THE NEXUS BETWEEN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN CHIMANIMANI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

By

OSWELL RUSINGA

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR TSHIMANGADZO S. MUDAU

JUNE 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

Name: OSWELL RUSINGA

Student number: 63693755

Degree: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Topic: THE NEXUS BETWEEN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN CHIMANIMANI DISTRICT, ZIMBABWE

I declare that the thesis 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.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination elsewhere for another qualification or any other educational or non-educational award.

_____
SIGNATURE

14 JUNE 2024
DATE

DEDICATION

To my daughter, Madeline, and my son, Bongani.

ABSTRACT

This thesis sought to understand the nexus between sexual and reproductive health (SRH) decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study described SRH knowledge of adolescent girls, explored their experiences of SRH decision-making, examined the connections between SRH decision-making and human development and also developed a strategy for increasing capacities of adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making thereby leading to enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. The statement of the problem highlights that adolescent girls lack capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. The methodology of this study was grounded in qualitative research. Using participatory action research, the researcher engaged participants in dialogue on the interconnectedness between SRH decision-making and human development. Chimanimani District was purposively sampled as the study area. Thirty-two adolescent girls aged between 16 and 19 years constituted the sample size. The researcher collaborated with five co-researchers to recruit participants using passive and active recruitment methods. Data gathering was done using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations. The researcher adopted critical discourse analysis (CDA) model developed by Norman Fairclough to analyse data. Findings revealed gaps in SRH knowledge among participants, indicating epistemic challenges to accessing such knowledge. Diverse experiences of SRH decision-making were highlighted. Economic uncertainty and poverty created obstacles to participants' abilities to make SRH choices which reflected their interests. Through implementing the strategy, the researcher learnt that participative democracy in research enabled participants voice their interests and concerns in the research process. This study recommended to broaden the scope by facilitating dialogue with both boys and girls in a single study. The researcher believed that this would strengthen strategies for addressing conflicts in SRH decision-making and ultimately creating peaceful societies anchored in sustainable development.

Key words: Decision-making, agency, control, vulnerability, sexual and reproductive health, social justice, transformative change

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABR	Adolescent Birth Rate
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CPAR	Critical Participatory Action Research
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNIC	Gross National Income Per Capita
GNP	Gross National Product
GNU	Government of National Unity
HDI	Human Development Index
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IMHC	Infant and Maternal Health Care
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
LAMA	Legal Age of Majority Act
MHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Care
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLGPW	Ministry of Local Government and Public Works
MMEIG	Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MOPA	Maintenance of Peace and Order Act
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPoA	Maputo Plan of Action
NASRH	National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ORAP	Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PASS	Poverty Assessment Study
PHC	Primary Health Care

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRIA	Participatory Research in Asia
RAP	Rapid Assessment Procedure
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
SPI	Social Progress Indicator
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Right
STD	Sexual Transmitted Disease
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat
UNDESAPD	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division
UNISA	University of South Africa
ZDHS	Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee
ZNFPC	Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council

LIST APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1: THE STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Adolescence is a crucial stage for creating the human condition of autonomy and also for cultivating self-determination in making decisions fundamental for transitioning to a normal adult life (United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA], 2022; Schaffnit et al., 2021; Woollett et al., 2021; GAGE Consortium, 2019; UNICEF, 2011). Adolescents are generally referred by the United Nation System to persons who fall between 10 and 19 years (World Health Organisation, 2018). However, many adolescent girls around the world bear the burden of multiple SRH issues like early pregnancy, early childbearing, HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, child marriage, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and maternal mortality (Larsson, 2022; Murewanhema, 2020; Liang et al., 2019; Austrian et al., 2018). Global, regional and national analyses indicate a huge burden of SRH challenges among adolescent girls. UNICEF (2022) reported that at least 650 million girls were married as children across the world. According to World Health Organisation (2020a), about 21 million adolescent girls in the 15 – 19 years age group are getting pregnant every year. Also, more than 120 million girls under twenty years worldwide experienced a form of sexual violence (World Health Organisation, 2020a). A Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) found that a third of women in the 20 – 24 years age category in Zimbabwe entered into marriage or union while still under 18 years (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency [ZIMSTAT] and UNICEF, 2019).

Previous studies had shown that pregnancy complications account for most of the maternal deaths among adolescent girls (World Health Organisation, 2023; Neal et al., 2016). The Sub-Saharan African region is still experiencing high levels of adolescent birth rate (ABR) (Ahinkorah et al., 2020). The United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UNDESAPD) (2024) reported that 94 births occur per 1000 females in the 15 – 19 years age group in Sub-Saharan Africa compared 43 births per females in the same age category in all less developed countries. A study in Zimbabwe revealed that 78% of sexually active adolescent girls reported ever being pregnant (UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2023a). In many parts of Africa

and Asia, girls who get pregnant are often forced to get married against their choices in order to avoid being stigmatised (Gyan, 2018).

In many cultures across the world, socialisation of adolescent girls takes place within the social structures which ascribe gender identities and roles in SRH decision-making (Offiong et al., 2021). Paul et al. (2017) describe SRH decision-making as having the capacity to make an independent choice essential to have control in all issues related to SRH. The Princeton University Advanced English Dictionary (n.d.) defines control as maintaining an influence over others or oneself, usually to one's advantage. This study describes SRH decision-making as adolescent girls' capacity to make choice and have control of the choice. Institutions which have a patriarchal character profoundly shape adolescent girls' abilities to make SRH decisions in conformity to expected gender roles (Mutswetu and Bhana, 2018). As a result, adolescent girls often face threats and uncertainties when they decide to break silence about oppression and exploitation in SRH decision-making. It is ironic that speaking up would increase their susceptibility and vulnerability to violence, debasing labels, and social ostracism. Consequently, they are forced to acquiesce to undesirable practices.

Although SRH decision-making among adolescent girls is now featuring in policies and laws in Zimbabwe, adolescent sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) gains much currency when harmful practices and risky sexual relationships are the major topics (Mafa and Simango, 2022; Nunu et al., 2021; Murewanhema, 2020; Marume, Maradzika and January, 2018; Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). In this way, debates and discussions often raise particular assumptions about the vulnerability of adolescents in SRH decision-making. This points to the influence of the epidemiological model on views, perceptions and attitudes towards adolescents' participation in SRH decision-making in Zimbabwe. The epidemiological model was embraced in Zimbabwe during the HIV/AIDS epidemic to promote safer sexual behaviours among young people (Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, 2003). The HIV/AIDS pedagogy was more aligned to convey behavioural determined messages about the fear of the disease and the regulation of sexual relations.

Consequently, contemporary interest in ASRH in Zimbabwe is connected to the strategy of imparting life skills for risk-reductive behavioural change (Graham and

Mphaphuli, 2018; Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, 2003). The strategy was formally introduced through the 1992 AIDS Action Programme for Schools by the then Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture which partnered with UNICEF (Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, 2003). Little attention had been paid to understanding how adolescent girls make sense of agency in SRH decision-making from a human development perspective. As such, this study stresses that the importance of considering adolescent girls as learners, knowers, believers and communicators in SRH decision-making which has direct bearing on enhancing socio-economic status and enjoying healthy lives.

In Zimbabwe, adolescent girls are introduced to the realm of SRH through taboos, ritualistic instructions, moral values, rites of passage and formal education, whether personal or collective. For example, the Family, Religion and Moral Education syllabus in primary and secondary schools introduces learners to moral values and information relevant to SRH decision-making (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE), 2015a; MoPSE, 2015b). Guidance and Counselling syllabus covers topics on sexuality, Ubuntu, relationships, family, HIV/AIDS and child protection, among others (MoPSE, 2016; MoPSE, 2015c). The Guidance and Counselling syllabus is offered at secondary level.

At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, there was consensus among states and governments for embedding human rights principles in SRH policy (Durojaye, Mirugi-Mukundi and Ngwena, 2021; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016; Austveg, 2011). Also, some scholars indicated that the fact that ASRH in African cultures is shrouded in silence has become complicated in the modern world, as strategies of empowering girls are premised on traditions which prioritise the individuality of persons (Olamijuwon and Odimegwu, 2022; Iwokwagh, 2017). Moreover, Amartya Sen argues that there are multiple ways in which individuals could be located in the state of vulnerability and deprivation (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

This study suggests a nuanced understanding of adolescent girls' social realities in SRH decision-making which is sensitive to the indigenous African cultural context (UNFPA 2020). From an Ubuntu perspective, belonging to a community is central to

one's capacity to cope with struggles for survival and emancipation. The idea of becoming in Ubuntu implies one's capacity to participate and belong to a community (Mkhize, 2008 cited in Metz, 2015). In the same breath, dialogue is vital to enhance meaningful and beneficial relationships among members of the community. In the modern society, a community includes families, traditional leadership, the state, government agencies and civic organisations. Ubuntu suggests that the community bears humanity through certain values such as personhood, care, solidarity, complementarity and spirituality (Mohlabane and Tshoaedi, 2022; Molefe, 2021; Magosvongwe, 2016; Metz, 2015).

It is imperative to reflect critically on the interconnectedness between SRH decision-making and human development. This is because adolescent girls' decisions on SRH are shaped by social and historical realities. Although neoclassical and neoliberal economics had been traditionally influential in the conception of decision-making and well-being, its economic assumptions about improving quality of life are understood in ahistorical terms (Hull, 2015; Reid, 2013). Therefore, the interpretation of the impact of development on human progress is restrictive to the market-driven distribution of resources. Furthermore, the profit motive to economic improvement of the human well-being was contested and alternative approaches to understanding development underpinned by people-centred perspectives about well-being were proposed (Ranta, 2022; Chandler, 2013).

The human development approach emerged in the early 1990s as an alternative approach which emphasised the significance of agency and freedom on improving human well-being (Sen, 2005; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1990). This enabled the researcher to pay attention to the role of freedom in SRH decision-making in concomitant to the capacity to decide on the kind of life one wants (UNDP, 2020). This thesis describes human development as a process of expanding capabilities of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making to enhance socio-economic and healthy lives. A human development approach was adopted, in this study, to guide conceptual analysis and perspectival thinking about the implications of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls to their healthy and socio-economic lives. Human development approach provides conceptual tools for establishing how individuals are faring in both their lives and in the development trajectory (Nussbaum, 2003; Sen,

4

2002a). As such, it is suggested that a human development approach provides alternative ways of analysing adolescent girls' freedom and agency in SRH decision-making beyond instrumental perspectives about human lives.

Bearing its connection to the capability approach, human development emphasises values and preferences in evaluating people's lives and well-being (Hirai, 2021; Robeyns, 2021). Nussbaum (2000) elaborates that the inner progress in development is constitutive of capabilities and functionings fundamental to well-being. In doing so, the human development discourse stresses that people could improve their well-being when they investing in their capabilities, given opportunities, and resources available. This thesis argues that it is inadequate to consider a particular form of evaluating benefits adolescent girls would realise in future, as adult women, based on a single prescribed protection at their current age (Pincock, 2017; UNICEF, 2011). In this study, the emphasis had been on the democratic process of suggesting alternatives of advancing progress, betterment and flourishing of human life (Velástegui, 2020; Walker and Boni, 2020).

Human development not only places people at the centre of development, but they are also seen as the main agents of development (Ibrahim, 2017). As such, increasing adolescent girls' freedom and agency in SRH decision-making portrayed in this study did not suggest prescriptive sexual normativity, creation of orgiastic experiences nor identify modes of grooming for self-objectification. Much in the same spirit of improving the human condition, this study emphasised a nuanced understanding of adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making which is essential for realising healthy and socio-economic lives.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The developing world is beset with serious adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls, of which Zimbabwe is one (Olaluwoye et al., 2022; Save the Children, 2021; Okonofua, 2021; Bankole et al., 2020; UNICEF, United Nations Women and Plan International, 2020; Liang et al., 2019). Following the 1994 ICPD, United Nations General Comment No. 22 on the right to SRH and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international development stakeholders identified SRH problems as

creating huge barriers to human progress (UNICEF, 2022; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016). However, some studies indicated that adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making had been largely conceptualised in the context in which adverse SRH outcomes justify the instrumental role of gender in development (Cobbett, 2014). Whereas ideologies and technical bureaucracy determine the discourse of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in policies and laws, much emphasis is placed on legal sexual regulation and the provision of SRH services in Zimbabwe (Matswetu and Bhana, 2023; Veritas Zimbabwe, 2022; Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2021).

