peer group, and community atmosphere. Microsystem relationships require personal interactions with members of the family, classmates, other students, and carers.

The way these organisations or people socialise with the children would therefore influence how they develop. For instance, more loving, caring, and more accommodating experiences and relations will promote the enhanced growth of the children.

In his research of ecological structures, Bronfenbrenner (1989) discovered that siblings who are in the same ecological environment can experience very distinct conditions. And as such, given two siblings within the same microsystem, their growth can progress differently due to the personality characteristics of each child, such as temperament, influenced by different genetic and biological factors, determining how others treat him/her. For example, if the emigrant parents have left a brother and sister in the same household, one may cope well while the other may struggle and require support.

3. 3. 2 Mesosystem

The mesosystem consists of links between the household and school, peers and family, and the family and society. Bronfenbrenner (1979) characterises the mesosystem as the interrelationships between two or more contexts in which the developing child actively engages. The behaviour, experiences, and actions of children cannot, therefore, be interpreted outside the framework in which they happen. According to the theory of Bronfenbrenner (1989), if the parents are deeply invested in their children's relationships, then the growth of the children is strongly impacted by balance and resemblance. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) helps to explain the direct and indirect influences on the life of children to many levels of environmental and social contexts that affect their development.

3. 3. 3 Exosystem

The exosystem relates to the ties which may exist between two and sometimes more settings, one of which may not contain, but unintentionally impact, the developing children. Bronfenbrenner (1979:25) contends that the exosystem comprises of one or more

environments that do not involve the developing child as an active participant, but in which activities happen that influence or are influenced by what occurs in the environments that contain the developing child. Based on Bronfenbrenner's (1989) results, individuals and places through which children might not communicate directly might still affect their life. Such locations and individuals may include workplaces for parents, extended family members, and children's neighbourhoods.

3. 3. 4 Chronosystem

The theory of Bronfenbrenner (1989) indicates that the chronosystem brings the practical element of time, which shows the effect of both change and consistency in the environments of children. The chronosystem can include a shift in family structure owing, for instance, to parental emigration, change of residence, employment status of parents, and significant changes in culture such as economic booms and busts, and conflicts. The research focused on modifications in the life of children due to parental emigration. The ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that if interactions break down in the immediate microsystem, the child will not have the required instruments to explore other components of its environment. Because of these differences, adults involved with a child's care and welfare should pay careful attention to his / her conduct in various environments, and the quality and type of links between any of these environments.

3.4 Family Systems Theory

Dr. Murray Bowen (1913-1990), who was a late American psychiatrist, established Bowen family systems theory in the 1960s, which provided a new framework for the conception of human behaviour and treatment of human issues. This is a theory regarding how people interact with one another. One of the earliest comprehensive theories of family systems functioning was Murray Bowen's family systems theory which was amended to 'Bowen theory' after 1974 (Bowen, 1966, 1978, Kerr and Bowen, 1988)

The control of environmental interactions, while maintaining the integrity of family parameters, is a key priority of the family system (Broderick, 1993). The significance of families as occurring over a broader social framework (e.g. neighbourhoods, groups) shows the value of examining the variability that characterises families, especially with respect to race, as well as the cultural and social structures where marginalised families are integrated (Cox & Paley, 1997).

Children's attachments to the influence of caregivers are shaped by the wider family background. Hence, Tong, Yan, and Kawachi (2019) highlighted that families are diverse wholes in family systems theory. Cox and Paley (1997) thus, acknowledge that this interpretation illustrates the multidimensional roles of all members of the family, including those of the children left behind. Family systems theory encompasses family dynamics including structures (buildings), responsibilities, interaction behaviours, boundaries, and authority relations.

While the theory of the family systems recognises that co-parenting dynamics can be distinguished from dyadic parent-child relationships (Erdman & Caffery, 2013:43), grandparents' surrogate parenting, combined by distant parenting of emigrant relatives, produces a more complicated pattern of communication incorporating a range of considerations in and outside family structures. The systems theory is relevant in the case of the children in Highfield because parental emigration reconfigures care provisions on the personal well-being of the children left behind.

Separation driven by economic migration is a phenomenon that has only emerged in the last few decades on an unprecedented scale and, in most cases, is driven by the desire of parents to improve the circumstances and well-being of the whole family, especially children (Rapoport & Docquier, 2006). Therefore, as indicated by Ahmad (1991) the family has generally assumed a noteworthy job in giving security in most nations, and it keeps on playing out a similar capacity today. Hoang, Lam, Yeoh, and Graham (2015) contend that family structures might be modified as tasks are reallocated and present roles of left behind family members transform to seal the gap left by the absent emigrant parent/s.

Graham, Jordan, Yeoh, Lam, Asis, and Su-Kamdi (2012) on the other hand, claim that "being a family" continues to have meaning in the face of international separation on many occasions, even when family traditions and relationships are much more mobile in a different way.

The family systems theory emphasises the idea that families are continual units, with rules, principles, and morals that shape members over time. A family structure affects and reflects on the family while understanding the many sub-systems within a family that strengthen family interaction (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2015). Family roles alter over time but may well consist of daily care of a family member like children left behind, community participation and support, economic support or direction for any members, and spiritual and

social inspiration, to prove a few of the never-ending prospects that depend on individual and family preferences, interests, and resources (Turnbull et al., 2015).

In many ways, systems theory is the cornerstone for family systems theory, as it impacted and encouraged the pioneers of the profession of family therapy. The systems theory has the advantage of highlighting the interconnectedness and interdependence that was consistently seen between caregivers and emigrant parents, teachers and caregivers, social workers and children, and many other people who play a significant role in the lives of the children left behind. The largest drawback of applying this theory was that, while it emphasized the family's interconnectedness and independence, it did not go into detail about the quality of the connections.

3. 5 Conclusion

These theories suggested that the core outcome in the study of the social security of children left behind as a result of parental emigration is determined by the relationships with parents, the immediate household caregivers, teachers, social workers and the community members at large. The outcome is a result of a complicated process shaped by the child's various interactions with their environment during infancy to adolescence. It was important to realise in this context, that the specific factors that can affect child well-being in absence of emigrant parents are family care arrangements and the availability of psychosocial assistance, household social security and socio-economic status. The underlying factors leading to the specification of childcare policies and migration processes further affect these family-level aspects in the broader social contexts.

Alternative ways of survival and family consolidation have helped to preserve families, although not in the traditional sense, even when families live separately. While families are exposed to new values, emigration, improved access to education, health care, and technology worldwide, this offers both advantages and disadvantages. Families continue to function given the socio-economic and political difficulties that affect their well-being and structure, which is why the family's importance and position should not be overlooked in providing its members with psychological, physical and material support for children.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4. Introduction

The methodology is the study of how we go about acquiring knowledge (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010). As such, the research methodology is a way of resolving the study questions systematically (Kothari & Garg, 2019). The effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind in Highfield were explored, described, and interpreted using a qualitative research approach. The data was collected using semi-structured face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The study included primary caregivers, such as grandparents, aunts, and uncles, who actually stay and care for the children left behind, as well as secondary caregivers, such as teachers and social workers, who support the primary caregivers by dealing with the children at school and providing social services to the children. The research design and methodology followed to collect data for this study are discussed in this chapter. The area of study, study paradigm, research design, participant selection and sampling criteria, data collection and instruments, data analysis and data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations are also outlined.

4.1 Area of Study

This research was conducted in Harare's Highfield high-density suburb, which is the city's second-oldest one (founded in 1930) after Mbare and is located southwest of the city. Egypt, Old Highfield, New Highfield, Lusaka, Engineering, and many other neighbourhoods constitute Highfield. Highfield is a densely populated suburb divided into east and west, and it is regarded as one of the original epicenters of nationalism in what was then Rhodesia and is now the Republic of Zimbabwe. Highfield is home to the Machipisa shopping center and the Zimbabwe Hall, which is known for hosting high school beauty pageants and other religious meetings.

The public swimming pool (currently inoperable at the time of the fieldwork) and the library are both located near the shopping center. Highfield's most important historical fact is that it is home to the popular Zimbabwe Grounds, often known as "Mazigo" in local Shona slang. Political rallies and protests for both the ruling party "ZANU-PF" and the main opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), music festivals, prayer, and other church services have all taken place on the Zimbabwe Grounds. Close to the Zimbabwe Grounds is the well-

known Takashinga cricket club, which has produced leading cricketers for Zimbabwe. The Machipisa Police Station serves and protects the broader Highfield community in terms of safety and security of the suburb.

The Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare operates a Highfield District social welfare office in Highfield, which is next to the Machipisa shopping center providing social services to the Highfield population. Western Triangle polyclinic (off Mangwende Drive), Old Highfield polyclinic (off Jabavu Drive), and Rutsanana polyclinic in Lusaka are the three council facilities where residents of the Highfield suburb receive primary health care. Generally, the Highfield area is known for prominent political leaders and musicians.

Highfield East and West are represented by members of parliament (MPs) for Highfield, who were elected after the harmonised elections on July 30, 2018. In Zimbabwe's Parliament, the elected members represent the Highfield constituency and other areas where they were elected. Regrettably, upon entering Highfield, one is met by potholed and dusty streets, and one can instantaneously see and smell the almost sickeningly evident urban poverty manifested in informal sector enterprises, patches of vegetable gardens growing in burst sewer water-filled open spaces, overflowing sewers, and persistent water shortages, dumped litter in open areas as well as poor tap water quality.

Some houses in the Highfield suburb are still in the original structures they were acquired in before independence, while others have been improved and extended, with better-off households having more than two bedrooms, a living room and a separate kitchen, a toilet, and a bathroom, as well as a small vegetable garden for household consumption. To compensate for the frequent water shortages, some homeowners dug wells, some legally and some illegally.

4. 2 Research Design

The research was a qualitative exploratory, descriptive, and interpretative study on social security issues affecting children left behind by parental emigration in Highfield. Although descriptive research looks at what, where, and when of a phenomenon, explanatory analysis is seeking answers to "why" and "how" questions. This research endeavoured to make a connection by establishing contributing factors and effects on the targeted phenomena (Bhattacherjee, 2012:6).

For this study, I found that a qualitative explanation for the observations and an inductive data analysis were the most effective methods because they all improved the probability of

rationality, which would have been compromised if measurable or quantitative approaches had been used. A research design is used to connect, evaluate, and illustrate how the primary components of a research project, including the sample, stages, and analysis processes, work together to answer the study's main research questions (Phillips, 1971).

A research design is a theoretical framework within which research is conducted; it is the model for data gathering, evaluation, and analysis. The design thus provides a summary of what the researcher will do from documenting the hypothesis to the final data analysis and its functional consequences (Kothari & Garg, 2019:31. I served as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis in this study. Since both the participants and I developed our conceptions, I embraced the situation and made sense of the many interpretations as there are several realities in any given context. I tried to collect data unobtrusively, allowing myself to study real-world situations as they inevitably unfolded, with no predefined restraints or criteria governing the research or its results.

In social science studies, individual persons or collective sets, such as communities, corporations, cultures, or economies, and their individual or collective interactions or activities are studied (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Since social scientists found it difficult to quantify human social behaviour using traditional quantitative methods, qualitative research techniques were developed to look beyond the "how"; "how often"; and "how many", and instead, explore the "why", to further and expand our understanding of the social environment. Creating knowledge through having an interest in knowing more about people's circumstances and conducting research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the standpoint of those being studied are best approached through a qualitative research design. For instance, several pupils analysing and writing a report of the same event or occurrence might be compared to social sciences research.

Qualitative research is concerned with understanding just how people construe their experiences and how they construct their worlds, and what connotation they assign to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:6). Consequently, accounts of the same event or incidence can differ according to how the researcher approaches the subject, and hence social research can yield multiple realities for different individuals depending on the methods the researchers select to carry out the study. Therefore, Merriam and Tisdell (2016:14) postulate that the general purpose of qualitative research is to get an understanding of how people make sense out of their reality, demarcate the procedure of meaning-making and describe how people understand what they experience rather than the outcome.

Two widely recognised research designs are qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative research design is founded on the belief that awareness is continually built by people as they participate in the context of an event, experience or phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The quantitative research model, on the other hand, appears to be focused on the assumption that knowledge pre-exists and awaits exploration (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As a result, quantitative research uses numbers as information and uses statistical methods to analyse them (Braun & Clarke, 2013:3-4). Appropriately, getting insight and analysing the effects of parental emigration on social security issues affecting the children left behind necessitated an approach that allowed for the investigation of the topics in detail to generate as much evidence as possible.

The emphasis for a qualitative research study is on method, interpretation and meaning with the researcher as the primary tool for data collection and analysis, the system being inductive and the final product being richly descriptive (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:15). During the research, my role was to present a friendly, open self who, although appreciating and recognising the challenges and constraints faced by the various families with children left behind, did not know more about the children left behind in Highfield than the caregivers and other authorities did (Pole & Hillyard, 2016:41).

4.3 Research Paradigm

An interpretative paradigm was used because it considers that the best method to research social order is to subjectively investigate the persons involved, and doing so by interviewing several participants and reconciling differences between their responses using their subjective viewpoints. This research was interpretive, and it relied on qualitative research methods such as face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions.