Additionally, the often conception about SRH choices of adolescent girls from a crisis perspective (Unis and Sallstrom, 2020; Cheney, 2019; Pincock, 2017) provides a restrictive view about empowering them to pursue the lives they value. While adolescent girls are still growing physically, emotionally and cognitively (Liang et al., 2019; Sawyer et al., 2018), it is also necessary to locate their freedom and agency within particular cultural, social, institutional, and historical contexts. It would be unjust to impose certain hegemonic perspectives about freedom and agency of individual adolescent girls in SRH decision-making at the expense of differences culminating from the intersection of gender, age, class, education, race, sexuality, disability, religion and citizenship. As portrayed in Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 20) of 2013, persons under 18 years are children who are also entitled to freedoms from all practices which increase risks of harm to bodily integrity and dignity (Moyo, 2022). Constitutional provisions enable adolescent girls to challenge hegemonic power relations in SRH decision-making. For example, girls under 18 years can legally refuse to get into marriages or unions.

Notwithstanding the importance of ensuring that SRH services are universally available, accessible and acceptable, the Zimbabwean government's responses to SRH problems largely follows from the rationale of functional and technical healthcare services (Muchabaiwa and Mbonigaba, 2019; Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). Little is known, if any, about adolescent girls' struggles to have control of SRH decision-making pertinent to improved well-being. It is underscored that this study developed a strategy for increasing capacities of adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making, leading to enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives in Zimbabwe. As such,

freedom and agency in SRH decision-making were framed, in this study, in a context in which adolescent girls should not always be seen in need to be rescued with no intention to understand the reality from their own perspectives (Eaton and Stephens, 2020; Robeyns, 2017 Ross, 2017; Nussbaum, 2003). This study adopted a multidisciplinary approach to enhance the representations of adolescent girls' narratives about their social realities.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study paid attention to understand the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe. This was undertaken through the following secondary objectives:

- To describe knowledge about SRH among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.
- To explore experiences of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.
- To examine the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.
- To develop a strategy that provides a framework for increasing capacities of adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Questions were formulated to guide the research process.

- What is the state of knowledge about SRH among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District?
- What are adolescent girls' experiences of SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District?
- What are the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District?
- How can a strategy for increasing capacities of adolescent girls on SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives be developed?

1.5   JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Adolescent girls who suffer from SRH problems are deprived opportunities to make meaningful decisions for enhancing their socio-economic status and having healthy lives. The justification of this study was based on the need to understand social injustices which constrain adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making, leading to enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. Like in many parts of the world, ASRH is a site of ideological contestations in Zimbabwe. It had been argued that ASRH is characterised by moral panics and controversies which influence beliefs, perspectives and thoughts about what kind of information is necessary to improve SRH and to determine behaviour appropriate to adolescents (Manguro and Temmerman, 2022; McClelland, 2019). In this context, the study adopted a form of social action to reflect critically on how hegemonic power relations shape adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making (Collins, 2019; Fairclough, 2010). It is believed that the idea of agency requires a critical analysis of the interface of beliefs, knowledge, thoughts, interpretations and emotions in SRH decision-making. This study argues that hegemonic ideologies tend to create disadvantages which marginalise alternative discourses in epistemic interactions (Fricker, 2017). Drawing from this view, undertaking a study for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making is quintessential for promoting social justice.

Additionally, it was anticipated that undertaking this study would significantly contribute to improve SRH among adolescent girls in Zimbabwe. This study expected to produce knowledge which conscientizes stakeholders about the significance of recognising adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making. Also, aligning the study to efforts of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was also considered. Attention was paid to contribute to Goal 3 for achieving healthy lives and improved well-being, Goal 4 for promoting education which is inclusive, Goal 5 for ensuring gender equality and empowering girls, Goal 10 for reducing inequalities, and Goal 16 for creating societies which are peaceful and inclusive. Relevant government agencies, policymakers, civil society, and human rights advocates are expected to benefit from the study results through recommendations for addressing the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls.

1.6   ASSUMPTIONS/DEMARCATION/DELIMITATIONS

This study sought to develop the strategy that increased adolescent girls' control of SRH decision-making fundamental to enhance their socio-economic status and to enjoy healthy lives. The idea of this strategy arose from the assumption that adolescent girls not only lack comprehensive SRH knowledge, but they are also marginalised in SRH decision-making. In this context, adolescent girls have fewer options to make choices which reduces their vulnerability to SRH problems.

The researcher specifically focused on SRH knowledge, experiences in SRH decision-making, and implications of SRH decision-making to standard of living, education, health, and human security to understand the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. The methodology of the study had been suited in qualitative research which was ideal for engaging adolescent girls in dialogue. Participatory action research (PAR) was considered as the research design. The study considered adolescent girls who fit in the 16 – 19 years age category as eligible to participate in this study. Thirty-two adolescent girls were recruited and participated in data collection. Drawing on Gillick competence, 16 years is the considered age when a child develops the ability to make independent choices and can be afforded legal protection to autonomy (Zimmermann, 2019). In this study, the researcher considered 16 years as the lower age of the category because it aligned with the legal age of sexual consent as was defined in the Sexual Offences Act (Chapter 9:21). The researcher finished the fieldwork before the amendment of legal age of consent from 16 years to 18 years as outlined in Criminal Laws Amendment Act (Protection of Children and Young Persons) No. 1 of 2024.

1.7   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A bricolage theoretical framework (full details are in Chapter 2) was developed to enhance critical reflection on the situation under study. Decisions on SRH which involve adolescent girls are shrouded are not only embedded in multiple perspectives, but they are also contradictory. The bricolage theoretical framework provided alternative forms of rigour, breadth and complexity in knowledge production. Kincheloe et al. (2018) assert that claims to truth are implicated in power relations. The bricolage

metaphor enables a researcher to tinker with paradigms, theories and methods available to enhance a multifaceted portrayal of the situation under study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). Additionally, paradigms, theories and methods which previously appeared to be incompatible inform each other's arguments in a single study (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). Thus, the bricolage metaphor enabled the researcher to crystallise multiple paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological perspectives in this study. The researcher was pragmatic, reflexive and adaptive when building the relationship with participants. For example, a research team comprising the researcher and co-researchers was established.

1.8   METHODOLOGY

The methodology was anchored in qualitative research (full details in Chapter 5). As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) asserted, qualitative research approach associates with meaning making of people's beliefs, values, actions, and experiences within particular social worlds. The research design was developed through the PAR. The fieldwork took place between July 2022 and August 2023. The ontology of PAR emphasises respect of people's beliefs, world views, values and knowledge systems. In addition, its epistemology privileges the centrality of relationships and collaboration in data gathering and analysis. This was crucial, as this study sought to place participants' voices at the centre of interpreting adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making.

1.9   DEFINITION OF TERMS

To avoid multiple interpretation of key words by readers, this study defines the following key words:

Adaptive preference refers to individuals' lack of capacity to make meaningful choices due to unjust and oppressive conditions (Khader, 2019). Terlazzo (2021) describes adaptive preferences as unwilling compromise and endorsement of oppressive circumstances when making choices. It is defined as making a choice which conform to an oppressive situation or reproduce inequalities.

Adolescent girl refers to any girl between 10 and 19 years (World Health Organisation, 2018). Banati and Lansford (2018) describe an adolescent girl as any girl who falls within the 10 – 19 years age-group and still developing biological,

physical, psychological and emotional characteristics essential for transiting from childhood to adulthood. This study defines adolescent girl as any girl between 16 and 19 years regardless of marital status, level of education, class, disability and religious affiliation.

Agency is the capacity to act in ways which influence the process of social transformation (Kabeer, 2021). It is also defined as the capacity to choose responsibly and commitment to some values even if one does not determine their influence on one's well-being (UNDP, 2022). This study defines agency as the capability of adolescent girls to decide on goals which they value, with the intention to act upon them within the existing structures. It depends on the perception of power to make and communicate one's choice, desire or refusal (Fahs and McClelland, 2016). The exercise of agency is affected by demographic characteristics, socialisation, position in the social context, and constraints of social structure (Horowitz, 2014).

Control is described as having power over one's body and having freedom from discriminatory practices in SRH decision-making (Temin et al., 2018). Control is also described as adolescent girls' capacities to make choices and exercise self-restraint when acting upon those choices.

Decision-making is described as the freedom or opportunity to make choices from alternatives available to achieve one's goals. This involves freely making and exercising a choice in ways which enhance one's autonomy and control of SRH decision-making (Paul et al., 2017).

Freedom refers to processes which enhance people's agency and actual opportunities to circumvent preventive risks and insecurities which threaten well-being (Sen, 2000). It also entails expanding capabilities and opportunities of achieving the valued life (Chandler, 2013).

Gender is described as a deconstruct of physiological/bodily, identity, legal and social aspects which determine performance and norm-related behaviours (Lindqvist, Sendén and Renström, 2021). It is also described as a social construction of characteristics, roles, relationships and opportunities between men and women (Meena, 1992).

Sexual and reproductive health describes a person's well-being surrounding physical, mental, emotional and social states in all matters connecting to reproduction and sexuality (UNFPA, 2021).

Sexual violence refers to any unwanted sexual expression, assault or aggression which is deliberately directed at forcing, deceiving or pressuring someone to undergo or perform sexually-related actions without their consent (Lett and Rothstein, 2020). According to ZIMSTAT and UNICEF (2019), sexual violence refers to a sexual activity resulting from unwanted sexual expression, physical force or pressurisation to have sex. In this study, sexual violence is defined as actual or perceived maltreatment in sexual interactions.

Social justice is defined as an entitlement to a certain threshold essential for improved well-being that is important for developing capabilities (Schweiger and Graf, 2015; Nussbaum, 2000a). According to Johnson and Parry (2015), social justice is a commitment to challenge power and ideologies which perpetuate marginalisation, oppression and discrimination in the distribution of benefits, privileges and opportunities within society. It has also been defined as adolescent girls' entitlement to privileges and opportunities to participate in discussions which contribute to social transformation.

Vulnerability is viewed as being powerless due to injustice, discrimination and inequality (Aldridge, 2015). It is also understood as a relative condition of powerlessness, marginalisation and exclusion. Vulnerability is not an instance of weakness or disadvantage (Fineman, 2019).

1.10   THESIS OUTLINE

The thesis culminated from eight chapters outlined below:

Chapter 1: the chapter provided the overview of the study. The background to the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, justification of the study, brief description of theoretical framework, overview of methodology, and definition of terms.

Chapter 2: the chapter discussed the bricolage theoretical framework.

Chapter 3: the chapter highlighted the capability approach conceptual framework.

Chapter 4: the chapter reviewed previous studies and relevant literature as important to enhance critical reflection on ideas and views about the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls.

Chapter 5: the chapter examined the methodology developed for this study and focused on the following: research design, data gathering methods and tools, trustworthiness, and ethical issues.

Chapter 6: the chapter involved presentation and discussion of findings

Chapter 7: the chapter presented the strategy developed in this study. The strategy was about increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making.

Chapter 8: being the final chapter, the focus was on the following: a summary of findings, suggestions for further research, recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: BRICOLAGE: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   INTRODUCTION

As Collins and Stockhom (2018) assert, a theoretical framework encompasses employing a theory or theories to articulate signposts of how new knowledge might be produced in a study. Bearing on the assertion that particular theoretical insights are socially constructed and historically situated (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018; Kincheloe, 2004), this chapter intended to develop a theoretical framework through bricolage. In doing so, the researcher acknowledged the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Zimbabwe. The objectives of bricolage, origins, and evolution of the bricolage are discussed in this chapter. A discussion of the historical moments pertinent to paradigms and theories is given. Bricolage's ontology and epistemology, formats of the bricolage and the researcher positionality are also presented.

2.2   THE OBJECTIVES OF BRICOLAGE

Given that SRH decision-making among adolescent girls is shrouded in many controversies, the bricolage helped to avoid a reductionist view about the situation under study through use of multiple theories. Also, it was important to avoid generalisation of language in use based on a single theory. The bricolage metaphor provides alternative ways of bringing together multiple theories in a single study. The bricolage captures alternative forms of rigour, breadth and complexity which enhance multiple ways of knowing in knowledge production (Kincheloe, 2004). In doing so, claims to truth are implicated within the networks of power (Kincheloe et al., 2018). Denzin and Lincoln (2018) point out that the bricolage enables a researcher to tinker with research methods available to enhance a multifaceted portrayal of the situation under study.

A researcher-as-bricoleur draws from available methods to adduce a dialectic relationship between objective and subjective ways of making meaning about the situation under study. As such, paradigms, theories and methods which previously appeared to be incompatible inform each other's arguments in a single study (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). Employing the bricolage is not so much about theories and

methods to use but the theoretical and methodological stances enacted by the researcher (Fayard, 2018). In this way, the researcher considers the research process as pragmatic, reflexive and adaptive to context and interactions between the researcher and participants. Therefore, the bricolage theoretical framework enhances critical dialogue.

2.3   ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE BRICOLAGE

The bricolage metaphor was first introduced in the social sciences domain by Lévi-Strauss in a book entitled *La Pensee Sauvage* (*The Savage Mind*, 1966) to study mythical and intellectual thought about cultures across societies (Phillimore et al., 2016; Altglas, 2014). Bricolage is a French metaphor which describes a process through which a bricoleur tinkers, improvises and innovates with finite available tools to achieve the task at hand as well as creating knowledge which enables new interpretation of the social world (Mahlomaholo, 2013; Kincheloe, 2004). Lévi-Strauss describes bricolage as making-do which implies a do-it-yourself handyman or handywoman with available tools to use for accomplishing the task at hand and proffer solutions to life problems (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018; Mudau, 2018). Bricolage allows the researcher to tinker with multiple theories, diverse worldviews and multi-methods when addressing study objectives and questions.

Using bricolage in qualitative research, as Altglas (2014) notes, evolved from understanding cultural change to focus on people's choices, eclectic lifestyles and social identities. Importantly, people are now positioned as the centre for social change. In its original conception in the 1960s, the bricolage had been applied in many diverse research contexts, across disciplines and largely informed by structuralist perspectives with little bearing on the influence of power on social relations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). Rogers (2012) highlights that the bricolage had been further conceptualised as an eclectic approach to social inquiry by prominent qualitative researchers like Norman K. Denzin, Yvonne Lincon, Joe L. Kincheloe and Kathleen S. Berry to encompass reflexivity, creativity and multiple ways of understanding a social reality. This implies that the bricolage could also be applied in line with postmodern, poststructuralist and critical theory assumptions of representing the social world.

Kincheloe (2004) argues that an emphasis on meaning-making incites one to study a social situation in a particular context.

With the onset of the 21st Century, the bricolage is applied in qualitative research to use paradigms, theories and methods in ways which enhance critical reflection on the situation under study and to promote social justice in research (Kincheloe, 2005). Scholars, such as Norman K. Denzin, Yvonne Lincon, Joe L. Kincheloe and Kathleen S. Berry, theorise bricolage to enhance critical inquiry and use multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives (Mosia, 2016). Multiple methods, theories and paradigms are deployed through a strategy which does not render a theory as superior over others. From this perspective, the bricoleur is strategic and self-conscious about adopting multiple positionalities in research (Steinberg, 2012).

2.4 HISTORICAL MOMENTS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Several historical moments influenced social science researches since early 20th Century. A discussion of the historical moments is bounded within the influence of context and power on selecting theoretical and methodological stances in qualitative research (McClelland, 2019). To appreciate the significance of using bricolage metaphor, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) suggest that the researcher should grasp different historical moments in qualitative research. These historical moments have informed qualitative research since the early 20th century. The following sub-sections explore the historical moments in detail.

2.4.1 The Traditional Period

It is highlighted that the traditional period is connected to the origins of scientific thought in social science research and qualitative inquiry, in particular. Of interest, the positivist paradigm heavily informed decisions on methodology and data analysis in social science research during this period. This section presents the origins, methods and methodological positions, researcher and participants' relationship and socio-historical context of the traditional period to the study.

2.4.1.1 Origins

The traditional period emerged in early 1900s and lasted to mid-1940s (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). This period marked the first historical moment and the beginning of empirical qualitative research (Mohajan, 2018). The traditional period laid the foundations of the scientific knowledge in social science research (Khanna, 2019). As highlighted by Walia (2015), philosophical assumptions of this historical moment are linked to the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods of the 16th and 17th centuries, respectively. Major contributions to scientific thought are attributed to Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626), Galileo (1564 – 1642), Rene Descartes (1596 – 1650) and Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727) (Khanna, 2019).

The foundational scientific method in social science research is credited to the French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798 - 1857) who introduced methods of natural and physical sciences as the standard model of doing social inquiry (Fillafer, 2022). Qualitative research was largely established as a mirror-image of researches carried out in natural and physical sciences that were, and are still, objective and value-free. The manipulation of research methods strives to maintain an objective view about the situation under study. The philosophical assumption is that social reality both independently exists of the researcher. In its extreme, the researcher should view the situation under study like a natural or physical attribute.

Empirical researches in the early 20th Century were used to legitimise other purposes such as spreading western civilisation, modernity and ranking cultures. Positivist social researchers acted in complicity with imperialism and colonisation to give representations of participants as a museum-like monumentalism with no reference to time (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The research subject carried the identity of the *other*, who was foreign, strange and alien throughout the research process (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). Ethnographic narratives and linguistic literature reflected the researchers' obligation to transmit cultural hegemony which justified the imposition of Eurocentric socio-economic models of reproduction upon indigenous people (Prevost, 2017).

2.4.1.2　Methods and Methodological Positions

Informed by the positivist paradigm, qualitative researchers carried out ethnographic researches on other cultures from worldviews of their own cultures. Ethnography was the major research method in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The preoccupation was to fit data gathered into pre-determined stereotypes and beliefs about colonised cultures. From a positivist perspective, the researcher demonstrates the ability to manipulate variables in ways which ensure prediction and control. A researcher equipped with his or her predetermined research methods can dominate the research process (Hamilton, 2020). The ability of a researcher to explain relationships between variables of interest is pivotal to make conclusions about the situation under study.

Empirical data had been at the centre of validating this study. Participants' narratives would act as empirical data essential to authenticate explanation of the nexus between adolescent girls' SRH decision-making and human development in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, many studies had been conducted in contemporary social science research which privilege scientific knowledge that is objective and value-free. For example, Indongo (2020) explored socio-economic and demographic variables which determine teenage pregnancy in Namibia. Quantitative data drawn from previous studies were fundamental in this study for determining trends and levels of SRH outcomes among adolescent girls. Mosia (2016) opines that the researcher-as-bricoleur is mindful of the traditional moment's theoretical and methodological approaches when constructing the bricolage.

2.4.1.3　Relationship between Researcher and Participants

The positivist paradigm is based on methodological conventions and grand narratives that describe events as taking place in a world independent of human consciousness (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). With a quest for adhering to objectivity, the researcher has power to determine the kind of interaction appropriate to participants prior to conducting research. In such a situation, the researcher is seen as an expert who mostly has a know-it-all attitude. The researcher has powers to treat the researched as mere respondents with no capacity for emotional expression. The researched are subjected to respond to questions with limited input, if any, to the context in which they interact with the researcher.

2.4.1.4 Social and Historical Context of the Traditional Period to the Study

Positivist ethnographic researches in the early 20th Century had a huge imprint on African societies and economies (Potter, 2014). Social statistics provided evidence which reinforced stereotypical notions of masculinities and femininities in policy and laws, with little attention to relations of power which shape social realities of indigenous people. For example, the incorporation of the notion of sexuality in the development discourse casted a moral and an economic project for ordering African societies into naturalised gender binaries (Cornwall, 2014). Although statistics quantified the evidence of the social problem, they limited the scope for understanding social realities of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making through predetermined categories.

During the colonial period, the Western language of science added a layer to the interpretation of indigenous knowledge systems. The case of transforming customary marriages practices through legal codes in colonial Zimbabwe is illustrative (Jeater, 2005). Some traditional marriage customs like *kuzvarira* (girl child pledging), *musengabere* (bride kidnapping) and *kuripa ngozi* (pledging a virgin to appease an avenging spirit) were classified as irrational and barbaric, hence they were criminalised. Consequently, adolescent girls were partly protected from forced marriages. However, these new ways of interpreting African customary marriage practices created contradictions and controversies by romanticising gender inequalities within the broader context of colonisation. The systematic reproduction of the *other* in the division of wage labour naturalised men as the most preferred workforce in industrial and commercial sectors thereby reinforcing the hegemonic masculinity of the male breadwinner (Cornwell, 2014; Sachikonye, 2012). Opportunities for social mobility among women and girls remained marginal. Suffice it to postulate that colonisation ushered in new interpretations of early marriage and transactional sex as ideal alternatives to escape socio-economic predicaments.

2.4.2 The Modernist Phase

Postpositivism emerged in mid-1940s as an alternative philosophical perspective in qualitative inquiry. Critique to the belief in objectivity and manifestation of a single reality led to recognising multiple ways of knowing about social reality. Qualitative researchers also embraced interpretivist and social constructionist in pursuit for understanding social reality. This section presents the origins, methods and

methodological positions, relationship of researcher and participants and socio-historical context of the modernist phase to the study.

2.4.2.1 Origins

The modernist phase spanned from the mid-1940s to around 1970 (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The phase is also known as the golden age moment. Researchers adopted the language and rhetoric of standardising research methods during gathering and analysing data to achieve validity, objectivity and generalisability. Qualitative research adopted postpositivist perspectives of being reductionistic, logical and deterministic based on theory selected prior to carrying out the research (Creswell, 2023). In the 1950s and 1960s, the philosopher of science, Karl Popper, criticised the positivist's verification of the truth of a theory and proposed the hypothetico-deductive scientific method in which falsifiability of a theory renders a study scientific (Khanna, 2019). Wilhelm Dilthey contributed to interpretivist thought in qualitative research by introducing the concept of *verstehen* (understanding) and also emphasised the importance of studying people's social realities within a particular social and historical context (Walia, 2015).

2.4.2.2 Methods and Methodological Positions

During the modernist phase, qualitative researchers were now acknowledging the importance of diverse and multiple interpretive approaches in social science research, although objectivity and causal relationships remained important to interpreting the study results. Thus, the focus on essentialism in explaining social reality envisaged in the traditional period came under spotlight and was critiqued. Thomas Khun introduced the concept of paradigm to articulate the manifest of paradigmatic shifts in interpretation of social reality (Anand, Larson and Mahoney, 2020). In this way, paradigms fundamentally influenced how research problems were articulated, questions formulated and methodological decisions made.

An interpretive turn gathered momentum during the modernist phase as researchers used interpretive theories. Some interpretive theories include critical theory, ethnomethodology, phenomenology and grounded theory (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Methodological considerations are supported by particular philosophical and theoretical positions (Creswell and Poth, 2018). As the researcher embraces an

interpretive framework, participants' social realities are understood through multiple levels of data analysis to ensure rigour (Creswell, 2023). The researcher-as-bricoleur is conscious that no theory is superior to another and theories are not readily available for synthesising. It is argued that a social reality in qualitative research is not readily available for measurement and observation, but it can be represented in textual form that could be read, interpreted and deconstructed (Tracy, 2013).