Ellen (1984:9) defines paradigms as models or frameworks that emerge from a worldview or belief system about the nature of knowledge and existence. As a result, a scientific community holds paradigms that govern how a group of researchers conducts research (Ellen, 1984:9). In essence, paradigms determine what should be examined, how it should be studied, and how the study's findings should be interpreted (Kivunja, 2017:26). Thus, the qualitative interpretivism paradigm served as a conceptual lens through which I investigated methodological factors to decide the research methods employed and how data was analysed for this study.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994:107), paradigms are made up of "basic beliefs." However, Matta (2021:1) claims that paradigmatic beliefs are the reasons why researchers select or utilise specific qualitative methods (paradigms are responses to why questions). Using the interpretivism paradigm, I was able to analyse the caregiver's perspectives on the effects parental emigration on the social security of children left behind. People create their own realities, according to the interpretive paradigm; by the different meanings they assign to their experiences, and as there are also multiple realities (Kivunja 2017:36-37).

4.4 The Fieldwork processes

The implementation of the consultation process began with my presence in the high-density suburb of Highfield in Harare to identify participants with whom I wanted to conduct interviews and conduct focus group discussions. After informally speaking with several community members, I noticed that many community members were attentive once they became aware of my study's intention. The pace and pattern for the point of entry into the families homes, administrators' offices were set during and after the informal and formal interviews. After receiving permission from several authorities such as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and Culture and the Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare to conduct my research, the research was put into motion.

The process consisted of:

Approaching caregiver/teacher / social worker,

Explaining the significance of the visit and the scope of the study,

Obtaining consent from caregiver/teacher / social worker to be interviewed and

Negotiating a suitable time, date, as well as the location with the participant or commence the interviews if the participant was available at that time**.**

4.4.1 Sampling and sample size
For this research, my credibility with caregivers and members of the community depended on having a compelling justification for my research and the time spent in the community and that the research findings would have some meaningful, significant benefits for the community and the children left behind (Pole & Hillyard, 2016:41). To gain access to the suburb of Highfield, the degree of familiarity was particularly advantageous. As stated by Pole and Hillyard (2016:21), in directing fieldwork, familiarity was important in defining techniques for the most effective methods of data collection.

The statistical process of selecting a subset referred to as a "sample" of a population of interest to make observations and statistical inferences about that population are known as sampling. It was critical to select a sample that was representative of the community so that the inferences drawn from the sample could be applied to the entire population (Bhattacherjee, 2012). The goal of social science research is to deduce patterns of behaviour within certain populations. Sometimes, because of practical and financial limitations, it is difficult to investigate entire populations; instead, one must select a representative sample from the population of interest for observation as well as analysis.

A non-probability sampling procedure was used in this study (Patton, 2015). While I followed a purposive sampling technique, I had to first identify what the most significant characteristics of my sample should be, and then find people who met these criteria, such as the caregivers in Highfield. Purposive sampling, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2016:97), is based on subjective criteria. Non-probability sampling is defined by Babbie (2017:195) as a technique in which samples are chosen in a way that is not supported by probability and statistics.

The study required me to visit schools and explain the goal of my research to the administrators and headmasters. They agreed to participate once they were convinced that the study would benefit the community, children left behind, caregivers, emigrant parents, and government officials. The school heads retrieved the school social databases and sent my letters to the caregivers, requesting that they participate in the study and return the consent letters to school within three days. I provided the administrators with my contact number so that they could reach me once the kids returned with signed consent forms. From there, I began calling caregivers to schedule interviews at a convenient time and location, for the data collection process to begin.

In a qualitative study, the number of participants becomes a reflection of the study's goal and the general population. The number of people chosen as a sample to represent the characteristics of a population is defined by Sekaran and Bougie (2016:396) as the sample size. In qualitative research, samples are maintained to a minimum to emphasize the depth of a specific scenario-oriented study, and the sample size in qualitative studies is frequently determined by a saturation threshold (Sandelowski, 1996; Siersma & Guassora, 2015: 1755). The saturation threshold is reached when you start hearing the same responses to your questions or seeing the same behaviours in observations and no new information is coming in (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 202; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:101).In reality, qualitative research comprises learning about the experiences and perceptions of the participants. Qualitative

samples, according to Vasileiou et al. (2018), are chosen for their capacity to give richly textured information that is relevant to the phenomena under investigation.

The total number of participants who took part in this study were forty (40). There were twenty-seven face-to-face participants; four of them were couples who were interviewed together with their spouses to make a total of twenty-three interviews. The other thirteen participants were in two focus group discussions of teachers and social workers. Individual face-to-face interviews were conducted first, followed by focus groups. The face-to-face interviews were conducted at the residences of the participants in Highfield.

Post completion of the personal interviews, the focus group discussions took place. I held two focus groups, one with teachers and the other with social workers. The focus group discussions took place on different days and venues. There were seven (7) participants in the teachers' focus group, all between the ages of twenty and fifty (20-50), four females and three males. The teachers' focus group meeting was held in one of the school halls after the school's academic activities had ended for the day.

The discussion with the social worker focus group was conducted last. The purpose of having the social workers last was to explore if their perceptions would support or refute the prior data acquired from the caregivers' face-to-face participant interviews and the teachers' focus group discussion. I had a group of social workers consisting of four females and two males. The social workers were between the ages of twenty and fifty (20-50). The focus group discussion with the social workers was conducted in one of the boardrooms at the welfare offices on a date and time agreed upon by all participants

4.4.2 Data collection instruments

The overarching theoretical direction underpinning field research emphasises the importance of the personal experiences of the social actors as study participants but not as artifacts (Pole & Hillyard, 2016). As explorative, descriptive, and interpretive research, the attempt was to derive data through direct interaction with the studied phenomenon. Throughout qualitative field research, an important aspect of data analysis was the quest for significance through direct interpretation of what was experienced by the participants themselves and what was perceived and documented about them.

Participants taking part in this study were given the opportunity to share their perspectives using face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The interviews were conducted

with individual household caregivers for the children left behind, as well as focus group discussions with teachers and social workers.

4.4.3 Semi-structured face-to-face interviews

I was the primary instrument for the collection of data in this research. Therefore, I was instrumental in conducting semi-structured face-to-face interviews and holding focus group discussions with the participants. Interviews, according to Yin (2011:32), are facilitated discussions in which participants are encouraged to narrate their own experiences and realities from their different viewpoints. To be consistent with all participants, I had a set of pre-planned primary interview questions, such that each participant would cover the same areas. Therefore, I created an interview schedule or guide as a primary data collection instrument for the different individual caregivers who participated in the study. I had easy access to social networks and interactions with the residents because I was born and raised in the Highfield community, which proved to be an additional benefit.

The interview questions were guided by the objectives of the study. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted first, followed by focus group discussions on two separate days. During the face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions, an audiotape was used on the participants who agreed to be recorded and also made handwritten notes.

4.4.4 Focus group discussions

Howitt (2019:81) specifies that focus groups are the joint interviews conducted by the researcher or moderators that exploit the multitude of possible interactions to provide abundant knowledge. A focus group is a meeting of people/participants hosted by a research team representative and maybe observed by other research team affiliates whether openly or secretively (Van Zyl, 2014:215). Naturally, focus groups were a choice for me because they facilitated group discussions, putting together different perspectives in a way that individual interviews would not (Van Zyl, 2014).

These focus groups were used to explore the perspectives of teachers as carers in the learning environment and social welfare workers as the first contacts of children seeking social support. There was realisation that children's social security extended to areas outside of their families, including their schools and the communities in which they live. I intended to have these groups (teachers and social welfare officers) as participants as they could provide the best knowledge for the children left behind to understand their social conditions. Teachers and social welfare officers were selected as focus group members, and having the children's welfare at the forefront was something they had in common and were necessary for this

inquiry. However, my first choice of participants for this study was only the household caregivers who were left in direct charge of the children of the emigrated parents.

Creswell (2012:164) suggested that if participants shared experiences and worked together, focus groups would be highly beneficial. Hence, the focus groups were based on participant status criteria because it was expected that the conversations would be more fruitful as teachers and social workers would have important similarities as professionals who work with children. This meant that childcare and welfare were not solely a function of the household, but that it was important to include the teachers and social workers as the carers who function in support of the households that have children left behind.

As such, I was socially qualified to guarantee that a few individuals did not dominate the focus group by adopting a process to enable a structured sequence of interviews and encourage high-quality, interactive communication (Howitt, 2019:81). Consequently, the questions that dominated the focus group discussions focused on teachers' perspectives and social welfare officers' views on what constitutes child social security, the problems faced by the children left behind, and the expectations of the children left behind. A single open-ended semi-structured question guided the focus group discussion for this research and was conducted separately for the teachers and social workers.

As a result, focus groups were used to help gather information from a population as greater perspectives had to be gained from the group dynamics to understand the contexts, attitudes, views, causes, or implications of parental emigration for the children left behind in Highfield. Focus groups are not meant to conclude, but to explain, not to generalise, but to assess the context, not to make claims about the population, but to provide insights into how society sees a situation within the groups. Morgan (1990) goes on to argue that focus groups are used to generate collective beliefs information and the interpretations behind those beliefs.

According to Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), at the start of a focus group, the facilitator should acknowledge the presence and involvement of audio taping equipment and handwriting down the notes, ensure privacy and security for participants, and give people the opportunity to withdraw if they are uncomfortable with being recorded. I was recording the discussion on audio and taking handwritten notes. The participants were aware and comfortable that their interactions were being recorded, as recommended by Stewart and Shamdasani (1990). When conducting focus group discussions, Van Zyl (2014) said that a researcher needs to use some abilities to coordinate, regulate, listen, watch, and analyse the group simultaneously.

4.4.5 Qualitative data analysis

The focus of data analysis is to convey unspoken connotations that people confer to their actions and responses associated with a phenomenon (Ravindran, 2019). In qualitative data analysis, a researcher tries to understand the significance behind participants' acts and behaviours becoming the data collection tool and poses critical questions and the quality and breadth of the narrative about an occurrence are underscored, instead of the number of study participants (Ravindran, 2019).

Ultimately, Ravindran (2019) contends that once the meaning and a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives of the participants are highlighted, the researcher is sensitive to what impact he/she has on the understanding of information and analytical concepts are represented as outcomes and not as testable variables. Qualitative data analysis strives to uncover patterns, concepts themes, and interpretations. The data analysis process starts with categorising and arranging data in search of patterns, critical themes, and meanings that arise from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.4.5.1 Thematic analysis

There are several methods for qualitative data analysis, and many of them involve classifying and structuring data into categories and themes. Thematic analysis is a qualitative methodology that can be used widely across several epistemologies and research questions. It is a technique used to recognise, evaluate, organise, explain and report themes contained in a set of information (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data collected from the fieldwork study was analysed using a thematic analysis approach. To connect the reoccurring issues and relationships, categories and themes were identified and used.

4.4.5.2 Data analysis process

The transcription of audiotape recordings

To start the analysis process, I had to sit and replay the tapes as well as review my handwritten notes in order to make sense of the data gathered during the interviews and focus group discussions. In most cases, I completed this as soon as I returned home from the interviews/focus group discussions. This procedure was both time-consuming and exhausting as I had to listen to the same audio twice or thrice, as well as rewind it more than once. During the listening session, I would type out the contents in verbatim text form, exactly as the person expressed it. I had to settle on the vernacular Shona with some participants to

communicate their perspectives, which were both a choice and an alternative for the participants who are not fluent or proficient in English.

I had to decode the interviews while also translating some and typing them in English. This meant that I had twenty-three interviews with twenty-seven (27) caregiver participants, with four joint interviews, as well as two separate focus groups (13 participants) with two audio recordings totaling about one and a half hours of discussion per group for this study (3 hours in total). The written text manuals generated a large number of pages, after which the material was classified into distinct and identifiable themes manually.

Data coding and the development of themes

A theme could be primarily created inductively from the data collected, or deductively developed from theory and previous research (Boyatzis, 1998). Inductive analysis is a method of coding the information without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame or methodological predeterminations from the researcher. This method of thematic analysis is data-driven in that sense (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To find themes or patterns, I had to read and re-read the verbatim texts (transcripts) during the data coding and theme-building process. Thematic data analysis is the process of identifying themes and patterns in data, which are subsequently reported as researcher-generated themes (Lochmiller, 2019:2030). As a result, Braun and Clarke (2006:81) argue that thematic analysis can be aligned or positioned so that it "reports experiences, meanings, and reality of participants." My study was question-driven and it relied on specified lines of inquiry to shape my interpretation of the data. In the study, responses to interviews and focus group discussions were aggregated into patterns that infer meanings about experiences, viewpoints, or belief systems via the lens of the family systems theory, hierarchy of needs theory of motivation, and the ecological systems theoretical frameworks.

The analysis of the similarities and differences of the codes facilitated the comparison of themes across data sources and data collection methodologies used, namely, the interview and focus group discussions. The technique of comparing themes in this study was done utilising verbatim quotes and documenting them from the participant responses. According to Lochmiller (2019:2031), themes are written down in transcripts to guarantee that the participants' accounts and opinions are preserved and communicated without distortion.

The data interpretation and analysis

The foundation for data analysis and interpretation is the classification of data into codes and themes (Dey, 2005:41). As a result, according to Dey (2005:41), the researcher's responsibility is to construct and/or establish "a meaningful and adequate account" of data representations. I presented the data interpretations and provided explanations to support the codes and themes that emerged from the analysis for this study. The lenses of the Bowen family systems theory, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory of motivation were combined to deduce meanings of the effects of parental emigration on the social security of the children left behind in Highfield. The information from the transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions, as well as my analysis, were used to assist generate the themes in this study. As a result, the final step in the thematic analysis is to create broad overarching statements that summarise what is occurring in the original data (Lochmiller, 2019:2032).