Additionally, the possibility that a researcher can use multiple paradigms or multiple theories in a single study improves the methodology in ways which facilitate deeper and broader insights into the lifeworlds of participants (Cilesiz and Greckhamer, 2020). Remarkably, SRH issues and rights among adolescent girls are characterised by intersecting identities of age, gender, culture, education and class which require an interpretation from multiple worldviews. Relevant to methodology is the ability to acknowledge the influence of the multiplicity of identities on context and subjectivities.

Social identities are socially and historically embedded. The ability to employ the interpretive paradigm enables the researcher to navigate multiple identities which shape how the researcher and participants interact in research. Negotiating multiple social identities deconstructs the unilinear process of knowledge production. In a context in which the researcher dominates the research process, it is not possible to identify how dominant power relations shape epistemic injustices in knowledge production (McCollum, 2012). As this study involved the interaction between an adult male and adolescent girls, an interpretive paradigm increased consciousness about the relationship between power and gender relations. Therefore, reflexivity was requisite to deconstruct and challenge self-interests during data collection and analysis (Rhodes and Carlsen, 2018).

Selected paradigms, theories and methods which emerged during the modernist phase are discussed in this section. Since it is not possible to discuss all the theories within the scope of this study, some theories were purposively selected. Grounded theory is one of interpretive theories useful for interpreting social realities of participants. The grounded theory first used in the 1960s as the brain child of Glaser and Strauss (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021). The researcher simultaneously gathers and analyses data (Charmaz and Thornberg, 2021). According to Glaser (2012), the

data can be rendered objective by employing procedures that enable the researcher to look at many cases of the single situation from the data. An explanatory theory is generated when researchers adopt inductive strategies to conceptualise their data (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2019). Researcher biases are reified by taking into account diverse narratives of participants through constant comparative method and theoretical sampling.

Several scholars further developed the classical grounded theory. Kathy Charmaz and Antony Bryant remodelled the grounded theory to add theoretical insights about social construction of reality from data (Belgrave and Seide, 2019). Charmaz (2020) underscores that constructivist grounded theory strives to promote critical inquiry and social justice. A researcher co-constructs experience and meaning with participants (Tie, Birks and Francis, 2019). Adele Clarke incorporates a situational analysis to grounded theory which takes into account reflexivity, differences, complexities and power in research (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). The researcher focuses not only on social action, but also on the situation when doing data analysis. Grounded theory emphasises flexibility in implementing the research process. Following this view, the researcher found it useful to blend some methodological assumptions of constructivist grounded theory to strengthen the research design based on PAR. While it is expected to involve participants in all stages of the research in PAR, it was not achievable in this study. Mindful that knowledge production in PAR is an outcome of experience, the researcher blended epistemological aspects of grounded theory to improve the process of theorising experiences in knowledge production (Azulai, 2021). This involved social construction of knowledge. Grounded theory also helped to make decisions on the extent of involving participants in the research process. In this study, participants were involved in recruitment process and data gathering.

Critical theory is another theory popularised in the modernist phase. It emerged as a brainchild of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research, with leanings to Freud's psychoanalysis and Marxist (Müller-Doohm, 2017). Rothe and Ronge (2016) highlight that prominent Frankfurt Institute of Social Research critical theorists were Max Horkheimer, Theodor Odorno, Leo Lowenthal, Hebert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin and Jürgen Habermas, among others. Critical theory attested to the departure from the Marxist economic determinist view of cultural change to focus on the subjective

relationship between economy and culture. Fundamental to critical theory is the idea that knowledge is more a product of a collaborative process (Rondelez, 2021). Critical theorists believe that a theory can be both cognitive and reflective to encapsulate consciousness and emancipation. This denotes critical theory as crucial to emphasise historical context in addressing social problems. The idea is to facilitate critical dialogue for further engagement. Critical theory was useful for the critique of crisis discourse and to conceptualise adolescent girls' control of SRH decision-making compatible with the desire to achieve socio-economic status and enjoying healthy lives in the current context.

Critical theory generated interests from many scholars around the world and applied across disciplines. This study selected the communicative action theory by Jürgen Habermas, Bourdieu's theory of practice, and Paulo Freire's theory of critical consciousness are discussed in this section as types of critical theory. Corresponding to each of these critical theories is their emphasis on critical reflection on ideologies which shape representations of social realities among members of society. Long (2017) highlights that Jürgen Habermas made contributions to critical theory through communicative action theory. Communicative action is a process for engagement to reach mutual understanding among stakeholders about aspects which affect their lives (Long, 2017).

Communicative action theory acknowledges the influence of hermeneutical structures such as tradition, culture, language and power on social realities. According to Jürgen Habermas, hermeneutic structures are responsible for the discursive construction of truth, meaning and interpersonal relations (Webber, 2018). It is asserted that people lack freedom to interact in the public sphere because of dominant institutions which distort or suppress the communicative action. This lack of freedom is also self-imposed because of the inherent coercion to interact in accustomed ways of legitimising a particular social practice in conformity to existing structures.

In theory of practice, Pierre Bourdieu argues that subjects are socialised habitus which is a set of expectations and perceptive patterns which give meaning to social practices among people (Piroddi, 2021). Habitus describes worldviews, schema of thinking, and practical knowledge which may legitimise or justify the domination of social institutions

and structures over social practices. In this context, social dispositions provide the impetus to reproduce class and inequalities (Shimoni, 2018). As a dynamic process which shapes people's thinking and perceptions about the world, habitus is constrained by field and capital (Costa, Burke and Murphy, 2019). Capital represents the material and symbolic resources which delimit one's ability to make choice (Costa, Burke and Murphy, 2019). Decisions reflect on the internalised social dispositions which shape subjects' interpretations of their social realities. Subjects render their thoughts and perceptions to existing normative and collective understandings of expected social action (Carter and Duncan, 2018). Thus, the decision-making process embodies a common-sense view about social rules of acting in a certain way. The theory of practice enhances understanding of how dominant structures impact on adolescent girls' capacities to participate in debates on aspects which affect their lives.

Paulo Freire formulated critical consciousness theory to propose transformative strategies for conscientizing people about oppressive conditions. Critical consciousness denotes enhancing capacities of marginalised people to reflect and challenge hegemonic social forces that create oppressive social relations (Seider et al., 2017). According to Boone, Roets and Roose (2019), Paulo Freire draws attention to reflect critically on the relationship between the dominant knower and the oppressed. Paulo Freire indicated that monologue pedagogy is top-down and reinforces existing dominant power relations that perpetuate oppression. Marginalised people would not develop critical consciousness about their social realities. In a research context, critical consciousness cannot be promoted where a researcher occupies a value-neutral, objective and know-it-all position. The voices of the marginalised would be muted since the researcher has exclusive powers to fix the boundaries within which participants think and act. It is imperative for a researcher to facilitate critical thinking to avoid decisions which perpetrate prejudices.

Interpretive and critical theories are important to address objective interpretation of situation under study in qualitative research (Willis, 2007). These theories are also useful in designing methods for enhancing the participation of marginalised adolescent girls in research. The research process would utilise hermeneutic thinking in accounting social realities with reference to purpose, context and imagination (Forster

and Giesdal, 2019). As D'Souza (2019) highlights, hermeneutic structures enable the interpretation of events where language is the basic medium of understanding. African cultures' tendency to speak about sexuality through taboos and sacred values shows an absence of a naturalistic attitude towards sex. In the African context, Wangamati (2020) highlighted that Christianity and colonialism destroyed the key role of aunts in socialising girls on issues of SRH and making schools central to delivering comprehensive sexuality education.

2.4.2.3   Relationship between Researcher and Participants

During the modernist phase, relationships in research were interpreted using the language and rhetoric of the postpositivist discourse (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). Abstraction prevailed to ensure that methods are replicable in another research setting and even at a different time. The researcher maintained an aloof social position through adhering to impartiality, falsification, approximation of truth, likelihood and reproducibility of findings. Participants no longer carried the identity of the *other*, but they are categorised as respondents (Mosia, 2016). In other words, respondents are sampled and voluntarily take part in the study whereby their answers form the critical component of the study results (Green, 2008). Qualitative researchers also adopt philosophical assumptions that enact close or collaborative interactions with participants. For example, critical theorists and feminist researchers focus on research oriented toward promoting transformation and social justice.

2.4.2.4   Social and Historical Context of the Modernist Phase to the Study

In the modernist phase, the postpositivist approach became the standard norm in development research, giving prominence to generalisation of levels of economic development across the world (Potter, 2014). The popularity of quantitative methods in the 1950s and 1960s conceptualised development in spatial terms. This also includes ranking countries by aggregate indicators of income. It was presumed that technology transfer would inevitably lead to the adoption of standards of economic development in underdeveloped countries (Stone, 2017). Universal ranking of countries based on income indicators is still the most method used in international development.

Additionally, the use of the birth control pill was approved in 1960 by the United States Food and Drug Administration and subsequently contributed significantly to the sexual revolution (Watkins, 2012). The sexual revolution is associated with engaging in sexual activities merely for pleasure and sexual liberation was embraced as healthy (Timm and Sanborn, 2016). However, Cornwall (2014) argues that the interpretation of sexual relations within the international development discourse after World War II increased emphasis on harmful practices, disease and health hazards while paying little attention to pleasure, joy, intimacy and happiness. However, there was a shift from sexual morality to reproductive control. This brought political dynamics of control over the body under spotlight (Makoni and Makoni, 2011). It is argued that SRH decision-making among adolescent girls could not be simply reduced to pure ignorance, but also points to broader socio-economic, cultural and political realities which shape gender relations (Kiguwa, 2019).

In addition, structural and market forces created constraints on agency based on race, class and gender. Limits to girls' capacities to make decisions on SRH in colonial Zimbabwe are broadly explained by racial and patriarchal domination. While colonial government legally regulated sexual relations, patriarchy acted in complicity to enforce expected moral order through control of female sexuality (Jackson, 2002). It is paradoxical that young women were monitored under the façade of protecting them from immorality (Provest, 2017). Thus, migration of unaccompanied young women to urban centres, commercial farms and mining compounds was resented by the state and patriarchal system. Young women's SRH decisions always gained social acceptance when they were in conformity with social expectations of staying away from public spaces. Autonomous decisions on SRH of young women were categorised as dangerous and signs of immorality (Benson and Chadya, 2005).

2.4.3 Blurred Genres

Debates on the centrality of paradigms in qualitative research raised questions about disciplinary boundaries. Pinpointing values in research underscored different ways of interpreting the social world. This section presents the origins, methods and methodological positions, researcher and participants relationship, and socio-historical context of the blurred genres to the study.

2.4.3.1   Origins

The blurred genres moment, which emerged in 1970 and lasted up to 1986, was characterised by tensions between quantitative and qualitative researches on philosophical and methodological approaches (Flick, 2005). The emergence of the interpretive paradigm increasingly influenced qualitative researchers to draw on methods and theories from other disciplines, especially the humanities. Disciplinary boundaries became blurred as social scientists turned to humanities for theories, models and methods in pursuit for pluralistic and interpretive explanations of the situation under study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). The blurred genres moment helps to unravel subaltern knowledges which would otherwise remain invisible when using postpositivist philosophical assumptions.

2.4.3.2   Methods and Methodological Positions

The blurred genres moment associated with the proliferation of paradigms, theories and methodologies in qualitative research such as symbolic interactionism, constructivism, naturalistic inquiry, neo-Marxist, semiotics, hermeneutics, structuralism, constructivism, action research, case study, historical, and biographical research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). The cumulative effect of paradigms was existence of alternative ways of collecting and analysing data using methods which allowed rigorous textual analysis of participants' narratives. In addition, triangulation was introduced in the 1970s to combine multiple methods in a single study (Caillaud et al., 2019). As a multi-method approach, triangulation improves rigour by addressing personal biases of the researcher and also finding convergence of multiple perspectives in explaining a single reality (Tracy, 2013).

Qualitative methodologies developed during this period enabled social scientists to move away from pursuing universal explanations to employing case studies and interpretive frameworks to achieve thick description of the researched (Smith, 2011). Thick description is useful to acknowledge voices of participants and to enhance credibility of research findings. Kincheloe (2005) underscores that the bricolage enables the researcher to develop thick description, which avoids a reductionistic about participants' lived experiences. The process of interpretation text was characterised by description of events. According to Fairclough (2018a), this involved

synthesising linguistic analysis with social theory, based on the static perspective of power.

Participatory research emerged and gained popularity in the developing world during this period. Participatory research gained popularity in developing regions in the 1970s (Rahman, 2008; Swantz, 2008). Participatory research places emphasis on utilisation of collaborative strategies in research (Hall and Tandon, 2017; Reason and Bradbury, 2008). It facilitates reflective thought and consciousness about the implications of power in research. Furthermore, data quality is more of a reflection on how the researcher managed to establish relationship with participants. In effect, the study results have a bearing on transformative change and social justice pertinent to addressing social problems such as inequalities, exploitation, violence, oppression and poverty.

Some theories which got increased use among researchers with marginalised social groups in developing countries during this period are discussed. Feminist theory is associated with political activism of women's liberation movement across the world (Molyneux et al., 2020). It is highlighted that there are several forms of feminism which include radical feminism, Marxist feminism, liberal feminism, African feminism, poststructuralist feminism and postcolonial feminism. Broadly, feminist theory argues for the transformation of structures for women's liberation and inclusive society (Byrne, 2020). Feminism suggests that theory must address challenges faced by women such as abuse, violence, oppression, and discrimination (Wakefield and Zimmerman, 2020). The patriarchal system is conceptualised as perpetrating sexual exploitation and discriminatory gender roles. Feminist theory is significant in interrogating the tendency of overlooking power asymmetries in SRH decision-making among adolescent girls. Moreover, feminist theory forges a reflexive research process that enables critical scrutiny of power asymmetries embodied in social structures. At the theoretical level, feminism is imperative for a critique of adolescent girls' oppression and discrimination in SRH decision-making.

Symbolic interactionism, as coined by Herbert Blumer, provides alternative theoretical perspectives to the positivist view of dominant social forces (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). According to Carter and Alvarado (2019), symbolic interactionism

is both a theory and a method pertinent to understanding how individuals develop subjective meanings about their attitudes, motives and behaviours based on shared definitions of social reality. Interpretation is on how social interaction determines people's views about society. People are socialised to participate in collective action and in formation of relationships. Bricolage enables the researcher to interpret subjective meanings developed by subjects as autonomous and active agents in construction of social reality (Tie, Birks and Francis, 2019). Having agency determines subjects' capacities to cope with social expectations and roles in interactions that prelude to collective action. However, there is the possibility that subjects make decisions about personal lives pragmatically, depending on the situation and in connection with others (Duncan, 2011).

2.4.3.3   Relationship between Researcher and Participants

As indicated above, triangulation became an important methodological strategy for conducting qualitative research. During the blurred genres moment, researchers benefited from the accumulation of many research methods developed during the traditional period and modernist phase. The researcher-as-bricoleur is aware that his or her ability to piece together multiple tools of data collection increases inclusiveness in participation. In addition, promoting an inclusive process also enables the researcher to promote marginalised voices in research (Mudau, 2018). As such, subjectivities of both the researcher and participants are managed through establishing mutually beneficial relationships. In this way, participants are considered as capable of participating in representations of their social realities.

2.4.3.4   Social and Historical Context of the Blurred Genres to the Study

In the 1970s, the approach to ranking countries according to aggregate indicators was challenged by deepening poverty and inequalities in Third World countries. The crude explanations of underdevelopment in Third World countries showed no evidence of income disparities within developing countries. Moreover, the impact of income indicators on lifestyles is interpreted differently across cultures. For example, Kaler (2006) notes that elders in Malawi linked money with the breaking down of social institutions that hold together bonds of respect and collective action. In the 1970s, structuralism and humanism proposed alternative models of development (Potter, 2014; Desai and Potter, 2006). Development thinking moved beyond the use of

income as the single proxy of well-being to focus on multiple dimensions of poverty and human deprivations (Currie-Alder, 2016).

Structuralism and humanism increased awareness about social dimensions of development. Gender relations drew increased attention to policymakers, civil society and development practitioners in developing countries. Although gender had been institutionalised in development in the 1970s, it had instrumental roots (Cobbett, 2014). This elicits an understanding of conditions and structures which constrain adolescent girls to have control of SRH choices. Adolescent girls lack freedom to determine alternatives in deliberations which shape their participation in SRH decision-making. Timm and Sanborn (2016) argue that gender relations are still shaped by social construction of heterosexual relationships and the accepted standards of sexual behaviour between men and women.

Additionally, the rhetoric of the population problem in colonial Zimbabwe was shrouded by the language of racial politics, underdevelopment and environmental degradation. Race-based views about the detrimental effects of population on environment and development in colonial Zimbabwe were justified through Neo-Malthusian perspectives. It is highlighted that the population growth question obfuscated colonial governments' obsession with the eugenicist discourse of quality population and the black peril moral panic (Wells, 2017). Fear of the black peril prompted decisive political measures to deal with African sexuality (Youé, 2018). Black peril escalated the view that black African women were sexually immoral, promiscuous and vectors of STDs. Black African men were regarded as sexually violent and a danger to white women. However, population control prevailed as a strategy to address concerns around African sexuality.

The solution to the African population explosion was found in providing family planning services. Formally established as a not-for-profit organisation in 1965 and later covered the whole country in the 1970s, the Family Planning Association of Rhodesia provided contraceptives to both white and black African women (Makoni and Makoni, 2011). Women were described as the target group in population control. This might be attributed to the colonial government's perception that it would be achievable to check population growth without disrupting racial and patriarchal power relations. As such,

the freedom gained by women through use of family planning was an unintended consequence. Moreover, it is argued that control of black African young women's sexuality was more of fiddling with female psyche and habits of thought about intimate relationships, in line with scripts of appropriate sexual behaviour.

Fertility regulation also became a contentious ideological issue between African nationalists and white settlers during the liberation war in the 1970s (Maggwa, et al., 2001). For example, the administration of the Depo-Provera became a political tool among black African nationalists to resist family planning (Kirkegaard, 2004). The tensions which characterised fertility regulation signified discriminatory treatment of women and girls in dominant racial and nationalist ideologies. Resistance to family planning services vindicated the nationalist position of treating women who used modern contraceptive methods as sexually irresponsible. Although women's voices were marginalised in both formal population control and African nationalist anti-family planning discourses, black African women adopted modern family planning methods. The number of women who visited family planning clinics increased from 9 000 to 46 000 between 1972 and 1978 (Makoni and Makoni, 2011).

Soon after independence in 1980, significant changes took place aiming at empowering the black African population. The 1982 Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA) became one the historical statute in recognising black Africans as capable to determine their lives. Through the Act, any citizen becomes a major after attaining 18 years, regardless of gender and race. Although the Act was non-discriminatory along gender lines, criticism was against women's and girls' independent decisions on issues which they used to rely on men's approval such as claiming seduction damages and looking for formal jobs. Ironically, the criticism resulted in increased power and authority of traditional leaders over marital relationships. With the support of some members of parliament, traditional leaders succeeded in lobbying for the revival of their authority to protect African marriages through customary courts (Alexander, 2006). However, the Zimbabwean government's position on sexual and reproductive behaviour was partly harmonious to the international public health concern during this period.

The 1984 Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC) Act proposed a holistic approach to family planning services. Family planning was adopted as a health priority. The Zimbabwean government adopted the family planning programme with a narrow focus on providing family planning methods to meet women's reproductive health needs. Such public health concern points to the intersection among gender, contraception and medicalisation of the female body in discourses that define women as consumers of contraceptives (Makoni, 2012). Gender relations were used to describe boundaries between agency and vulnerability in SRH decision-making among women. Women as bearers of the burden of childbearing were, and are still, viewed as highly vulnerable and at greater risk to reproductive health problems. While contraception protects women from unwanted pregnancies, the rhetoric of family planning overlooked the essence of expanding adolescent girls' capabilities to having control of SRH choices.

It is argued that women's abilities to initiate collective demands and needs in post-colonial Zimbabwe were subsumed in the political process of redressing racial inequalities and fostering nationalist ideologies (Essof, 2013). The gender identity in the state politicking becomes illusory when its social construction intersects with categories of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and political affiliation. Gender identities are more nuanced in how women's movement advocated for legislative reforms in the post-colonial Zimbabwe. Apparently, certain expressions of gender and sexuality were, and are still, perceived by the Zimbabwean government as dangerous and threats to nation-building. As such, the representation of gendered interests and aspirations in national development is characterised by contradictions, controversies and collusions, with iterations of events indicating the Zimbabwean state's concerns with a broader moral and political order from its own perspective. In debates about adolescent girls' SRH decision-making, contraceptives have often been depicted as markers of licentiousness.

2.4.4 Crisis of Representation

As Denzin and Lincoln (2018) point out, the blurred genres moment culminated in a crisis of representation where paradigm wars erupted between interpretivist and postpositivist researchers. This section presents the origins, methods and

methodological positions, the researcher and participants relationship and the socio-historical context of the crisis of representation to the study.

2.4.4.1 Origins

As the fourth historical moment, the crisis of representation arose between 1986 and 1990. The blurring of disciplinary boundaries ignited conflicts around the appropriateness of integrating qualitative methods with quantitative methods in research (Denzin, 2010). Although paradigm wars were associated with disputes of superiority between quantitative and qualitative approaches (Galvez, Heiberger and McFarland, 2020), triangulation of theories and methods in a single study was viewed as creating problems for ensuring validity and rigour as proof of truth in qualitative research (Mudau, 2018).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), relying on text created a crisis on representing and legitimising participants' narratives in ways that ensure rigour. Instead, researchers adopted reflective approaches to carry out qualitative research (Giuseppe and Miller, 2014). The representation of a single reality was viewed as not possible because of the existence of multiple ways of representing social reality. Researchers faced challenges when presenting social realities of participants in their written reports. The representation of social realities became text written by the researcher through successive stages of self-reflection during the fieldwork, up to the presentation of study results.

2.4.4.2 Methods and Methodological Positions

Interpretivists focused on interpreting immediate meanings of actions from the perspectives of participants and on the importance of relationships to interpreting data in research (Roulston and Halpin, 2022). During the crisis of representation, researchers used reflective approaches which enabled them to capture localised and contextual accounts of participants' social realities. The significance of reflective approaches as suggested in the crisis of representation enables a researcher to interweave pragmatic strategies with scientific research methods in knowledge production. In doing so, data collection and analysis are intertwined activities which take place simultaneously (Willis, 2007). Reality is not known by direct observation of

the study situation, but through the text. For text to find legitimacy, it must provide material resources for describing social realities.

While interpretation of text is one of the core attributes of understanding reality in qualitative research, the representation of identities is not inimical to power, institutional constraints, resistance and innovation, thereby suggesting the partiality of truth (Corman, 2021). Interpreting text for the sake of searching the truth is not doing justice to participants. Interpretation also needs to relate to the responsibility of putting power dynamics into perspective when taking a critical stance on lived experiences of participants. The researcher needs to listen to participants, while reflecting critically on the circumstances which shape collaboration in knowledge production.

Researchers interested in qualitative research became more attentive to the influence of race, class and gender on social conditions of knowing and also in how these identities are forged in how the researcher interacts with participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Despite diverse approaches, Kiguwa (2019) highlights that the feminist movement adopted critical methodologies which enhanced participants' autonomy in research, while interpreting women's realities. This is crucial in research with adolescent girls, hence recognising them as a demographic group in its own right and also with its particular needs and interests.