4.5 Ethical considerations and access

Appropriate and fair measures were taken to conform to specific ethical guidelines to protect the privacy, confidentiality, integrity, freedoms, and anonymity of the participants. This section explains how ethical issues have been addressed during the data collection stage of the research. Therefore, strict adherence to all the ethical guidelines acts as criteria for the integrity and confidentiality of the data collected and the subsequent data analysis.

I had to obtain clearance from numerous government departments to acquire access to the research area before I could begin collecting data. Consent was received from the Director in the Department of Education Provincial Education Director's office in Mount Pleasant. The Director's office then directed me to the Highfield and Glen Norah District office overseen by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Schools near the Machipisa shopping center. Consent was received from the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare Officer, the Director of Human Resources at Makombe Buildings, who issued me with a request letter on September 25, 2019, to get access to the social workers and the outcome was given on the 29th of September. However, I had to wait for authorisation to be granted after receiving a letter from the Provincial Social Welfare Officer written to the Director Human Resources at the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare at Compensation House. This finally happened on October 2nd, 2019. As a result of these letters, the data collection process could begin. These letters were quite beneficial since they were very informative, enabling me to be welcomed and acknowledged by the participants with whom I had to engage whilst collecting the data through face-to-face interviews and focus groups.

Prior to going on the research and data collection journey, I had imagined that it would be a rather simple process because I had concluded that familiarity with the subject may be especially advantageous when obtaining access. However, I discovered that going back and forth and up and down was critical to obtain the necessary approvals and consent so that the study could proceed without problems. I found myself going through a slew of formalities, including agreeing to send a copy of my "final research document" to the Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare, as well as the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education offices. Another prerequisite for me to do the fieldwork study was that I adhere to the study's objectives by paying attention to the material and data that was relevant to my research.

4.5.1 Consent

This study presented the participants with minimal risk related to their conduct, contact and/or emotional well-being. Efforts were made to ensure the participants understood the implications of the research and the fact that participation was voluntary. A participant consent form was completed, and a statement was made that discretion of their information privacy would be continually assured, protected, and evidence of participant identification would not be made available before and after the study. Participants were free to withdraw at any time during the study if they did not want to continue. Informed consent refers to the researcher providing all of the study's information to research participants, specifically for the participant, so that they can decide whether or not to participate (Wiles, 2012:6).

The researcher informed the participant caregivers, teachers, social welfare officials about the intent, nature of the study, methods of data collection, and scope of the research prior to start. In addition, I explained each participant's typical role; this was especially important because the method was traditional face-to-face interviews. In order to ensure that I had the participants' informed consent, I obtained it in writing as reflected in the Appendices attached.

4.5.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality, according to Wiles (2012:7), refers to the non-disclosure of personally identifiable information about participants received throughout the research process of data collection. Participants were informed that their names would not be used for any other reason other than the research and that no information that revealed their identities in any manner would be disclosed. As a result, in this qualitative study, safeguarding participants' anonymity was critical, particularly in terms of interview preparation, research conduct, and research analysis. Also, the participants in the study were not required to enter their names on consent forms, and in circumstances where they were uneasy with written consent, verbal agreements

were made available. The use of aliases was also necessary to ensure the participants' privacy and confidentiality.

4.6 Reliability and trustworthiness in qualitative research

Lincon and Guba (1985) expanded the idea of trustworthiness by incorporating the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to complement the traditional quantitative evaluation criteria of validity and reliability. As such, dependability refers to the consistency of findings throughout time (Lincoln & Guba,1985). Therefore, dependability entails participants' evaluations of the study's findings, interpretations, and recommendations, all of which must be backed by the data collected from study participants. According to Tobin and Begley (2004), researchers must guarantee that the study process is rational, traceable, and well recorded in order to achieve dependability. In this study, dependability was established by ensuring that the research process was coherent and verifiable, which meant that during my fieldwork visits and data gathering appointments, I noted the dates, times, venue, and purpose of the meeting on my notebook, thereby documenting all activities.

The degree to which qualitative research findings may be translated to other contexts or settings with different respondents is known as transferability (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules (2017:3). A potential user's ability to assess transferability is strengthened by the researcher's detailed description. Transferability was achieved by showing the audience and readers that the research findings could be applied to other contexts, circumstances, timeframes, and demographics. As a result of this study's phenomenon being a global contentious issue, it can be applied in a variety of situations. "It is, in summary, not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability, it is her responsibility to provide the database that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers," Lincoln and Guba (1985:316) remarked.

Confirmability is the extent to which the research study's conclusions could be confirmed by other researchers. Confirmability is concerned with demonstrating that the data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the reseacher's imaginations, but rather are clearly drawn from the data, requiring the researcher to show how conclusions were reached (Nowell et al., 2017:3). Confirmability is established, according to Lincoln and Guba (1989), when credibility, transferability, and dependability are all met. The researcher must incorporate markers such as the rationale for the theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices throughout the entire study framework to comprehend how and why decisions are taken in the study. Participants in this study included caregivers, teachers, and social workers, all of whom

best represented and had expertise of the research topic and phenomenon under investigation. Conformability means information that accurately represent the data provided by participants and are not interpreted by the researcher. As a result, it relates to the objectivity of the data, as well as the potential for consensus between two or more separate people on its accuracy, relevance, and possibly meaning.

Credibility refers to the level of trust that may be placed in the accuracy of a study's conclusions. The research findings credibility is determined by whether they represent believable information derived from the participants' original data and whether they are a correct interpretation of the participants' original opinions. According to Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010:39), credibility is determined by how closely the participant's perceptions of the phenomena under investigation match those of the researcher. To put it another way, it explores if the researcher accurately recorded the ideas, feelings, and actions of the participants, as well as the processes that impact them.

The credibility criterion had to be established and fulfilled to assert the study's reliability. As a result, the study's credibility was based upon the fact that there was a clear link between the study's findings and the day-to-day realities of the Highfield research participants. The study's findings were consistent, detailed, and rich in "verbatim quotes" that were well developed into themes, due to the fact that the data was obtained through face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Multiple theoretical viewpoints were also helpful in providing a comprehensive and in-depth description of the phenomenon under investigation, as informed by the research objectives. Also, the participants for this study were identified and accurately described, contributing to the study's credibility.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented the research paradigm, research methodologies, strategies, and design used in the study, including procedures, participants, data collection tools, data analysis methods, and ethical considerations. A descriptive and interpretative research design was used in this study, which included face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. The qualitative thematic analysis method was used to analyse the data collected during the fieldwork. The data gathered during the fieldwork was analysed and interpreted into themes that will be presented in the findings and data analysis chapter which follows.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION, AND ANALYSIS

5. Introduction

This chapter's main objective is to present research findings and analyse the caregivers', teachers, and social workers' views on the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind in Highfield. The study's findings are based on qualitative data collected through semi-structured face-to-face interviews with key informants who are individual caregivers, as well as on two different focus group discussions, one with teachers and the other with social workers. The total sample size for this study was forty (40) participants with twenty-seven participants in twenty-three face-to-face interviews with caregivers and two (2) focus groups consisting of seven teachers and six social workers. This section begins with an overview of the challenges that caregivers face in terms of providing and gaining access to various social services while caring for the children left in their care.

I knew from the start of this research project that to grasp the social security challenges facing the children left behind, I needed to first understand the importance of these issues and their influence on the children's well-being. When it comes to providing care for children, particularly those who have been left behind due to parental emigration, it is important to remember that care does not have to be limited only to the household. For that reason, teachers and social workers were included in this study to provide a complete picture of social security and its influence on the children left behind. Accordingly, I felt that it was important to bring in the other caregivers who were working outside of the immediate home. Aside from the obstacles experienced by household caregivers, I wanted to investigate the issues faced by school officials, given that they also invest so much time with children in the classes at school.

As such, teachers played an important part in this study as both direct representatives of the schools and custodians responsible for the educational well-being of the children. The role of social workers in this study was to draw attention to the day-to-day social concerns that impact left-behind children, which can often spill over into the larger society and affect everyone. This chapter presents the findings from participant interviews and focus group discussions about the questions from these data collection processes. The research questions are presented below to provide context for the research.

- What are the causes of parental emigration and its impact on the children left behind?
- What are the social security issues that affect children left behind?
- What are the adapting techniques embraced by children left behind in Highfield?

- Do the economic benefits of parental emigration outweigh the social security risks faced by the children left behind?
- Are there any government poverty reduction strategies and social security protection policies that contribute to lessening the social security impacts on the children left behind?

5.1 The Fieldwork journey

This section offers insight into my fieldwork activities during the process of collecting research data. Participants in the study agreed that the issue of children left behind owing to parental emigration is a sensitive one that has had a significant impact on the children particularly, relatives and community members who were affected in some sort expressed tremendous concern over the children's prolonged separation from their parents.

Making written field notes when conducting qualitative research is vital for keeping data, because the human mind forgets things easily, according to Groenewald (2004:14). Based on Groenewald's (2004:115) assessment, I became a firm believer in the use of observational field notes, sometimes known as "*what happened notes*," since they are considered useful enough by any researcher. As a result, before, during, and after the data collection stages, I made field notes to assist me in making sense of the information and non-verbal situations and interactions during both face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions.

Writing field notes proved to be a beneficial undertaking. As such, I would ask the participants to give me some extra time in their homes or office after the interview to sketch down the most important feedback from the discussion. The data analysis and report writing occurred much later in this case after a significant amount of time had gone between the interviews and focus group discussions. Therefore, the written field notes jogged my memory of the actual interviews and their circumstances, allowing me to include some key information that I would have otherwise missed or overlooked. Essentially, the field notes served a dual purpose: they assisted in understanding the interview scripts and they served as further supporting evidence for the information gathered.

5.2 Empirical research findings

In this section, I present the study's empirical findings based on data gathered from the field and speaking with participants. As a consequence, Elliot, Fischer, and Rennie (1999:221) suggest that researchers contextualise their sample, or describe the research participants and

their life circumstances, so that the reader may determine the range of people and situations to which the findings may apply. Accordingly, each participant's profile is featured as a way of representing the people who participated in this study by sharing and expressing their perspectives as caregivers of the children left behind.

The findings of the research study are presented using the structure below.

- Participant's profiles and their responses
- Themes that arose from the data collected and analysed, guided by the use of thematic analysis. Each theme is examined individually, and participants' accounts that validate the findings are quoted. The findings of the study are supported by the literature. As a result, Merriam and Tisdell (2016:202) posit that findings can be structured as descriptive narratives, themes, or categories that cut through the information, or models and theories that interpret the factual data.

5.2.1 Profile of the caregivers and the children left in their care

Aunts, uncles, grandparents, and older siblings above the age of eighteen years were among those that took part in this research. The children left behind in these households were generally between the ages of five and fifteen and were in both primary and secondary school. The children left behind, on the other hand, did not participate in the interviews or were not among the participants. The participants were identified through the schools' social records using a purposive sampling technique. Despite Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter's (2006: 49) suggestion that qualitative researchers should not insist on representative samples but instead aim to ensure that the research results are useful in understanding other situations or groups much as the one explored, I brought into question whether the minimum sample size would yield adequate information for this research. As a result, participants were chosen specifically to add to the study's understanding of the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind. Children were left behind in the homes of the participants identified in the table hereunder.

Table 5.1 The Caregiver's profiles

The names provided in the caregiver profiles are not the real names of the participants to safeguard their identity. To ensure privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity, pseudonyms were used*

Participant 1: Gogo Madhuve is a 69-year-old grandmother who has four children

with her husband "sekuru Dube," three of whom are still living in Zimbabwe and one in South Africa. Her daughter, who lives in South Africa, is the mother of her nine-year-old granddaughter. For the past six years, the girl's mother has lived and worked in South Africa. Gogo Madhuve and sekuru have four grandkids that live with them (the parents of the three children have died). Gogo Madhuve is a seventy-four-year-old retired municipal council worker, and sekuru is a seventy-four-year-old retired carpenter. Gogo Madhuve's daughter, who lives in South Africa, is the family's main breadwinner and provides the family's essential groceries when she can.

Participant(s) 2: Grandmother, fifty years old and unemployed, and grandfather, fifty-four years old and works in a factory in Southerton. The paternal grandparents are caring for their ten year old grandson (nicknamed Ghiribheti), whose parents are both in South Africa. The grandparents look after their grown son (he is an uncle to the ten year old).

Participant 3: Aunt Tee, 35, works as an early childhood teacher and lives with her elderly parents, who are both in their sixties. Aunt Tee is a single parent to two boys, ages five and nine, as well as a six-year-old kid who was left in her care by her brother (almost the same age as her other son). Aunt Tee receives money from her brother, who works as a technician in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as her teaching pay. The child entrusted in her care (brother's son) spends the majority of his time with his grandparents, who are unable to provide the boy with the care and attention he requires.

Participant 4: Mr and Mrs Washamu have two children, a daughter who is eleven years old and a boy who is seven years old. Mr Washamu is a cross-border truck driver (long-distance trucks) who travels between South Africa, Zambia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo on a regular basis. Mrs Washamu is responsible for her two children as well as the children placed in her care by her sister and brother. Her sister's children include ten and twelve-year-old girls, as well as an eight-year-old boy who is her brother's son (the brother is a teacher based in Namibia). Mrs Washamu's sister has spent the last three years living and working in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. They rent a two-bedroom

cottage/backhouse with a sitting room and a kitchen. Mrs Washamu is a 38-year-old teacher and caregiver who lives in the old Highfield neighbourhood and works at one of the government-run local primary schools.