2.4.4.3   Relationship between Researcher and Participants

The crisis of representation radically disrupted the assumption that developing relationships with participants in research is a source of bias and is unscientific (Kirshner and Kamberelis, 2022). Ravenek and Rudman (2013) articulate that the researcher's power was questioned by focusing on participants' understandings of their social worlds. In addition, the ways the researcher interacts affect the validity of knowledge produced within particular contexts. However, researchers encountered challenges when interpreting participants' perspectives in the presentation of study results. As researchers adopted new ways of representing the truth, they struggled with the crisis of authenticating research participants' views as trustworthy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

2.4.4.4 Social and Historical Context of the Crisis of Representation to the Study

By the mid-1980s, Zimbabwe's family planning programme was recognised internationally as one of the most successful in Africa (Makoni, 2012). The programme received donor support from the United Nations, international development agencies and NGOs. However, Law (2021) argues that enhanced access to birth control did not inevitably result in improved cultural acceptance of female sexuality due to anxieties of creating a morally bankrupt Zimbabwe. The policing of female sexuality was enforced not only through legal statutes, but also by strict surveillance of women's mobility. Apparently, roundups, arrests, harassments and violence dominated young women's encounters with gender myths in public spaces. Masakure (2016) argues that police roundups and detentions of women unaccompanied by men in public spaces in Zimbabwe undermined basic freedoms that were fought for during the liberation struggle and also enshrined in the constitution.

The family planning programme came under spotlight when HIV/AIDS was discovered in Zimbabwe in 1987. Provision of contraceptives in Zimbabwe had been largely influenced by racist and nationalist control over the female body (Makoni, 2012). Whilst family planning was more oriented to birth control, HIV/AIDS invoked policymakers to pay attention to critical questions about sexual relationships. With the emergence of HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe, the government adopted strategies based on the public health's risk-based approach (Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, 2003). Central to the public health's risk-based approach was to identify groups at high risk and networks which were fuelling the transmission of HIV. It is important to highlight that empirical research identified young women between 15 and 24 years as at greater risk to HIV/AIDS compared to other demographic groups (UNAIDS, 2020). Ironically, within HIV/AIDS awareness education in Africa, girls are constructed as having a particular responsibility which is detached from reality (Cobbett, 2014). Therefore, sex education concentrated on safeguarding adolescent girls from moral corruption.

2.4.5 The Postmodern Period

As highlighted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), the postmodern turn marks the beginning of the crises of representation, legitimation and praxis in social science research. Also, there is no paradigm that claims monopoly in representing social reality. This section

presents the origins, methods and methodological positions, researcher and participants relationship, and socio-historical context of the postmodern period to the study.

2.4.5.1 Origins

The postmodern period is the fifth moment which spanned from 1990 to 1995. Many scholars contributed to the rise of the postmodern thought, namely Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Perry Anderson, Francis Fukuyama, Ihab H. Hassan, Jean Baudrillard and Friedrich Nietsche (Susen, 2015). Fundamental to the postmodern period is the critique of the existence of universal truth claims about a situation under study. Postmodern researchers argue that narratives and storytelling are influenced by context. Stories are given a central role to making sense of the situation under study, hence knowledge is fragmented, situated and multifaceted (Tracy, 2013). Postmodern perspectives facilitate an understanding of a situation on multiple contexts such as economic, ideological, historical, cultural, gender, and race (Susen, 2015).

2.4.5.2 Methods and Methodological Positions

During this period, qualitative researchers were at loggerheads with crises of legitimation, representation and praxis, as theories were read like tales from the field (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). It becomes apparent that language and text do not guarantee unproblematic communication of social reality. Thus, researchers should also understand social realities through narratives and storytelling. The postmodern thought is in opposition to the totalising effect of theories and paradigms in understanding a situation under study. Grand narratives are delineated as lacking credibility to reflect on how gender, race, class, sexuality, age, and ethnicity intersect. Intersectionality theory is significant in taking multiple identities into account when researching social problems (Crenshaw, 1991). In this context, the postmodern turn is concerned about the fixation of single identity within formal representation of authoritative structures and hegemonic discourses.

Postmodernist researchers stress the importance of collaborative research by adopting participatory and activist-oriented research methods. A reflexive and pragmatic approach is significant in producing knowledge in a manner that privileges dialogic communication in research. Multiple layered meanings of identities and

respect of the partiality of all truth claims about the social world are important (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). In addition, Zilber (2018) argues that people interpret the social world within specific times and places. The researcher pays attention to context when writing, since stories can produce different versions about the same social reality.

Context and social action mutually elaborate each other in stories and narratives of participants. The authenticity of a story is evaluated within the research context in which the researcher and participants relate to each other. From this perspective, the researcher has to be innovative and creative because the situation under study would be ever-changing during the construction of narratives (Fayard, 2018). Additionally, Yap (2017) argues that researchers can reflect critically on universalism in social science research through decolonising methodologies. Walker and Boni (2020) remind that the emphasis on decolonial praxis does not imply shutting door to Eurocentric and other world views, but researchers should challenge hegemonic epistemic traditions which disregard other ways of knowing in research.

Furthermore, a researcher-as-bricoleur adopts critical methods such as critical discourse analysis to critically understand meaning-laden stories from different theoretical angles (Susen, 2015). Field notes documented during participant observations constitute important material resources for interpreting stories of participants. Postmodern researchers embrace reflexivity and pragmatic ways of doing research characterised by experimental ethnographic writing in which grand narratives are replaced by meta-narratives which relate to particular problems and specific situations (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). This would enable methodological stances for resisting essentialist interpretation of knowledge about indigenous cultures.

2.4.5.3   Relationship between Researcher and Participants

From the postmodern perspective, the way the researcher relates to participants could be influenced by the insider-outsider context which situates subject positions during storytelling. The interactions of the researcher (listener) and participants (storytellers) enable critical reflection on how power shapes the interpretation of stories and narratives in specific situations. In doing so, the researcher conducts storytelling with

participants, whereby stories are conceptualised as critical components of social interaction and social action.

2.4.5.4 Social and Historical Context of the Postmodern Period to the Study

In the early 1990s, the understanding of well-being as a multidimensional concept changed the view of development (Currie-Alder, 2016). The United Nations system formally adopted the multidimensional view of well-being in the 1990 human development report. According to UNDP (2020), human development provides an alternative explanation to human well-being and people's lives. Critique of gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) advocated for a development which focuses on basic needs, child well-being, hunger, epidemics, inequalities and social justice (UNDP, 2020). The human development approach suggests enlarging people's freedoms and choices in development. Thus, the idea of freedom in development is a process of creating an enabling environment for people to develop alternate subjectivities which are appropriate to the lives they value (Lorenzini, 2018).

In view of the postmodern perspective, the human development approach created multiple pathways of ensuring that people have opportunities to live longer, be creative in pursuing valuable lives, become healthy and have fulfilling lives (UNDP, 2010). From this perspective, the use of aggregate measures in development made little effect on mainstreaming voices of marginalised populations into policy and social action. As such, development constitutes a process of addressing power imbalances that inhibit human progress. The challenges to address human progress emerge from developmental constraints, socio-cultural, legal and regulatory environments (Folayan et al., 2015).

The controversies of promoting agency and freedom in development also draw the attention of neoliberalists in this age of globalisation. Lorenzini (2018) articulates that neoliberalism is related to a rational way of organising social relations dictated by the market. Neoliberalism is viewed as an ideology, political economy, discourse, historical rationality or governance, depending on context. From the Foucauldian governmentality perspective, the governance of people in neoliberalism is based on the intersection among power, culture and subjectivity. Human agency and freedom

are inextricably connected to how power is produced and organised between those who govern and the governed (Lorenzini, 2018).

According to Michel Foucault, social practices take place in power networks that permeate and intermingle with discourses (Jackson, 2013). In doing so, the exercise freedom is shaped by historical processes responsible for enacting subjectivities, identities and citizenship. Neoliberalism has reconfigured gender order to liberate people from social norms, cultures and institutions that constrain their capacities to determine personal life choices (Hickel, 2014). In this postmodern turn, adolescent girls are no longer only seen as preoccupied with the desire for a happy home, but they also strive to have money, power, and enjoy success (Oksala, 2013). In this context, social identities, such as marriage and parenthood, that were essentially markers of adulthood and social status in African cultures are rendered to any life choices that adolescent girls can freely have.

This study argues that viewing neoliberalism as providing a new model of cultural norms and symbolism without any form of conflict provides partial truth about adolescent girls' social realities. While it is true that neoliberalism creates new perspectives about agency and autonomy, human lives are affected by social and historical realities which give meaning to the existence of a community (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). Additionally, neoliberal values are often encountered in ahistorical and abstracted relationships. It is somewhat misleading to think that adolescent girls as social agents make SRH decisions in a rational manner indifferent to gender norms and roles for which they were socialised. In a study in Tanzania, Pincock (2018) revealed that adolescent girls did not speak about intimate relationships in individualistic terms, but they narrated their lived experiences in relation to other challenges and opportunities they faced in their lives. It is controversial to treat adolescent girls as autonomous and free to adopt new norms, values and practices unmarked from the effect of time and place. This implies that new values and norms could not be appropriated outside social and historical contexts that shape gendered interpersonal relationships in African cultures.

In the early 1990s, adolescent girls' lives and well-being drew the attention of the various stakeholders at the international level. UNICEF, in collaboration with

international development agencies, declared the United Nations decade of the girl child between 1991 and 2001 (Cobbett, 2014). The declaration sought to raise awareness about empowering girls through education. Empowered girls are conceived as a vital cog of national economic development and, ultimately, as part of the solution to the global development crisis. Thus, it is believed that expanding girls' access to educational services will improve their chances of participating in the labour market, leading to financial independence (Pincock, 2018). In the postmodern turn, gender does not construct a universal identity in its intersection with other identities which shape adolescent girls' social realities.

The representation of adolescent girls' sexuality in the development discourse underwent a paradigm shift at the 1994 ICPD. Notably, the family planning model for population control was replaced with a human rights framework to SRH. The conference emphasised the right to self-determination in decisions and choices around SRH for all people. According to the UNFPA (2021), every person has the right to reproductive decision-making without fear of victimisation, violence, discrimination and coercion. In this context, national governments should respect SRHRs the same way they are obliged to promote human rights.

Since the early 1990s, national responses to SRH issues in Zimbabwe had adapted to international and regional SRH protocols and standards (full details in Section 4.8). The Government of Zimbabwe established partnerships with civil organisations, the United Nations and international development agencies to scale up responses to adolescent girls' SRH challenges. The promotion of SRHRs of adolescent girls is still fragmented in Zimbabwe. Notwithstanding that the Zimbabwean state is ideologically and politically connected to the global world, policies and legal instruments are products of political deliberations and tinkering with models to adapt and localise practices (Stone, 2017). This gives the Zimbabwean state its own particular historicity in institutionalising ASRH through policy and legal instruments. Thus, it would be necessary to take into account the influence of political decisions taking place at the national level, despite the Government of Zimbabwe's rhetoric of adherence to international norms.

2.4.6 Post-Experimental Moment

The post-experimental moment came after the period of experimental writing during the postmodern moment, seeking to produce concrete knowledge about social reality. This section presents the origins, methods and methodological positions and researcher and participants relations.

2.4.6.1 Origins

Post-experimental inquiry emerged between 1995 and 2000 as the sixth moment. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explain the post-experimental inquiry as the moment of great excitement among qualitative researchers. This was characterised by the diversity of qualitative approaches to interpret social realities. In this respect, researchers adopted alternative ethnographic and arts-based or arts-informed methods to represent the study situation in ways that make the boundaries between social sciences and humanities vague (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). Representations of the situation under study were done through poetry, drama, performative, photovoice, conversational, visual and multivoice, among others. Researchers also engaged in co-construction of social realities of participants through use of participatory methods. The situation under study had also been seen as a meta-narrative to challenge moral values, patriarchal gender relations and ideologies which perpetuate oppression and harmful practices. Different kinds of people hold different views with regard to social world depending on identities of gender, class, race, religion, and education (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011).