Participant(s) 5: Uncle Simon (39) and his wife (37) both work as teachers and care for their eleven-year-old nephew (Tafara), who is in sixth grade. Both of his parents have lived and worked in the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, respectively for the past seven years. Simon is Tafara's uncle. Uncle Simon and his wife their own three children and live in a six-room rented home in New Canaan.

Participant 6: Gogo Mamoyo is the maternal grandmother aged fifty-five years old to a twelve-year-old girl (who I decided to name Popo). Gogo Mamoyo is a widow whose spouse died in 2011, and she is a civil servant with a twenty-year career in the public sector. She has four children, three of whom live outside the country (South Africa, United Kingdom and Namibia). Her youngest child is a law student at the University of Zimbabwe, and she lives with them in a six-roomed house in Western Triangle. Popo (who is the child left behind) under Gogo Mamoyo's care is twelve years old and attends a local government school in grade seven. Since the death of Gogo Mamoyo's husband in 2011, Popo's parents have lived and worked in South Africa, with the father working as a teacher and the mother as a waitress.

Participant 7: Gogo Sanyambo is a sixty-two-year-old paternal grandmother (father's mother) to three grandkids (Tatenda, Taona: girls, and Tichafara: boy) who are fifteen, eleven, and seven years old. Gogo and her three grandkids reside in an eight-room house in Engineering that was purchased by her son and wife, who emigrated to Canada (son) and South Africa (daughter in-law) and have lived and worked there for four years. Gogo Sanyambo employs a housekeeper who is mostly responsible for domestic responsibilities. Gogo has five other adult children, some of whom have gone to other countries with their children, and others who remain in Zimbabwe and live with their children in various parts of the country.

Participant 8: Mai Tadisiswa is a 38-year-old stepmother and caregiver to twin

daughters, ages ten and in grade five. In addition, she has two boys, aged seven and five, who are her biological children with her husband. Her husband is an electrician who has spent the last three and a half years away from home, working for a major electrical power company in South Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mai Tadisiswa is self-employed and lives in the Paradise neighbourhood of Highfield.

Participant 9: Gogo va Asumpta is an unemployed woman in her fifties. She resides in Lusaka with her three granddaughters, ages twelve, ten, and seven, as well as an eight-year-old grandson (her daughter's children). The children's mother is married to her husband of fifteen years, and she lives and works in South Africa and he works in Tanzania. The children's parents had been gone for three years. Gogo lives in her house with her grandchildren and leases out two rooms to supplement her income (pension) and the remittances sent by her daughter and son-in-law.

Participant 10: Both great-grandparents are retired business people, aged 75 and 80 years old, respectively. They reside with their two great-grandsons, ages 14 and 11. The children's parents moved to the United Kingdom in 2017. In Old Highfield, the children and their great-grandparents reside in a huge house with a large play space outside.

Participant 11: Gogo va Pardon is a 62-year-old paternal grandmother (widow) with two grandkids, aged 15 and 13 (boy and girl), who are entrusted in her care. Her son and daughter-in-law migrated to the United Kingdom in 2011. She sells fruits and vegetables, as well as a variety of other agricultural items, grown from her Norton allotment when they are in season. She also sells clothes and other items that her children who live outside of the country send her.

Participant 12: (Grandma 58 as I shall call her)
Grandmother is a 58-year-old woman who is the mother of the 5 children left in her care by their emigrated parents. The children that have been left behind are 16, 14, 13, 12, and 8 years old. The three are siblings, and the other two are also siblings. The parents of the children are both single mothers who have worked as

care workers in the United Kingdom for 9 and 12 years, respectively. The 8-year-old child was born in a foreign country and brought home to her grandmother when she was only 2 years old.

Participant 13: Gogo Chisi, who is in her sixties, has two grandchildren who are the children of her daughter (based in the United Kingdom). Gogo Chisi's daughter emigrated to the United Kingdom five years ago (2016), following nearly four years of living and working in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (2012-2016). The children are now 14 and 13 years old, and the last time they saw their mother was shortly before she went to the United Kingdom in 2016.

Participant 14: Grandparents of a grade 7 (12 year old) child whose parents live in Cape Town, South Africa, and have lived there since he was a toddler (1 year and some months). Deon's parents work in the hotel and tourism industry and rarely visit over the holidays because it is the busiest time of year for them. For the past ten years, they have been working in South Africa. The grandparents live in Old Highfield and have two other orphaned grandchildren to look after, but they are helped by Deon's parents with food, education, and other necessities.

Participant 15: Aunt va Nicky, 33, is sisters with Nicky's mother and looks after her sister's child, who is now in grade 6 (11 years old), and they have been staying with her since she started kindergarten. Nicky's mother has spent ten years as a teacher in Botswana.

Participant 16: Mellisa's aunt, who is a sister to Mellisa's father, is married and has a 7-month-old infant. She lives in Jerusalem (Highfield) with her niece Mellisa (grade 6) and her husband. Mellisa's aunt and her husband, (who works for a local non-governmental organisation), occupy a rented six-roomed house with her (in-laws). Mellisa's parents have lived and worked in Germany for the past three years.

Participant 17: Faith's aunt, Tete va Fay, is a 22-year-old caregiver, and her niece Fay is 9 years old and attends one of the primary schools near the Machipisa shopping centre. Tete va Fay is the principal caregiver for her elderly parents and niece, who live in the family home in Highfield's Stones area (also known as

"Kuma Stones"). Faith's parents emigrated to Canada when she was five years old, before she had even begun first grade, and she is now in the fourth grade.

Participant 18: Anashe's paternal grandmother, aged 48 lives in the new Canaan area of Highfield, and she is a police reservist (13 years). She is happy to serve and protect the community, and is married to a police officer. They live in a government subsidised civil servant house in Highfield. Anashe's parents are young teachers who moved to China three years ago when Anashe was just four years old. She is now in second grade.

Participant 19: Grandmother Parira is a paternal grandmother to her son's two boys, ages 7 and 11, who live with her. Gogo Parira is a 66-year-old grandmother with five grandchildren, two of which are males who were left in her care. The parents of the two boys work as teachers in Swaziland, having relocated from South Africa (where they had resided for three years) to Eswatini two years ago (2017). Gogo Parira is a retired nurse aid who used to work at one of Harare's most prestigious private hospitals, and her grandkids are Tapiwa (11) and Tapona (7). They live in Highfield's Western Triangle neighbourhood, near the Gaza Land shopping centre. The Parira family lives in an eight-room house, four (rooms) of which are occupied by tenants who pay rent and contribute to the family's financial well-being.

Participant 20: Mumu's grandmother is a vibrant 60-year-old woman who has never been formally employed a day in her life, yet makes a career doing cross-border business in countries such as South Africa, China, Dubai, and Turkey. Mumu is a 10-year-old grade 5 student at one of Highfield's local government primary schools. Mumu's grandmother lives in a lovely house in Highfield's 5 pounds area with some of her grandchildren, but their parents are still in Zimbabwe. However, Mumu's parents have lived and worked as English teachers in the Philippines for the past six years. During their six years away from the country, the parents have only been able to visit once.

Participant 21: Sekuru va Sean, who is 57 years old, is the primary caregiver for his three grandchildren, ages nine, twelve, and fifteen. Sekuru's wife died a few years ago, and he has never found someone that suits him. His adult children live

in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (are the parents to the children left behind). He has a house helper who comes every day for six days to assist him with chores and the kids. His adult children, who work as technologists in Qatar and the UAE, emigrated less than two years ago. Sekuru va Sean lives in Highfield's Egypt neighbourhood, dividing his time between his rural home in Mrehwa (where he raises chickens) and the city.

Participant 22: Grandmother H is a retired correctional services officer who now spends the majority of her time caring for her grandkids, Louise (10) and Lina (13), whom she has been entrusted with. The parents of Louise and Lina are siblings who have lived and worked in South Africa for the past 12 years. Grandma H is a 59-year-old woman who has lived in Highfield's Engineering neighbourhood her entire existence.

Participant 23: The 49-year-old father of three sons works as a self-employed carpenter in his yard. Tee (girl), a grade 7 student, is 12 years old and has two brothers aged 22 and 16. Tee's mother is a domestic worker who has spent the last seven years in Turkey (Eastern Europe).

The twenty-seven participants in the face-to-face interviews and their narratives, as well as their circumstances, point toward some of the larger characteristics of my research participants and individuals that I interviewed. The different participants encountered similar issues, but the thread of commonality was that they had children left in their care and their households. Consequently, it is important to note that the accounts presented here are not exhaustive of the attributes of Highfield households with children left behind, but they do afford a glance into the many types of households and caregivers.

The demographic data is crucial for determining the socio-economic status of the participants. For the reason that it was critical for me to understand how emigrant parents addressed their children's social security demands and needs back home, the nature of work conducted by emigrant parents was briefly explored from the viewpoints of the caregivers. The emigrant parents were largely educated people who had no choice but to leave the country in search of greener pastures because they could not find work in Zimbabwe. Some of the emigrant parents work as technicians, technologists, domestic workers, teachers, tourism sector

personnel, careworkers, and electricians were among the emigrants' parents' jobs in the host nations.

5.2.2 Demographic information of the face-to-face interview participants

All of the interviews took place in the participants' homes. Twenty-seven caregivers participated in this study, with four couples participating as joint interview participants (husband and wife). There were sixteen interviews with grandparents, four interviews with aunts, one (1) interview with an uncle and his wife, one (1) interview with a stepmother, and one (1) interview with a parent left behind as the primary caregiver of children (father). The participants in this study ranged in age from 22 to 80 years old, with 21 females and 6 males among them.

In traditional African culture, it is widely assumed that women are the primary caregivers for children. While this may be true, during fieldwork, however, several caregivers were male, including participant number one (grandfather, 54), participant number five (uncle, 39), participant number ten (great-grandfather, 80), participant number fourteen (grandfather, 70), participant number twenty-one (grandfather, 57), as well as participant number twenty-three a father of three, aged 49 years old.

The majority of the participants spoke and read "English" fluently, even though "Shona" was their first language. At the time of the interviews, all of the participants were Zimbabwean residents of different genders, ethnicity, culture, and religious background, who lived in Highfield. According to this study, South Africa has the most emigrant parents, with nine, followed by the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates, both with four, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Canada, and Turkey, all with two. Lastly, countries with one emigrant parent include Botswana, China, Germany, Namibia, Tanzania, Swaziland, Qatar, and the Philippines.

5.2.3 The interview visits

In true traditional Zimbabwean hospitality, if someone arrives at your house, you invite them inside as a sign of warmth and welcome, even if you are meeting the person for the first time. Because of that, whenever I went to the participants' homes for the scheduled interview appointments, they greeted me as if there was a sense of familiarity. After ringing their doorbells and knocking on their gates, and entering the yard, the participants would invite me inside and make me feel comfortable. Most or all of the time, the participants would inquire if I required tea, coffee, juice, or just water upon arrival, whilst others quickly told me that they had nothing to serve me as a visitor due to challenging times. Besides, it is traditional to offer

a visitor something to drink or eat as a show of courtesy. On the other hand, as I was leaving after the interviews, I would give the caregivers some snacks or fruits for the children as a token of my appreciation for their time.

Prior to starting the face-to-face interviews, I was overwhelmed with gratitude for the participants' time and willingness to share their experiences. As a result, I needed to acknowledge that the participants had to put themselves in vulnerable positions when sharing their experiences, emotions, and challenges for me to understand and appreciate their experiences and circumstances (Dickson-Swift, Klippen & Liamputtong, 2007: 331). With this realisation, I learned that it is important to make sure that the narratives told to me were accurately recorded so that the participants' accounts did not get lost in translation. In particular, the meaning participants needed to ascribe to their specific, subjective conditions or stories be uncovered and expressed accurately.

5.2.4 A tabulated representation of the demographic information of face-to-face interview research participants

Table 5. 2: Demographic information

Participant Number	Gender and age of caregiver		Relationship with the child left behind	Age and gender of child(ren) left behind	Country parent(s) emigrated to and duration
P#1	Female, 69		Grandmother	Girl, 9 years	South Africa: 6 years
P#2	Female, 50 & Male, 54		Grandparents	Boy, 10 years	South Africa: 2 years
P#3	Female, 35		Aunt	Boy, 6 years	Democratic Republic of Congo: 4 years
P#4	Female,38		Aunt	Girls, 10 &12 Boy, 8	Namibia/United Arab Emirates: 3 years
P#5	Male, 39 & Female, 37		Uncle and Aunt	Boy, 11	United Arab Emirates/Turkey: 7 years

P#6	Female, 55		Grandmother	Girl, 12	South Africa: 8 years
P#7	Female, 62		Grandmother	Girls, 15 &11 Boy, 7	Canada/South Africa: 3 years
P#8	Female, 38		Stepmother	Twin girls, 10	Democratic Republic of Congo/ South Africa: 3 years
P#9	Female, 54		Grandmother	Girls, 12, 10 and 7 Boy, 8	Tanzania/South Africa: 3 years
P#10	Female , 75 & Male, 80		Great-grandparents	Boys, 14 and 11	United Kingdom: 2 years
P#11	Female, 62		Paternal Grandmother	Boy, 15 and Girl, 13	United Kingdom: 8 years
P#12	Female, 58		Maternal Grandmother	16, 14, 13, 12 and 8	United Kingdom: 9 and 12 years
P#13	Female, 60s		Maternal Grandmother	14 and 13	United Arab Emirates: 4 years and United Kingdom: 5 years
P#14	Female, 65 & Male, 70		Grandparents	Boy, 12 years	South Africa: 10 years
P#15	Female, 33		Aunt (mother's sister)	Girl, 11 years	Botswana:10 years
P#16	Female, 30		Aunt (father's sister)	Girl, 9 years	Germany:3 years
P#17	Female, 22		Aunt (father's sister)	Girl, 9 years	Canada: 4 years

P#18	Female, 48		Paternal Grandmother	Girl, 7 years	China: 3 years
P#19	Female, 66		Paternal Grandmother	Boys, 11 and 7 years	South Africa: 3 years and Swaziland:2 years
P#20	Female, 60		Maternal Grandmother	Girl, 10 years	Philippines: 3 years
P#21	Male, 57		Paternal Grandfather	15, 12 and 9 years	Qatar and United Arab Emirates: 2 years
P#22	Female, 59		Maternal Grandmother	Girls, 10 and 13 years	South Africa: 12 years
P#23	Male, 49		Father	Boys 22 and 16; Girl 12 years	Turkey: 7 years

5.3. What are the causes of parental emigration and how has it affected the social security of the children left behind?

It was also vital to investigate how the parents' absence due to emigration affected the social security of the children by establishing the various reasons for their decision to emigrate. One of the interview participants went on to describe and assert the following regarding the causes of parental emigration and how it has impacted the social security of children left behind in Highfield below.

Participant # 1:

"We all know that the standards of living have dropped. Most people do not work and they cannot find jobs. Life is no longer like it used to be in the past, and now one of the available choices is to look for greener pastures in other countries if you are able-bodied and young, or willing to work hard. I strongly feel that people feel the need to start afresh in a place that gives you and your future hope. People in general, I think, when they feel like they have a better chance elsewhere, they go there."

In line to the feeling conveyed by interview participant #1, participant #2 goes on to say the following about the pursuit for greener pastures:

"*The economic downward spiral has made people economic migrants in neighbouring countries. For example, our son and his wife have run away from the harsh economic conditions in Zimbabwe. Economic migrants will go in search of a better life. They emigrated because they wanted to be able to secure their financial future. In this country, they could have never made it as honest people, hence they left, and they just took a chance.*"

This interview participant agreed with the previous participant and stated:

"*The economic hardships of this country have left every sane person complaining about the cost of living being too high. It is not easy to not know what to give your children. Parents are then forced to make a decision. In the case of economic hardships, one is bound to move to more functioning economies. The harsh economic climate has made parents choose between staying with their families without a means to survive, and emigrating to an unknown country for financial and economic reasons.*"

According to another interview participant:

"*As much as I am unsure of which one has the biggest measured push impact factor, I think that the economy takes number one. You see, when I talk about the economy and the economic situation, it is the level of joblessness or unemployment that has existed since the late 2000s. The economic situation that has prevailed has not been encouraging for many, and my sister is amongst the many that have left because of the economic situation, leaving behind her son for 7 years*"

The parents decided to emigrate for a variety of reasons, including socio-political anxiety and insecurity. As mentioned by one of the interview participants:

Participant # 3: "*One has to understand that there are no political freedoms in this country. The socio-political space is played by a certain few. These are very powerful people who will do anything to protect their political standing power and maintain it. Such an insecure political space is not liveable. You can always get yourself into trouble, my sister, if you can't keep quiet.*"

Participant # 10: The great grandparents (the wife's response) "*We would like to think that there are many reasons that made our grandchildren emigrate. Even if we lived through*

Ian Smith's colonial era, the good times in Zimbabwe's early years of independence and the Robert Mugabe's difficult administration, and now under Munangagwa's rule (the current president from 2018 to date), things have worsened. Everything leaves a bitter taste in your mouth mwana we mwanangu (my grandchild)…. In fact, our grandchildren have been left with no choice than to go somewhere. As long as it is not in Zimbabwe…! But, as for us, "isu tiri hari dzofanzirofa saka hapana kwatichaenda, tangomirira kuenda kwamupfiga nebwe chete": (this means that as they are very old, they are mortals, and so they cannot leave their country to go anywhere else because they are on an irreversible journey towards death). In the case of our grandchildren, the socio-economic situation together with the bad political and volatile environment was the last straw. These were enough to make them pack their bags.

On the socio-political causes that have driven parental emigration, the great grandfather concurred with his wife, and said:

Participant #10 (the husband): "*The socio-political issues such as the absence of political free will, the supported political violence and intimidation during and around election times, elections rigging and manipulation, human rights abuses and violations, corruption, state collapse, fearful citizens as well as the freedom from punishment or harm for the law breakers who support the regime. These issues have led to long term economic stagnation, unemployment, food insecurity, HIV/AIDS, and the arresting, torture and sometimes killing of those who are opposed to the current regime. When you look at all these things that I have mentioned, any one of them could cause a person to leave their country without a doubt that they are making a decision that is in their best interest.*"

Participant # 6: "*It is as clear as daylight and you our child know that our political situation in the country "nyaya dzezvematongerwo enyika", as they call it in "Shona" is like a storm that you have no idea when it will end. Based on this, I think that the political uncertainty was the main reason for my child to leave the country and emigrate to another. Because of the political uncertainty, my child was certain that they needed to emigrate. My understanding is that the state of the political environment in our country was a major push factor, yes!*"

5.3.1 Theme 1: Parental emigration and children's social security

The face-to-face interview participants all attributed numerous causes for parental emigration and identified diverse social security implications on the children left behind, caregivers, and the general community. Different interpretations place a greater emphasis on a broader range of economic and social factors as reasons for emigration (De Haas, 2010). As a result,

seeking greener pastures, relocation, social-political crises (political refugees), and socio-economic challenges (the bad economy) were all suggested as reasons for parents emigrating. There are clear links between the overarching theme of parental emigration and the sub-themes that highlight and substantiate it, such as reasons for emigrating, duration of absence, and nation emigrated to by the parents.

According to the above table, emigrant parents have lived overseas for an average of five years or more with the longest in South Africa and the United Kingdom. The parents have been away for 12 years and the shortest having been away for 2 years. The cost of living and the situation of the economy collapsing were cited by five participants as reasons why some emigrant parents have become economic migrants. According to Mattes and Richmond (2000:2930), the most distinguished politically motivated migration is the fleeing of oppression and persecution, as well as political turmoil and instability. Thus, four participants noted political reasons such as a lack of political freedoms, a threat to life, political violence, human rights violations, and fear of detention, torture, and being killed. This demonstrates that, while there are various reasons for parents emigrating to other countries, political issues are the most frequently reported, and while they are varied, they still point to political concerns as the most important element. Economic factors, which have been equally strong and cited as much as political factors, have been responsible for driving emigration too.

5.4 What is the social security issues affecting the children left behind?

To better understand the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind, I asked the participants in this study about the numerous social security challenges that the children confront and these were their responses:

Participant # 1: *"Our granddaughter is only 9 years old. We have had to deal with many issues that concern her safety and social security. There is only so much we can do as grandparents. Firstly, she loves material things; she is naughty to the extent that she doesn't listen to anyone. I sometimes think that since she loves material things, she has been taken advantage of by men and other young boys. However, I do not have a way to support my suspicions of her being a potential sexual abuse victim.*

We have been told that outside of the home, she is rebellious, and at school she struggles to concentrate. She does not do her schoolwork in class and that which she brings as homework. The other children report that she is boastful and bullies others children."

Participant # 2: *"My grandson's school work suffers because I am unable to help him with his schoolwork or homework projects. Also, we do not have a house helper; hence, my grandson is often swamped with chores to the extent that he cannot even go and play outside with his friends. My grandson's school performance has dropped and this has affected his educational achievements."*

Participant # 11: *"One thing we need to realise is that most parents who have emigrated have mostly replaced the love and care they cannot directly give to their children with material things. Children left behind have the latest gadgets on the market, with a monetary value that is sometimes equal to six months' rent and food for the whole family. With the current economic situation, appearing to be having the things other people only dream of makes the children corrupted with the need to feel important or to be seen. This has damaged the children very much; because they have this thing of just wanting things, all the time. Some caregivers, especially me, are not sure if only love is still enough for these children."*

Participant # 12: *"As I have five grandkids staying with me, and as a paternal grandparent and caregiver, their mothers' side of the family only want to have the kids if they can bring food and nice goodies sent for them from the UK. My grandkids are very clever and they can see that the other side of family only want the benefits but not to have the normal relatives' relationship. You see, such a situation conflicts the child, and these are only children for crying out loud. When my grandkids go and visit other family, because I want them to feel a sense of family and be connected to their relatives, they come back changed in terms of their behaviour, and some don't want to go and visit again.*

Participant # 17: *"It is not easy to know what the children get up-to, usually, even if they are your own children, you will be the last one to know and find out. Most of the issues we just guess, and we always assume and believe that they act the way they do because they want to seek attention. When the children get in trouble at school or in the neighbourhood, we usually do not want to tell the parents immediately, we try to fix it, so that we don't bother the hard working parent abroad, but the children also feel like they have two sets of parents. They usually don't want to be asked the same issues more than once; hence the discipline component becomes hard. Children end up feeling like they are being overdisciplined. Children will end up feeling like no one can trust them or has their interests at heart."*

5.4.1 Theme 2: Vulnerability and social security

As participants in face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions revealed, parental emigration has had negative consequences for the children left behind, and the reasons for this are manifold. Cebatori and Raturi (2021:3) explain that leaving children behind, in the care of family and friends, is a difficult decision that can have a variety of consequences for the children's emotional growth and capacity. According to Cebatori and Raturi (2021:6), the children's vulnerabilities in this situation are due to a shift in caregiving arrangements, where the absence of the biological parent is associated with a decline in caregiving.

According to UNICEF (2010), caregivers and guardians, such as the elderly grandparents, are usually unable to offer adequate emotional support, hygiene, nutritional needs, or homework supervision to children who are left behind. According to Lei, Liu, and Hill (2018), even when the care gap is compensated by a consistent caregiver relationship, negative implications for children's overall health and well-being are detected. On the other hand, it is claimed that children who are left behind in insecure caregiving arrangements, which permits them to engage in disruptive and dangerous behaviours in some situations, suffer from poor mental health and school performance (Boynton-Jarret, Hair & Zuckerman, 2013).

Understanding the social and physical contexts in which these children are found or raised is critical to comprehending the impact of social security on the children left behind. Social security issues, according to White (2018:2), are generally responsible for strengthening or inhibiting children's development at home, school, and in society as a whole. As a result, a wide range of variables impact expectations, including family dynamics, neighbourhood, school, and societal issues, all of which interact in complex ways (White, 2018:2).

Due to parental emigration, the family systems theory can be used and perceived in the context of having nontraditional family arrangements and systems. As a result, since families are supposed to be connected and support one another, the aunts, uncles, and grandparents played the role of family in this study to meet the child's need for family. The children have a sense of a family structure and are able to function due to the presence of family members other than their biological parents.

5.5 What are the challenges children face and the strategies they use to cope?

One **interview participant** said:

"Children left behind mostly have lack of confidence- due to them not having their biological parent/s around. The lack of confidence then affects children in so many aspects of their lives, namely at school, in society and as individuals. For example, children who lack confidence are bullied, beaten, spat at and even told that they do not fit anywhere because they lack confidence."

As such, the above **participant 3**: put forward the strategies children use to cope with the challenges they face especially due to the lack of confidence, stating that:

"Sometimes, children find themselves befriending the naughtiest children at school or in society, because they think that these other children are cool and very smart. They believe that these children will help them in dealing with their confidence issues, which in most cases does not end well."

In striking contrast to the feeling expressed by the previous participant, another participant proposed:

"As a solution or copying strategy to lack of confidence, children keep to themselves most of the time. They don't really make friends. This means that they isolate themselves."*

In addition to the aforementioned hurdles, this same participant asserts:

"Another challenge that children left behind face is that whilst we are their primary caregivers, we have other children and family members to take care of. Consequently, due to economic hardships, we will be stretched and face various challenges. In other situations, children left behind are prone to emotional and other forms of abuse."

I realised that the participants might be raising something serious, such as child abuse, and that there was more to discover, I felt obligated to ask for additional information and elucidation. In order to better comprehend the abuses suffered by the children who were left behind, I felt that it was necessary to ask the participants about the kind of abuses the children experienced. Based on this assumption, I gathered the participants' actual facts about the cases of abuse to be able to get detailed information. Accordingly, participants provided the following explanations of the abuses alluded to as emotional and physical.

Interview participant: "*Some of the tell-tale signs that a child has been abused sexually include being very ill-disciplined or promiscuous, bullying of others and or being bullied by*

others at home or school, stealing, teenage pregnancy for girls as well as the use of drugs for example."

Highlighting the emotional challenges children left behind face, an interview participant said:

"Children left behind often struggle with understanding why their parents emigrated without them. On the other hand, children deal with a lot of emotional baggage and they have no idea how to address it and when. The children's emotional challenges are also evident when they feel like they lack parental love while at the same time not being totally happy or satisfied by being with caregivers. The other big challenge is when the children feel like they can't be a part of the "caregivers' family. In most cases, left behind children feel like they are trapped in a place they don't fit, while at the same instance they cannot go and live with their emigrant parent/s."