2.4.6.2 Methods and Methodological Positions

During the post-experimental period, researchers employed multiple methods based on values of collective participation in research and knowledge production. Multiple methods were combined in a single study, without privileging an approach or a method over others. Corresponding to the process of combining social scientific, narrative, performative and artistic modes of representing the situation under study is the generation of multiple perspectives crystallised from multiple lenses. Engaging in crystallisation enables researchers to combine multiple methods and multiple genres into a coherent text (Denzin, 2012). Research findings are important to reveal contextual changes of participants' lives (Mudau, 2018). For example, autoethnography provides ways of producing research that sensitises readers to

identity politics and voices of social groups often silenced by acknowledging subjectivities and emotions in research (Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2011).

2.4.6.3 Relationship between the Researcher and Participants

During the post-experimental moment, it is highlighted that context and intuition were important to build relationships in research. The researchers utilised democratic and inclusive approaches to ensure that participants actively participate in research. In doing so, the researcher collaborated with participants in implementing the research process, based on mutual respect and context (Mudau, 2018). Participants actively participated in generating and analysing data. In this process, power and ethics in knowledge production were interrogated in ways that enhanced participants' agency in reflecting critically on their social realities.

2.4.7 The Methodologically Contested Present Moment

Ensuing the triple crisis during the post-modern period, Clarke, Friese and Washburn (2015) assert that scholars began to call for social science researches that privilege context and practice as well as prioritising experiences over universals and prediction. The methodologically contested present moment emerged and mostly attested to pragmatic ways of doing social science research oriented to reflect critically on real-world problems. This section presents the origins, methods and methodological positions and researcher and participants relationship during this period.

2.4.7.1 Origins

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) indicate that the methodologically contested present moment is the seventh moment which spans the period between 2000 and 2004. It was characterised by methodological conflicts and tensions. The moment mediated disputes about the incommensurability of quantitative methods and qualitative methods through developing a third or middle ground (McBride et al., 2019). A middle ground could be found where researchers can integrate quantitative methods with qualitative methods in a single study. This gave rise to what is referred to as the third methodological moment. Using a combination of methods in qualitative research has its roots in classical experimentalism philosophy and in Norman Denzin's works on triangulation in the 1970s (Caillaud et al., 2019; Flick, 2018; Denzin, 2010). Thinkers and philosophers like Max Weber and Wilhem Dilthey suggested the integration of

natural sciences' objective approach in studying the subjectivities of participants in human sciences (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Triangulation enables the integration of multiple methods, strategies and theoretical perspectives in a single study.

Prior to the methodologically contested present moment, many social science research used a combination of methods without necessarily adhering to any paradigm or methodological position (Tran, 2016). Mixed methodologists are now largely informed by the pragmatist paradigm which proposes research to combine qualitative methods and quantitative methods in research. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) highlight, the pragmatist paradigm renders the qualitative approach a complementary role to the quantitative approach. McBride et al. (2019) indicate that a pragmatist paradigm which allows an iterative research process and researchers are expected to evaluate their beliefs and decisions in a practical manner. This reinforces the appeal of the mixed methodology as a method, a methodological perspective, a philosophical worldview, and a practice (Anguera et al., 2018; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The underlying principle of the mixed methodology movement is to produce evidence which authenticates real world issues. In this context, empirical evidence is rooted in the idea of what-works and provides the basis for cumulative knowledge which validates the truth around the situation under study. The mixed methodology is mostly restricted to researches which combine qualitative and quantitative methods and emphasises incremental change in terms of what-works with little substantive evidence of transformative change (Anguera et al., 2018; Denzin, 2010).

2.4.7.2 Methods and Methodological Positions

The post-experimental moment takes upon the vitality of using both quantitative methods and qualitative methods as essential to undertake quality research (Creswell and Clark, 2018). Validity and reliability of a study are achieved through triangulation of research methods. Mixed methodologists believe that the research process is driven by context rather than by methods. Context is significant in authenticating data quality is regarded as a source of bias by quantitative researchers (Mudau, 2018). As such, qualitative methods were seen as having a secondary role in research which also uses quantitative research (Denzin, 2010).

Given the importance attached to outcome-oriented research by the third methodological movement, researchers give recognition to participants' voices in analysing and interpreting data. In addition, the underlying assumption of what-works suggests that scientific knowledge is more effective and efficacious when context is taken into account in making meaning about social realities of participants. A researcher has to make methodological decisions that ensure research outcomes are replicable in different temporal and geographic contexts. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) mention that what-works is not only an empirical question, but it is also implicated in the politics of evidence. The rhetoric of what-works might devalue the democratic debate and even overlook the significance of privileging voices of marginalised groups in research (Greenhalgh and Russell, 2006). While the fixation of what-works from an empirical perspective might improve validity of findings, research should strive to achieve inclusiveness and social justice.

2.4.7.3 Relationship between the Researcher and Participants

Researcher's decisions on how to related with participants are entangled in tensions and conflicts associated with attempts to reconcile impartiality, context and praxis in a study. A researcher uses approaches and methods that are more democratic and inclusive to facilitate critical dialogue (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). Also, a researcher seeks to build collaboration with participants during knowledge production such that research is transformative to the lives of participants and host communities. The goal is to pursue the research problem beyond the dichotomy between numbers and words (Creswell and Clark, 2018). The researcher collaborates with participants in critical reflection on the interaction of people or groups in particular contexts. In this iterative process, the researcher not only relates to his or her positionality, but is also conscious about the impact of power to interpretation of context (Mudau, 2018).

2.4.8 The Fractured Future

The fractured future is characterised by qualitative research that provides alternatives to evidence-based practices of quantitative researchers. This section presents the origins, methods and methodological positions, the researcher and participants relationships and socio-historical context of the fractured future to the study.

2.4.8.1 Origins

As the eighth moment from 2005 to the present, the fractured future emerged as a result of recurring debates on the backlash against researches which were based on qualitative methodologies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2013) indicate that the fractured future is confronted by the methodological conundrum emanating from the evidence-based social movement's insistence on what-works in framing research based on traditional positivist and postpositivist assumptions. Researchers are advocating for qualitative researches which facilitate critical dialogue. Researchers must have a moral responsibility to facilitate critical reflection on the impact of race, democracy, class, gender, sexuality, disability, globalisation, freedom, community, and nation-states on human progress. In addition, the fractured future moment seeks to promote ethical rights of historically subordinated indigenous groups in many disciplines and also engage in academic decolonisation (Mudau, 2018). Chilisa (2020) highlights that embracing indigenous research methodologies illustrates openness to local histories, traditions and knowledge systems which inform world views of indigenous communities. In this respect, enhancing transparency, accountability and inclusiveness makes research findings more accessible to local communities and adaptable to particular social settings.

Parkhurst (2017) suggests that the positivist-empiricist and critical-interpretivists are not always mutually exclusive from a normative perspective of the politics and ethics of evidence, despite epistemological differences. Both believe that evidence matters for nuanced understanding of social justice in research. Central to the debate on politics and ethics of evidence is how validity, reliability and generalisability must be used in evaluating the quality of research. The positivist-empiricists suggest that the use of evidence is technical and must be achieved through the application of research tools like protocols, methodological checklists and data extraction sheets (Greenhalgh and Russell, 2006). Parkhurst (2017) notes that critical-interpretivist epistemological and methodological decisions are more aligned to some formal considerations of modern democratic values such as transparency, responsibility, accountability, and inclusiveness.

The evidence-based social movement frames the significance of research through the ethics of the market and neoliberal discourse (Kincheloe et al., 2018). While empirical

evidence is important to proffer solutions to social problems espoused by research, there are conflicts among the academia, governments, pressure groups, multinational corporations and indigenous community groups about research priorities (Nespor, 2006 cited in Denzin and Giardina, 2009). The underlying motive is to set a technical precedent for ethical judgements on research priorities to establish what-works. Furthermore, the politics of evidence has become complicated as governments are increasingly involved in determining what good science is through regulation (Denzin, 2009). As a result, researchers are increasingly at risk of being integrated into bureaucratic and managerial agendas of governments (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018a). This points to an uncertain and fractured future in qualitative inquiry. This is because researchers might take the regulatory framework as a necessary burden, without a critique of the constraints it imposes on creating an inclusive and democratic research environment. Moreover, ethical imperatives in qualitative research are now negotiated with diverse stakeholders. While attention had been specifically directed at inviting adolescent girls to participate in this study, the moral responsibility for engaging relevant stakeholders was equally important for enhancing the trustworthiness of the research process.

2.4.8.2   Methods and Methodological Positions

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlight that the fractured future moment attests to methodological contestation of scientising knowledge production in social science researches. On the quantitative front, some researchers believe that social science researches should strive to develop standardised tools for producing empirical evidence (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). In its methodological purity, the evidence-based social movement promotes the notion of modern science through increased use of scientific terminologies which frame what could be described as effectiveness in research (Parkhurst, 2017). Researchers have to identify scientifically proven methods and procedures that work in mainstreaming evidence into practices for addressing social problems. Randomised control trial method has been popularised as significant to achieve effectiveness in research (Parkhurst, 2017).

For researchers who ascribe to reflexivity in research, qualitative approaches are viewed as responsive to social justice and participatory democracy in research. Also, the proliferation of digital technologies makes knowledge production more responsive

to market dynamics. Knowledge production should prioritise the needs of the users and consumers. The fractured moment is important to make decisions on how to collect data and create democratic space for critical dialogue.

2.4.8.3   Relationship between the Researcher and Participants

In the fractured future moment, the influence of power is now an overarching issue in making decisions on the methodology. The researcher's power over the research process can be challenged as participants can influence what may be written about them (Denzin, 2017). In this period, it would be difficult to eliminate participants' roles in determining the context in which the researcher interpreted research findings. Additionally, the conditions of knowledge production in a study are influenced by research traditions as well as institutional, political and economic contexts (Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). The credibility of research findings is anchored in ethical principles as the validation of evidence is not based on rules or laws. Mudau (2018) points out that researchers assume that people come to know what they know largely through communication, observation and interpretation, and less through given prescripts, standards, and procedures enacted as monuments of absolute truth.

2.4.8.4   Socio-Historical Context to the Study

Zimbabwe's lacklustre development trajectory, as Sachikonye (2012) argues, does not reflect a lack of sound development plans and clearly articulated policy objectives. Since the 1994 ICPD, the Zimbabwean government has shown commitment to addressing SRH challenges among adolescents. Greenhalgh and Russell (2006) underscore that the deliberative process of policy making is shaped by power relations and is mostly achieved through dialogue, influence, and conflict. For example, the Zimbabwe National Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (NASRH) Strategy II 2016 – 2020 suggested a partnerships and participatory methods engaging various stakeholders in validating the strategy (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016).

Furthermore, in this age of globalisation, national values are no longer transmitted only through formal and bureaucratic channels, but they also reach direct to individuals through social media. In effect, social media have created networks which render boundaries between private and public spheres almost invisible. The level of interaction on social media is no longer fixed between a speaker and listener, as the

exchange of opinions and ideas takes place in networks. Networks have no bearing on power hierarchy which has hitherto organised structures both in private and public spheres. As Denzin (2017) highlights, social media now invoke new questions about the foundational understanding of the public sphere, private life, civil society, and personal troubles. In this period, it is imperative to conceptualise SRH decision-making among adolescent girls within the broader goal of social justice and democracy. It would be hard to meaningfully increase capacities in SRH decision-making when adolescent girls are not treated as human beings who have their own ways of conceptualising the lives they wish to lead.

2.5   ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY OF THE BRICOLAGE

Qualitative research's concern with worldviews related to reality (ontology) and the process of generating knowledge (epistemology) determines a researcher's methodological and axiological positions (Gary and Holmes, 2020). Conducting qualitative research takes place within the natural setting (Creswell and Poth, 2018). In this context, the interpretation of the situation under study was affected by multiple perspectives. As such, it became clear that the researcher could not separate his or her ability to interpret research findings from the context in which participants were recruited and data were collected. Kincheloe et al. (2018) underscore that the researcher-as-bricoleur respects the social world as socially and historically situated. The bricolage metaphor demands the researcher to clarify his or her positionality in the web of interacting with participants and other researchers in producing and interpreting knowledge (Kincheloe et al., 2018). The researcher took advantage of the corpus of theories in social sciences to interpret data. In the same vein, the researcher applied reflexive thinking in use of theories in research to examine the situation under study. Moreover, the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls was a delicate issue which required the researcher to be agile when interpreting participants' narratives. The researcher applied theories as they were seen useful for enhancing critical analysis of participants' narratives.