An interview participant pointed to the physical abuse and its effects, saying:

"Vulnerability: to drugs, promiscuity, and rebellion and attention seeking behaviour, feeling of abandonment, and discrimination in society. Children often are not well fed, have experienced traumatising circumstances such as abuse and neglect, sometimes injury and lack of access to proper healthcare. Some children left behind experience anxiety, depression and loneliness which may expose them to direct physical harm."

Consequently, one participant mentioned this:

"When children are in the households their parents left them in, they may not be well presented in terms of the way they look and dress, with no proper uniforms for school for example. In some cases children get swamped with household chores. They sometimes take on the role of the house help and even sometimes care for the adult family members. This is done to save money but the child suffers because of the lack of complete welfare. The children's rights are therefore violated in some way."

Another interview participant concurred and said:

"Children struggle with their homework. So basically, at times the homework is not done because children are struggling with the new curriculum that was introduced since 2015. Most of the caregivers are struggling to assist children with their education."

One interview participant mentioned the following about coping strategies:

Participant # *"I have seen that the children left behind build relationships or form attachments with their brothers and sisters, especially if they stay in the same house-hold. They do this to form and increase their sense of security."*

Moreover, the above participant concluded that:

"Children left behind sometimes obey the caregivers so as to just get by; this is one of the tactics they have used to cope with parental emigration. They sometimes just pretend to comply, listen, respect and trust their caregivers. This is sometimes called "dance to the tune", so that they can survive and be accommodated; in essence, they adopt a "do" or "die" attitude."

Another interview participant said:

"Another way for the children left behind to cope is that they become closed-off and keep to themselves. We see it as a way of protecting themselves from friendships, and other people outside of the home or household they live in. Children are often too reserved, quiet or isolated as a way of protecting themselves."

The following was mentioned by one of the interview participants:

"Some children will reach out to teachers and other trusted adults. Children sometimes open up to teachers to seek help; they feel teachers are most likely to help them as they may be aware of their situations."

The ecological systems theory can be used to analyse how some of the children have acted and behaved. The impact of the environment in which they operate is important, thus ecological systems look at the environment around the child and how the child reacts to it. The sentiment of Participant 3 on her 9-year old's (left behind child) behaviour is that it is influenced by the outside environment and then impacts the child at home and at school. The ecological systems theory best explains the school the child attends and the friends she plays with.

5.5.1 Theme 3: Vulnerabilities and coping strategies

Since children left-behind receive less parental supervision and support, parental absence emigration greatly increases the likelihood of child abuse and neglect (Chen, Sun, Chen, & Chan, 2020: 119). Such a higher risk of child abuse and neglect may be attributed to the fact that left-behind females and the aged, as caregivers for the children left-behind, generally experience parenting stress and shoulder other responsibilities of life (Mu & Van de Walle,

2011). Children who are left behind have a worse sense of security and are more likely to consider suicide. Therefore, children's negative childhood experiences can be reduced and internalising behaviours can be avoided through supportive parenting (Gini & Espelage, 2014).

Accordingly, children who are left behind have higher rates of sadness, anxiety, loneliness, stress, and other mental health problems for example (Chen, Sun, Chen, & Chan, 2020:119). Moreover, children left-behind have a weaker self-concept (that which makes you "you" and who you are, the "you"?) and self-esteem, both of which are linked to an increased risk of mental health issues. Children who are left behind are put in a vulnerable situation and are more likely to face human rights violations (e.g. physical protection, health care, and education), mental disorders, and other well-being issues (Chen et al., 2020:114).

5.6 What can lessen the social security effects of parental emigration on children left behind?

According to one of the interview participants,

"Our children in the diaspora need to send money back home. This money will assist us. When you look at the day to day living here in the city, nothing is for free. Money will help me to buy food, pay for rates and school fees. When there is no money, the children are not happy, and adults too. In addition it is also good that parents send the children clothes as they quickly outgrow them. Children have to look and feel like they have parents working out of the country: Vana vanosekwa nevamwe muroad kana pamba pasina chikafu, vasina hembe dzirinani dzokupfeka kana kuti mari yechikoro isina kubhadharwa saka vabereki vakatumira mari, zvese izvi zvandataura zvinoreruka kuti zvigadziriswe *(If the children do not have food in the house, proper clothes and they have not paid school fees, they become a talk of the community. So if the parents send money all these issues are easy to fix)."*

Another interview participant thought that:

"Emigrant parents need to be involved in the day to day life of the child. It is difficult to have no support in the discipline side of things, as children sometimes take advantage. If the absent parent is involved, children will not be able to play us as their caregivers, and their parents. In this situation for example, if decisions are to be taken, the caregiver (us), and the emigrant parent must consult each other first. Upon the consultation, we can then involve the child or inform the child of the decision. So, as much as the parents are absent physically, they must be available emotionally."

In support of this statement, another participant concurred and suggested the following:

"It becomes a problem simply because one or both parents are absent (emigrant parent). There is a part that needs to be played by the actual biological parent if they are alive, and they cannot delegate this one to us as caregivers or guardians. Children will walk a straight line if they know that their parents are able to make decisions that affect them, even from another country."

One interview participant had this to say:

"Some emigrant parents live an extravagant life in the diaspora. People must not live a life of obligation due to them wanting to fit in where they are. This ends up affecting their capacity to live that lifestyle while at the same time maintaining children left behind. Emigrant parents with children left behind have to make sure that they prioritise their children at home. Emigrant parents must put the child's welfare first."

Another participant stated that:

"Parents who are struggling to make ends meet must communicate their problems, so that expectations placed on them can be reduced. Parents must be transparent of their circumstances in the diaspora, so that children left behind and caregivers do not have unrealistic expectations from them."

This participant stated the following:

"Parents must visit often. There are situations where emigrant parents stay for years and years without coming back. On the other hand, the children left behind grow so fast. If parents visited and often so, children will not feel like they have been abandoned. If emigrant parents visit and come back home regularly they may not be able to form bonds with their children."

The following was suggested by one of the participants:

"Consider this: parents must emigrate with their children. This is probably the best and lasting solution to the children left behind situation and the other problems that it brings. Otherwise we wouldn't have the children left behind situation. Parents have to seriously think and work towards emigrating with their children. Parents will then have to not worry about the education, housing, food and the other needs to ensure the children are safe back home with caregivers."

Another participant in the face-to-face interview proposed that children who are left behind be placed in boarding schools so that their caretakers and guardians are not directly accountable for their social security. As a result, this view was reflected by the participant, who said:

"Children left behind must go and stay at boarding schools. These children will have a home in the form of their dormitories food and school in one place. All children at boarding schools wear the same school uniform, eat the same food and sleep in the same type of beds and blankets. There is no competition and all children live and follow the same rules, school and study timetable and have the same extra mural activities. The boarding school is a community that is the same for everyone, for those with emigrant parents and those who are still in the country. Boarding schools equalises all the children and there is no room for children being referred as children with parents who emigrated."

5.6.1 Theme 4: Benefits and Parental loss

According to Antman (2012), having emigrant parents can lead to some children growing up in caregiving arrangements that benefit and flourish the child by allowing them to benefit from the positive externalities of emigration, such as higher living standards. Other advantages include the family's better socio-economic status, which has improved the children's social security (Wen & Lin, 2012). Furthermore Islam, Khan and Mondal (2019) mention improved health and nutrition as a great benefit for the family and children left behind. For one thing, emigrant parents, according to Chen and Sun (2015), will often make good living arrangements to mitigate the negative effects on the children left behind, designate responsible caregivers such as non-migrant family members or grandparents, and ensure adequate care to children. According to Cebotari and Raturi (2021:4), the emigrating parent(s), caretakers or guardians, and the informal care of the community that the family belongs to, all contribute to the children's care arrangements.

Emigration is a complicated psychological and socio-cultural phenomenon, according to Marchetti-Mercer (2009:130), having far-reaching effects not just for those who move to another country, but also for those who must cope with the effects. Based on Marchetti-Mercer's (2009) conclusion and in the context of this study, teachers, social workers, and other community members are affected by this phenomenon.

Despite their loss and heartache, caregivers, guardians, and the children left behind sought to not make the emigrating parent feel bad about leaving the country, but instead, applaud their endeavour. On the other hand, the emigration of parents left the children with a sense of emptiness, which they attempted to comprehend and accept to the best of their abilities. The

majority of aunts, uncles, and grandparents interviewed for this study stated that the children who were left behind missed out and suffered parental loss. Although the children had all the material things they needed, they saw emigration as a loss of opportunities to develop relationships with their parents.

Participant 5 indicates that she is unable to meet her grandchild's fundamental needs, particularly in terms of assisting her with education. Meeting the most basic requirements is one of the major components of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and in this situation, the grandparent felt unable to do so. The Hierachy of Needs can be applied to children's requirements such as food, shelter, education, and clothing, for example, in order for them to meet their other needs and thrive in the absence of their parents.

5.7 Focus groups participant profiles

In social science inquiries, focus groups are crucial, and this study was not any different. The focus groups allowed me to connect with two groups of well-chosen research participants, who were highly valuable to the research. Teachers and social workers participated in separate focus group discussions, guided by a distinct semi-structured open-ended question for each group.

However, unlike the face-to-face interviews, where I took on the role of "investigator" per se, in the focus group discussions, I portrayed the part of a "facilitator," where I steered the group discussion between the participants, rather than between the participants and myself. According to Hohenthal, Owidi, Minoia, and Pellikka (2015), the researcher plays a peripheral part in a focus group discussion. Because interviews were the primary data gathering tool for this study, focus group discussions were held to aid in the clarification and extension of the findings from the face-to-face interviews (Manwa & Manwa, 2014).

The focus groups were organised around the participants' status criteria as the discussions intended to be more enlightening and fruitful since the participating teachers, for example, would have a strong connection with the left-behind children who attend their classes. Focus groups, according to Creswell (2012:164), can be extremely effective when participants have common interests and cooperate.

The topic that guided the teachers' focus group discussion was based on their experiences as teachers, their perspectives on what defines children's social security, the obstacles faced by

children who were left behind in school, and the teachers' expectations for parents and students. Purposive sampling was also used to obtain the sample for the focus groups, with participants drawn from teachers who had the most pupils left behind in their classrooms (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:114). However, participation was entirely voluntary, and individuals were not rewarded financially or in any other way.

5.7.1 Demographic data of participants in the focus group discussions
On the 7th of October 2019, I was able to conclude the preparations for the focus group discussion meetings with the teachers and social welfare officers in terms of the appropriate time and location. On October 7th at one of the primary schools and on October 9th at one of the Social Welfare Offices, focus group talks for this study were held. The administration of focus group discussions and interviews entailed engaging with participants while audio recording their responses as well as jotting some essential details on the mood of the group participants, expressions, as well as other interactions between the participants that could not be captured on audio.

Table 5. 3 Focus groups participants' demographic characteristics

Focus Group 1- Teachers			Focus Group 2- Social Workers		
Gender	*Male*	3	**Gender**	*Male*	2
	Female	4		*Female*	4
Total		**7**	**Total**		**6**
FG1 Age of Participants			**FG2 Age of Participants**		
20- 30	2		**20- 30**	2	
30- 40	3		**30- 40**	2	
40- 50	2		**40- 50**	2	

5.7.2 Findings from the focus group discussions

Themes are offered as a summary of the research findings from focus group discussions. Individual participants in face-to-face interviews unanimously agreed that parental emigration has had a significant impact on the social security of children left behind in terms of education, health, food, and shelter. Economic (poor economy) and socio-political factors are among the many reasons for parental emigration, as well as their causes and consequences (lack of good governance issues and the non-existence of political freedoms). Because the numerous

social security challenges affecting the children left behind in Highfield are intertwined, a variety of arguments have been presented to explain the reasons, origins, and consequences. After moderating two focus group discussions, the following interpreted impacts by teachers and social workers were created. Each point of view represents what teachers and social workers said about the effects of parental emigration on the children left behind in this case.

5.7.3 The teachers' focus group discussion

The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture coordinated and granted permission for me to enter the schools, allowing me to conduct focus group discussions with the participant teachers. Once I arrived at the school and explained the purpose of my visit to the Headmaster, they then communicated my research work to the teachers. Therefore, teachers formed an important component of the research participants for this study. Educators in Zimbabwe are generally known and addressed as "Teachers".

Accordingly, I realised that the teachers' knowledge of the children through their everyday interactions in class would be particularly valuable to the research. Prior to the focus group discussion with the teachers, I had the opportunity to visit multiple schools and engage informally with the headmasters and other schools administrative personnel to "break the ice" and acquaint myself with the focus group setting and potential participants. For this reason, on the 7th of October 2019, at 14:00 hours, a focus group discussion with teachers took place at one of the primary school halls in Highfield as we had previously arranged.

One of the benefits of holding the teachers' focus group meeting in the school was that it gave a more natural setting, as well as having the teachers' shared understanding of the phenomena being significant (Creswell, 2012). This particular focus group discussion with the teachers allowed me to come up with many viewpoints on the following question:

5.7.4 What are your perspectives on the effects of parental emigration on children's social security and education, and what do you anticipate emigrant parents to do for their children left behind in this regard?

Focus Group Participant # 1: responded and said that *"The immediate caregivers of the children left behind often abuse or divert the funds sent by the parents of the children who are outside of the country. As a teacher, I have seen many children coming to school without the*

proper uniform, sometimes incomplete uniform. My understanding of such a situation is that the child left behind is often caught in between… this situation disturbs the child's concentration and focus levels in their class. In such cases, the teacher and the school administrators cannot do much to help the child. You see [pauses]…. This situation has brought many families to misunderstandings and the children left behind are the losers in all this. With regards to what I hope the emigrant parent can do….Ummm, this is not easy to say but…emigrant parents should make arrangements with the school authorities to pay the school fees directly into the school account. Also, parents can arrange that caregivers handle as little cash transactions as possible to avoid misuse of money for other personal things."

Focus Group Participant # 2: concurred with focus group participant # 1 and stated that *"money sent back by emigrant parents is sometimes used to pay for other household members' needs, such as hospitalisation, medical care and other day-to-day living expenses. So, the other immediate family members benefit at the expense of the left behind children's welfare and security. These expenses are generally prioritised over the child's fees for example. The assumption is that emigrant parents can always send some more money; because they can tell them that they used the money for other things that were more important at the time. In such a situation therefore, emigrant parents have to emphasise that money sent for the children's welfare should be spent for its intended purposes and nothing else. However, this also further creates tension between the caregivers, emigrant parents and the children left behind."*

Focus Group Participant # 3: said this, in agreement with both focus group participant 1 and focus group participant 2, asserting that *"the caregivers benefit economically as the money sent for left behind children can also take care of their financial problems. Therefore, school fees are not paid or are paid erratically; children do not have books and other stationery. Some children even end up stealing books, pens and equipment from other children at school."*

In light of the aforementioned assertions, focus group participant # 4 stressed that:

"*Other children left behind are badly affected to the extent of coming to school hungry, and some children bring buckets (for bathing), water bottles at school to collect drinking water for*

home. Other children end up being absent from school for long periods such as a week and miss out and struggle to catch up with the other children."

Focus group participant # 5 added to the preceding statements by saying:

"Some of the children left behind lack self-confidence due to them not being well taken care of. Many children left behind are taken care of by their grandparents, and often, they are not the only child in the home. The children's social welfare can lack because the grandparents and the children are both unable to adjust to their growing needs in the household, school and curriculum (often by not getting the homework done). The children feel helpless to help themselves and often don't get support and lack self-confidence."

Another focus group participant # 6, on the other hand, claimed that:
"While there are some drawbacks and other challenges faced by children left behind due to parental emigration, some children have been able to access better schools, have books and stationery, have better nutrition and are able to bring lunch-boxes and a cool drink to school. Children who are not hungry can concentrate and be able to grasp the things taught in class quickly. Notably, a good number of children with emigrant parents have uniforms and that boosts their self-esteem and helps them to make friends at school, engage with teachers and have a positive attitude towards school activities and learning."

Focus group participant # 7: *"In my personal capacity as a teacher, I feel and have mixed emotions on the issue of social security for children left behind. Children's social security impacts on their education. Having emigrant parents compounds the situation for the children. Emigrant parents, if they can't be with their children in countries they have chosen to live in, the social security cost of being without their children is too expensive for me. Children lose and parents lose, it is just a social cost we cannot put a price tag to, sadly."*

5.7.5 Theme 5: Social security and education

The teacher focus group discussion participants indicated that parental emigration has hurt the social security and education of the children left behind in Highfield. The participating teachers observed challenges arising from households with children left behind in dealing with concerns such as financial resource misuse, which has fragmented most family

relations and threatened the welfare of the children. Additionally, the children have suffered as a result of this arrangement, while family members who are responsible for the children left behind have benefitted. Children's needs are not met as a result of diversions and mishandling of remittances and children are forced to turn to undesirable practices such as stealing, going without food, and other necessities, which can undermine school attendance, performance, and outcomes.

According to the teachers, children who lived with grandparents and senior caregivers generally had too many home duties to undertake, with little or no help with their schoolwork. As a result, some of the children left behind are not properly cared for in terms of appearance, thereby damaging their self-esteem. On the other hand, one participant preferred to focus on the positive effects of parental emigration, such as improved access to better schools and education, stationery, uniforms, and nutrition, all of which are necessary for children to have a better social security condition.

The findings of the teacher focus group disclose and demonstrate a favourable impact of parental emigration on the academic and educational needs of children. Teachers seemed to reflect that the children can attend school, have their fees paid, have stationery, and uniforms, which equates to a happy child who has positive school experiences and likes being a part of the other children. Teachers also stated that children who are cared for by a grandmother rather than a younger aunt or uncle are more likely to receive assistance with their schooling than children who are cared for by senior caregiver relatives such as grandparents.

5.7.6 What are the social welfare protection policies in place and how have they been able to especially support the children left behind due to parental emigration in Highfield?

Focus group participant # 1: *"There are no specific social security policies for children left behind in the country. In general, if there is a reason, the community care workers from the social welfare department go for home assessment to check on the child or children. Some of the policies for vulnerable children include NAPoVOC Act of 1998, which was created to respond to the increasing number of children due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, to assess their vulnerability."*

Another focus group participant backed up what focus group participant 1 had expressed, stating:

Focus group participant # 2: *"While there are no policies to attend to as well as address the social security issues of children left behind due to parental emigration in Highfield, we would like to see the well-defined laws on paper (legislatively and policy wise) work in actuality and have resources committed by key stakeholders especially the government. I say this because, for example, with the NAPoVOC Act having been intensified and implemented at the national level, in policies and legislation relevant to children in terms of the (Zimbabwe's National Orphan Care Policy Act of 1999), mainly the Children's Act (Chapter 5:06), we see that this law does not have a provision for and does not respond and monitor the situations of the children left behind. Thus, this builds a gap for not having children left behind fall within the cracks and thus not taken care of in any manner whatsoever."*

Focus group participant # 3: "*I have to come in on this issue and say this; ….uuuuuhmm….firstly, we have to be clear about the fact that there are no precise policies and or legislation/s to deal with the various specific challenges faced by children left behind due to parental emigration in Zimbabwe generally. As a result, we wish that, as social workers, to have such laws to help us deal with these children and the circumstances they find themselves in. Second, it is essential to highlight that we find ourselves confused and conflicted about how to help the children without a specific guiding law that applies to their subjective situation. We have had to deal with the children left behind social security situations individually and there are some grey areas as there is no law to base your decisions upon. So, it has been difficult to deal with children left behind, concerning their social security and overall well-being in general."*

Focus group participant # 4: "*The issue of children left behind due to parental emigration and their social security presents a fundamental problem. Children's rights are violated from the time the child is left in other people's care and it is often not their choice. By a situation that is not of their choosing and making, children are placed in extended family setups, sometimes with pastors, church members, foster care, and sometimes adopted. Having these short to long term solutions such as the extended family situation and foster care as measures to mitigate the problem, some problems are created as a result."*

In support of the preceding opinions and reflections regarding policies for the children left behind, focus group participant 5 stated:

Focus group participant # 5: *"Ordinarily, the social welfare officers trace relatives. For instance children left behind due to parental emigration might end up in the care of extended family members such as the aunts, uncles, grandparents and or older siblings. The other option is that other community institutions such as churches and pastors and or clergyman end up having the burden of taking care of some of the children left behind."*

Focus group participant # 6: *"As brought up by the other participants who spoke before me, there are no regulatory policies and laws; well, at least we agree on this one [that there are no policies]….as a result, we use a situation based approach…. [the merits of the case], to analyse and deal with the social security issues that the children left behind face …I can tell you this, as a social worker, I always feel as if I am walking a thin line and not sure if you are within the regulatory and statutory frameworks. It brings an uneasy feeling, because your decisions are not backed by law or policy. On the other hand, we have always been able to help each situation and case individually based on the understanding of the needs of the children left behind."*

As indicated by UNICEF (2004), the responsibility of protecting children's well-being necessitates appropriate resources and internal ability for strategic planning, policy preparation and execution, program implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. In consequence, the Zimbabwean government should adopt and maintain a progressive approach to the social security of children who are left behind, which must align with the country's Constitution. In other words, social welfare services should be defined according to the level of service intervention, which might range from protection to preventive to early intervention, reintegration to residential care (Dybicz, 2005). The social worker participants in this study tended to bemoan the lack of support. So, Ray, Davey, and Nolan (2011) argue that it is the government's primary obligation to create the conditions that allow all children's rights to be met and for families and communities to properly care for them. The primary purpose of social protection programmes as public policies should be to lessen vulnerabilities, alleviate poverty, and ultimately avoid it, as well as to empower poor and marginalised individuals, families, and communities (Skhosana, Schenck & Botha, 2014: 220).

The study included six social worker professionals as focus group participants. The purpose of including the social workers was to highlight how social protection policies have either supported or unsupported the children left behind in Highfield. The subject of the focus group discussion was on social protection policies and how they apply to left behind children. The focus group discussion with the social workers took place on Wednesday, October 9th, 2019, in the auditorium of one of the social welfare facilities after lunch. The discussion focused on current social welfare policies and how they have been able to support children who are left behind.

Focus group discussion based on the question of available social welfare policies for children left behind due to parent emigration was conducted with social welfare officers. All six social workers who took part in the study agreed that there are no special policies in place to help children left behind facing social security difficulties. The social workers, on the other hand, stated that even if no policies exist yet, the government must be dedicated to implementing them and allocating the required resources. They said, on the other hand, that they are faced with the issue of having to make decisions based on the merits of the scenarios or circumstances, rather than being directed by the legislation.

There was a suggestion that some form of the standard be established especially when dealing with vulnerable children. A legal framework, according to the social workers, is a tool that will allow them to base their work on statutory and regulatory standards rather than making subjective decisions that could jeopardise the social worker, the child in need, and the child's community of family. An analysis of the focus group data supports the caregivers' perspectives that, while there may be no existing legislation to protect the social security of the children left behind, the caregivers remain powerless to protect the children if there are no guiding policies for the children, caregivers, and the emigrant parent

5.8 Summary and conclusion

The findings from twenty-seven face-to-face interview participants who took part in twenty-three interviews were conducted, with four of the interviews being combined because they chose to participate as couples. The two focus groups had thirteen participants in total, including six social workers and seven school teachers, giving us 40 participants in total, which were presented in this chapter. To gain a better understanding of each participant in this study, it was necessary to provide biographical information such as gender, age, relationship

to the child left behind, age and gender of the children left behind, destination country, and length of stay in the emigrant parent's destination country. The participants and or couple profiles were provided to offer the reader with information about the participants so that they may obtain insight into the personal experiences of each individual participant.

This study's 40 research participants contributed a plethora of information. Thematic analysis was utilised to identify the participants' experiences, perspectives, and insights, with verbatim quotes provided to show the source and demonstrate the results' trustworthiness. Furthermore, the qualitative research findings were presented by discussing the five main themes that emerged from the data analysis, notably: Parental emigration and children's social security; Vulnerability and social security; Vulnerabilities and coping strategies; Benefits and parental loss; and Social security and education.

Vulnerabilities and social security of children left behind emerged as the golden thread that ran through almost every interview and the focus group discussions. The children's vulnerability manifested itself in a variety of ways, dependent on the household and care settings, educational provisions, and their integration into the Highfield community. While the participants praised the accomplishments of emigrant parents, they were unable to confirm that parental emigration improved the children's social security.The following chapter presents a summary of the study in its entirety. The conclusions are drawn, and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the dissertation and study as a whole, the study's goals and objectives, as well as the data collection methods, are iterated. The research questions and objectives that guided the study are highlighted, as well as the data collection strategies employed, the conclusions reached, and the proposed recommendations.

The following are the study's research objectives, which are directly related to the below-mentioned research questions: (1) To ascertain the causes and impacts of parent(s) emigration on the children left behind, (2) To identify social security issues that affect children left behind in Highfield; (3) To explore the coping mechanisms embraced by the children left behind, (4) To determine whether the economic benefits of parent (s) emigration outweigh the social security risks faced by the left behind children, and (5) To evaluate if government poverty reduction strategies and social protection policies contribute to lessening the impacts of parent(s) emigration on the social security of children left behind in Highfield.

To understand more about the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind in Highfield, I used an exploratory, interpretative, and descriptive study design. These research questions served as a guide for the inquiry: (1) What are the causes of parental emigration and how has parental emigration affected the children left behind, (2) What/Which are the social security challenges that left behind children deal with (3) What are some of the coping mechanisms in dealing with parental absence, (4) What are the economic benefits and challenges that the children face, and (5) What policies does the government have in place to mitigate the effects and safeguard the children that are left behind?

The participants in this study comprised of caregivers and guardians who were part of interviews as well as teachers, and social workers who were part of the focus group discussions. All participants stated that parental emigration had a detrimental effect on the social security of children left behind in Highfield, Harare. A total of 40 participants took part in the study, with all of them living and working in Highfield. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, and data from secondary sources were used to collect data. Secondary data gathered from a variety of sources was crucial in augmenting participant information on the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind. Interviews and focus group discussions were sufficient data gathering strategies for answering the research questions and objectives since they generated rich qualitative data. The literature

relevant to the nature of the study and purpose assisted me in comprehending current information on the impact of parental emigration on children left behind's social security.

6.1 Conclusions on the research findings

In this section of the chapter, I provide the findings of the study as well as the conclusions reached based on the study's objectives. The literature review and participants played the most essential role in contextualising these conclusions.

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs theory of Motivation needs was used in this study because theoretical frameworks provide a theoretical foundation for framing studies. As a result, this theory was appropriate for explaining the necessity of the children's physiological needs for them to completely function and meet their other needs. If the physiological and basic needs of the children, such as food, water, clothes, shelter, and clothing, are met, this ensures that they meet their personal and immediate social security. This theory, along with Bowen's family systems theory (1966; 1978), was useful in putting the child's place in the family in context. Although family relations have altered as a result of parental emigration, children can still find love and care from the caregivers and other family members who remained.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems assisted in framing the setting in which the child grows and functions, therefore cementing and supporting the family systems and theory of motivation. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theoretical lens was appropriate for framing a child's development, growth, and interactions. Children are a major and vital element of the system that they themselves construct and grow, as they are the future adults and leaders, even though they are small and require care from their elders, community, and environment. This theory, together with Bowen's family systems and the theory of human motivation, assisted in answering the theoretical component of the data evidence gathered from fieldwork and literature evidence, as well as achieving the study's research objectives.

6.1.1. Parental emigration and its effects on the social security of children left behind

To appreciate the social security effects of parental emigration on the children left behind, I had to contextualise the reason(s) for the parents' decision to emigrate from the perspective of the caregivers and guardians caring for the children. The goal was to interact and observe the caregivers during the interviews. In this study, the caregivers and guardians included grandparents, aunts and uncles, elder siblings, and other close relatives. As a result,

everyone in this study was related to the child or children who had been placed in their care. The participants said that parental emigration had a range of effects on the children, specifically for those who had been left behind for an extended period and those left while they were still very young.

One of the factors that arose in each interview, with practically every participant mentioning them as if they were the only reason for parental emigration was economic reasons. For instance, they placed economic issues at the heart of the country's emigration problem, implying that Highfield has not been spared by this phenomenon as demonstrated by the high level of children left behind.   The country's economic crises, with no signs of improvement in sight, unemployment, a deterioration in living standards, and a high cost of living for those who work but are unable to make ends meet are among the economic factors cited (wages are too low). Some participants suggested that the high rate of unemployment is attributable to a lack of foreign direct investment coming into the country.

Many participants, on the other hand, suggested that the country's political situation was to blame for the high rate of parental emigration. Some participants were hesitant to clarify and expound on the socio-political reasons; instead, they would simply state them without going into detail for fear of being branded as political enthusiasts. Participants would frequently say, "You never know who is listening," and "We do not want to put ourselves in danger, and neither do you" referring to me. The most common political reasons for parental emigration, according to the caregivers' are political violence and intimidation, a lack of political reforms and freedoms, election rigging and voter intimidation, human rights violations, political nepotism and corruption, and citizen's fear of their government.

In the context of this study, the reasons for parental emigration are founded on the fact that the emigrant parents believed and felt that this was the best choice for themselves, their children, and those staying behind with the children as caretakers. Therefore, there is little doubt that parents will continue to go to other countries as a result of the country's long-standing economic, social, and political dynamics.

Although it is natural to consider that the children's welfare and social security should come first in the case of children left behind, the parents had to make difficult decisions, firstly to emigrate, and secondly, to leave their children behind. Parents would have been torn between taking their children into the unknown and leaving them in their familiar environment in Highfield.

6.1.2. Social security issue of left behind children

The social security challenges that affect the children who are left behind are primarily issues of vulnerability in the home, school, and community. To begin with, children are placed in families where they are with their relatives and loved ones, but they feel a sense of void and despair as a result of their parents' absence. However, while the children are in the care of relatives, they do not receive direct parental love. The lack of direct love has had a confounding effect on the children since some of them are not completely satisfied being with caregivers, let alone being a member of an extended family.

Additional challenges include inadequate emotional support, nutritional needs, and hygienic care, academic and homework supervision (since caregivers such as grandparents may not be familiar with the curriculum), and children being overburdened by domestic obligations and chores (for example, attending to washing dishes, cooking and cleaning the yard). Furthermore, some of the children that are left behind engage in rebellious behaviour, have difficulties concentrating and following instructions, bullying other children or being bullied, and boast.

Participants in this study stated that some children left behind become disrespectful, and some even tell caregivers that the money sent by their emigrant parents enables the household to thrive. The participants also stated that children do not always understand why their parents do not send money and that the children always suspect the caregivers of diverting the finances elsewhere. This arrangement, for example, puts the child in the middle of an argument between the emigrant parents and the caregiver about the child's care and support.

6.1.3. Coping mechanisms of children left behind

The study confirmed that the children of Highfield had devised several techniques to cope with the social security implications of parental emigration.

The participants in this study were quite concerned about the social security and well-being of the children who were left behind. For example, while many agreed that the children have a roof over their heads and a place to call home, they are unable to cope with the reality that their parents choose to leave them. One participant stated that the children left behind are unaware of the dynamics of parental emigration and other issues such as why children are unable to visit their parents frequently and vice versa. Nevertheless, the participants stated

that, within the confusion and children's attempts to persevere, they are dealing with a variety of challenges, and that some have established alternative ways to cope.

Children appeared to utilise coping methods such as keeping to themselves or seeking attention from their peers. Children who keep to themselves are more likely to have no friends, engage with other children on the same street less frequently, and have no school friendships. Even in the home, the participants remarked that these children are often in their rooms, less participating in family events, and occasionally on their phones playing games or communicating with online friends. Other caregivers said that the children's isolation is a strategy to shield themselves from being hurt by friends and other external influences.

The majority of participants, on the other hand, seemed to assume that the children who were left behind were almost guarding themselves against being abandoned and left behind again. The participants stated that children find themselves in a scenario where they would not want to be abandoned again, either by friends or other individuals they become attached to, who may abandon them eventually, much like their parents did. On the other hand, some children who are left behind seek attention and build relationships with friends, siblings, relatives, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, and, on rare occasions, their neighbours or teachers. When it came to the establishment of attachments as a coping method, the participants voiced the concern that if the attachments are broken or interrupted, the children will be more emotionally affected.

The participants noted that attachment as a coping mechanism is both beneficial and problematic for the children who are left behind. In a worst-case scenario, it results in leaving the children in more vulnerable emotional situations. Children who have been left behind have found another method to cope with parental emigration by being obedient. The majority of participants stated that the children learnt that there is no other way to be, but to be a child and do as the elders say, without questioning or arguing. Children that use this coping method typically become subservient, cooperative, and constantly seek permission and direction from their caregivers and adults in positions of greater authority in the family and community.

6.1.4. Economic benefits of parental emigration and its impact on social security

 Interview and focus group participants in this study stated that while there were significant economic gains, they were unsure if the benefits were sufficient to outweigh the expense of social security. Essentially, observable physical and monetary rewards may be more tempting since they appear to reflect tangible changes in the lives of the children. For example, children

may appear to be well fed, properly clothed, and have adequate housing and food. The participants also indicated that the children were able to attend school, have their school fees paid, and have access to books, stationery, uniforms, and other school necessities.

Aside from paying school fees, the welfare of the children left behind improved in terms of nourishment, which enhanced their physical health and well-being. Children were able to attend school on full stomachs, concentrate and focus in class for longer periods of time, and participate in school activities with enthusiasm as a result of better provision of appropriate nutrition.

6.1.5. Government poverty reduction strategies and social protection policies

The objective of establishing and evaluating government strategies and policy interventions to address the consequences of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind in Highfield has been thoroughly investigated and assessed. The analysis confirmed that the children who are left behind have social security challenges for which there is no specific policy in place to address them. However, some legislative instruments in Zimbabwe deal with child protection in general, and these are the same mechanisms that have aided the state, law enforcement authorities, child protection and social welfare officers, and the communities in which the children are raised.

The economic situation in Zimbabwe at the time of the study was not good, and continues to remain this way. As such, social workers and teachers said it was difficult to have families who foster children as they would have done in the past or if the economy was good. Participants of the social worker focus group discussion said that it has been difficult to place children in foster homes or care because foster parents are unable to cope. Teachers and social workers who participated in the study stated that children who are left behind are frequently discriminated against and ridiculed in society because their parents have abandoned them. The ridicule has a negative impact on the child's self-esteem and frequently leads to the children associating with the wrong people to fit in. Since children end up with the wrong characters in their neighbourhood and caregivers are not entirely aware of the children's dealings, some of the children end up having substance abuse issues at an early age.

However, the findings show that for children who have major social security difficulties in the households where they are staying, adoption or guardianship is often the last alternative and resort. Adoption occurs, according to the participants, when authorities are unable to determine who would be the best person to care for the child or have lost contact with other

relatives or parents. Other policies are available to support a child's social well-being in general, but they do not specifically address children who have been left due to parental emigration.

6.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations are established on the findings of this study and are as follows**:**

- It is recommended that parents should not simply leave their children with any caregiver because they are related, as this brings psychological distress to the children. The participants acknowledged that parents should take their time when choosing a child caregiver/guardian to ensure that the children's needs and requirements are fulfilled, as the child's wellbeing is always paramount.

- The findings of the study recommend that the emigrant parent should discuss and inform the children about their plans to emigrate so that they are cognisant and can mentally prepare themselves. The engagement and consultation give the children a sense of belonging and allow them to participate in the decision-making process of something so significant.

- It is recommended that the state and other stakeholders work together to develop laws and programs that provide children left behind with social security. As a result, some constitutional provisions must effectively provide for the right to social security and place a responsibility on the state to act, so that social security does not remain a vision but delivers significant benefits.

- The study recommends coordinating policies that link multiple social security functions and requirements, as well as benchmarks that must be established and maintained. This must be done to prevent repetition and inconsistencies in the processes of meeting the social security obligations of the children left behind.

- The study recommends that because children who are left behind have unique challenges and situations, social welfare agencies should be able to reach all children in need of fundamental social services to improve their lives and future prospects.

- The study also recommends that future research be conducted using the children themselves as participants, as they would be the best people to explain their situation. This recommendation is based on the possibility that the children's social security issues could not have been objectively highlighted by their caregivers.

- The study recommends that more research be done for the reason that the children's social security phenomena is under-researched and there are no definitive statistics on the number of children who are left behind. As a result of this gap, I recommend that future study use school censuses to determine the number of children left behind, as previous studies have been unable to do so in Zimbabwe.

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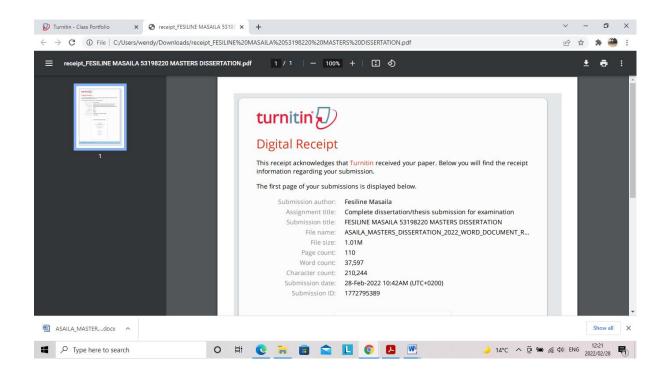
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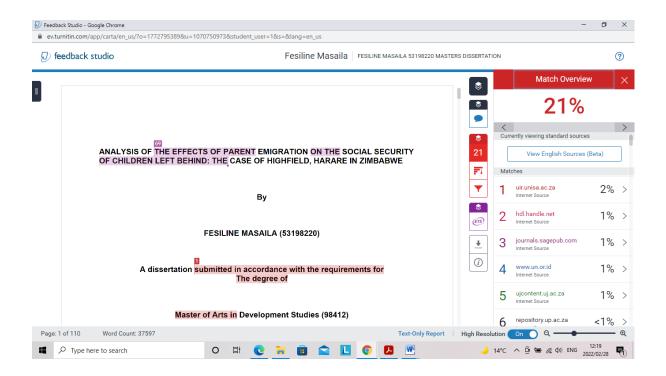
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Appendix A: TURNITIN SIMILARITY INDEX REPORT

Appendix B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Name of Participant:

Age:

Gender:

Religion:

Marital Status

Relationship to child/children:

Number of children left in your care:

Ages/s of child/ren in your care

Face-to-face Interview schedule guide

1. What made the parents/s choose to emigrate? How has parent/s emigration affected the social security of the child/children?
2. What is the social security issues affecting the child/ren?
3. Which strategy have the child/ren utilised to cope with parental absence? How long have the parents been away?
4. What are the economic benefits? And the challenges child/ren face as a result of parent emigration?

Teachers Focus Group Discussion Question

1) What are your perspectives on the effects of parental emigration on children's social security and education, and what do you anticipate emigrant parents to do for their children left behind?

Social Workers Focus Group Discussion Question

1) What are the social welfare protection policies and how have they been able to especially support the children left behind due to parental emigration in Highfield?

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COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

30 May 2019

NHREC Registration#:

Rec-240816-052

Dear Fesiline Masaila

CREC Reference#: 2019-CHS-Depart-53198220

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 30 May 2019
to 30 May 2022

Researcher(s): Fesiline Masaila

Supervisor(s) Dr A Khan

khana@unisa.ac.za

Caregiver's views on the effects of parental emigration on the social security of children left behind: The case of Highfield in Harare, Zimbabwe

Qualifications Applied: Master of Arts in Development Studies

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa Department of Developmental Studies, College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for three years.

The *low risk application was reviewed and* expedited by the Department of Development Studies College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, on 30 May 2019 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:
1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.

2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the Department of Development Studies Ethics Review Committee.

3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.

4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Persona/Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.

7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date (30 May 2022). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2019-CHS-Depart-53198220** *should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature:

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