2.6   FORMATS OF THE BRICOLAGE

The bricolage enables researchers to analyse a situation under study from multiple angles. In doing so, the bricolage can be considered as a methodological, theoretical,

interpretive, political, narrative and critical to research inquiry (Rogers, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). A researcher can employ all the formats of the bricolage in a single study. For example, a researcher can be a methodological, theoretical, political and critical bricoleur at the same time. In this context, a researcher-as-bricoleur is aware that a situation under study can be interpreted from multiple perspectives. This section discusses the formats of bricolage in detail.

The methodological bricolage involves the utilisation of available methods of collecting and analysing data (Bueddefeld et al., 2021). This involves tinkering data gathering methods available to achieve a task at hand. The researcher employs multiple methods to compare and contrast multiple perspectives in response to changing research context (Yee and Bremner, 2011). Following this understanding, the methodological bricolage enables the researcher to be pragmatic, strategic and self-reflexive when combining different research methods and tools. Methodological bricoleur brings in his or her knowledge about diverse research methods and tools to make methodological decisions within a specific research context (Sobolewska, 2017; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Employing multiple methods enhance an innovative and creative ways of producing knowledge which is not only believable to peer researchers, but also corroborated by participants.

Theoretical bricolage informs the researcher to believe in the importance of knowledge about paradigms which influence his or her beliefs about the situation under study (Berry, 2004). Theoretical bricoleur demonstrates extensive knowledge about interpretive paradigms and is aware that these paradigms can be synthesised in a single study (Denzin, 2012). Given that the application of philosophical assumptions and theoretical perspectives is not prescriptive, the researcher does not attach importance to a particular theory or paradigm in a generic way. Rather, decision on the appropriateness of a theory is determined by its strong relevance to specific research findings.

Interpretive bricolage is a format which enables a researcher to employ multiple theories in interpreting a study situation. From this perspective, interpretation of findings in qualitative research encompasses an interactive process which is shaped by personal experiences and one's positionality (Denzin, 2012; Ellis, Adams and

Bochner, 2011). Thus, interpretive bricoleur respects context in interpreting social reality in research. Interpretation of research findings involves bringing together multiple representations of social realities from data gathered using multiple methods (Sobolewska, 2017). It is argued that an interpretive bricoleur adds pluralism to his or her research by respecting the diversity of human experiences (Kincheloe, 2004).

Political bricolage is based on the perspective that any research is influenced by power and research findings have political connotations which go beyond the research context. As such, any interpretation of research findings has implications to the broader political context (Gary and Holmes, 2020). Lund (2006) argues that even when development strategies claim to be technical, they also reveal the intersection between power and knowledge in understanding development challenges. Political bricoleur considers the influence of dominant structures on knowledge production. In light of this awareness, political bricoleur adopts collaborative strategies which serve to produce knowledge that benefits participants, local community and other relevant stakeholders.

Narrative bricolage is another format. According to the narrative bricolage, the bricoleur acknowledges multiple perspectives about social reality. Narratives or texts cannot give universal claims about social reality since they are influenced by context. However, acknowledging participants' voices is vital to understand social reality from their own perspectives (Johns, 2021). In doing so, narrative bricoleur is conscious that all stories are socially constructed, hence they add layers to the complexity of social reality. Also, storytelling traditions reflect diverse paradigms which shape insights about participants' capacities to tell stories about social worlds they experienced (Denzin, 2012). Therefore, a narrative bricoleur acknowledges that stories and narratives during data collection are also shaped by the research context.

As described by Kincheloe (2005), critical bricolage focuses on the interdependence of power and knowledge production in qualitative research. Critical bricoleur focuses on increasing consciousness about differences and indeterminacies in understanding social reality (Kincheloe, 2005). McClelland (2019) argues that critical reflection on methods enable researchers to explore norms and procedures for epistemic authority fundamental to legitimising voices, theories and methods in qualitative research. Critical bricolage could enhance the researcher's understanding of how power

relations shape participant adolescent girls' meanings about social realities. In doing so, critical bricoleur interrogates the operation of power relations in ways which would capture the narratives and voices of the marginalised adolescent girls.

2.7 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY IN THE STUDY

Researcher positionality plays a key role to address power relations when making decisions on social identities in research. Positionality represents the subject's worldview about the position he or she adopts in a study (Gary and Holmes, 2020). A researcher identifies positionality in research through ways of seeing his or her personal history in relation to participants and also within the evolving research context (Kincheloe et al., 2018; Wamba, 2017). The researcher's personal history in relation to participants is significant to epistemological beliefs about being an insider or outsider. It is argued that the researcher's understanding of his or her positionality is a dynamic process which requires considerable time for critical reflection on context (Gary and Holmes, 2020). Moreover, all subjects in a study are involved interactively and have multiple overlapping social identities.

Identities that shaped the researcher's interaction with participants included gender, age, and class. Drawing on bricolage, the researcher did not treat social identities as fixed. Instead, he acknowledged that they were dependent on the emerging circumstances related to research situation. This study was carried out by a researcher whose gender is opposite to that of participant adolescent girls. Manohar et al. (2019) argue that contextualising gender identity in research creates a dynamic viewpoint about other aspects of research. In African cultures, men assume multiple identities in their relationships with women which make them not always seen as a problem, but also as allies in many situations of overcoming life predicaments (Wamba, 2017). In this study, the researcher shared social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds with participants. Consequently, the researcher perceived himself as an insider, in some contexts, who has the potential to acquaint with socially expected manners which guide discussions on SRH issues between an adult men and adolescent girls.

The researcher was an adult male in relation to adolescent girls. Reflecting on the age gap, it occurred that the researcher's interaction with adolescent girls in research was

implicated in values and norms which guide interactions of girls with adult men. The researcher adopted a research design which enabled the application of reflexivity and pragmatism in reflecting on the influence of subjectivities on the research process. Guided by participatory action research, a research team which comprised of the researcher and participants was established as decision-making body. This was fundamental to enable participants to find voices in research. Participants had the opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns and suggestions.

Class is another identity which impacts on the researcher's positionality. It is an identity which represents privilege and power. As highlighted by Gary and Holmes (2020), etic accounts are normally situated in culturally-neutral terminology embedded in theories and are often written in a language orientated to an external scientific community. In addition, differences in educational backgrounds would be a source of power imbalance. This study involved the researcher whose highest level of education was postgraduate while the participants were high school students or out of school. Education can create differences in accessing epistemic resources crucial for critical reflection on the situation under study. The researcher assured participants that he had been an educator at a local public university and its role included ensuring accessing to information for learners of all genders. Interview and focus group discussion questions were translated into local language to ensure that the information is accessible to all participants.

Chereni (2014) highlights that a researcher can potentially address power asymmetries by considering multiple identities depending on the situation. In the process, decisions on methodology and theory do not represent a rigid and fixed social identity. Additionally, the authenticity of social identities is not only depicted from cognitive capacity to recall events or experiences, but also depends on mutual beneficial social relationships. In this study, the researcher adopted the Johari window model to guide the process of negotiating social identities. According to the Johari window model, the *self* is interdependent with the *other* in social construction of identity (Oliver and Duncan, 2019). Identity construction is based on critical reflection and mutual criticism during the process of building relationships. In effect, identity construction would involve (a) mutual sharing of what is already known by the researcher and participants, (b) the researcher sharing personal qualities not known

by participants, (c) participants opening up about what they see in the researcher which is hidden to the researcher and (d) both the researcher and participants discovering new knowledge about themselves.

2.8   CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter discussed the theoretical framework anchored in bricolage to understand the situation under study in a social and historical context. The objectives and origins of the bricolage were provided to demonstrate the importance of multiple paradigms, theories, and methodologies to the study. A critical reflection on the historical moments in qualitative research was provided. The ontology and epistemology of the bricolage were highlighted. It was also important to discuss the researcher positionality as a way to demonstrate the interactions of the researcher and participants in this study.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND THE CAPABILITY APPROACH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conceptual framework based on the capability approach. The origin of the capability approach is examined. The rationale of the capability approach to this study is explained. The chapter also examines vulnerability within a capability approach and the conception of agency in human development. Key concepts of the capability approach are also outlined. Lastly, participation and empowerment of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

3.2 ORIGINS OF THE CAPABILITY APPROACH

The capability approach draws from a spectrum of theoretical perspectives of social justice, humanism, welfarism and social choice theory (Robeyns, 2017; Nussbaum, 2011; Anderson, 2010; Sen, 2009). The foundational views of capability draw from the philosophical perspectives of Aristotle, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, and Adam Smith (Nussbaum, 2021). Amartya Sen is credited as the pioneer of contemporary conception of the capability in development in a 1979 seminal paper entitled *Equality of what?* (Barreda, Robertson-Preidler and García, 2019; Robeyns, 2017; Basu and López-Calva, 2011). Amartya Sen elaborated nuanced explanations of capabilities in human development in subsequent collective scholarly works.

The reasoning of the capability approach is informed by the belief that substantive freedom is significant in realising doings and beings pertinent to valuable lives. Drawing on the capability approach, Robeyns (2020) asserts that certain things which matter to people should be understood at the practical level. Also, the capability approach expanded in scope and applied in humanities and social science disciplines to enhance the understanding of social phenomena such as social justice, empowerment, sustainability, inequalities and poverty (Robyens, 2017; Gasper, 2006). Its relevance to the control of SRH decision-making could be construed from the need to identify the elements which individuals should have control of (Robeyns, 2017). The capacity to have control of SRH decision-making may be understood as realisation of functionings and capabilities which are fundamental to a decent life.

From its inception, the capability approach construed development as a multidimensional concept. This underlines the significance of employing a multidisciplinary approach to understanding social problems. For example, quality of life focuses on capabilities and functionings realised from internal endowments, possessions or external resources (Anderson, 2010). It also takes into account the social and physical environment contexts which shape people's lives. Capabilities are essential to convert income and resources into capabilities which actually enable people to lead lives they aspire. However, increasing income, commodities or resources does not inevitably translate to an improvement of well-being. While a person's command of income, commodities, and resources is useful to well-being, the critical concern is on what individuals or a group of people can do with income and resources they have for them to change their life situations (Sen, 2006).

The evaluation of well-being needs to consider the process which leads to the outcome as fundamental to establishing the capacity of a person to convert income, commodities or resources to one's well-being (Foster, 2011). The distribution of resources to achieve a reasonable lifestyle is generally justified in the context of expanding skills, knowledge and voice as capabilities to make sense of agency and competence (GAGE Consortium, 2019). Acknowledging differences in capabilities enhances people's participation in society. Thus, expanding adolescent girls' capabilities in SRH decision-making should not only rely on strengthening SRH services, but also addressing structural and political systems which impose constraints on meaningful participation in programmes which affect their lives.

Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum propounded two distinct but interrelated theoretical perspectives for the capability approach (Nussbaum, 2021). Amartya Sen suggested an alternative perspective to the limits of the utility concept of welfare economics by looking at equality of opportunities and resources in terms of capabilities. As highlighted by Robeyns (2017), Amartya Sen paid attention to people's achievements and freedom in evaluating their abilities to participate in improving their well-being. Amartya Sen suggests that well-being is achieved by expanding capabilities of people in ways which they have real freedoms or opportunities relevant to their future aspirations, depending on different spaces of income, liberties and utilities (Sen, 2002b).

Additionally, improving well-being generally involves mapping spaces of states of affairs which are influenced by the distribution of public goods, income, commodities or resources. Sen (2002a) interprets equality as how goods and services can change well-being. In this context, the notion of difference has no intrinsic detrimental effect on the evaluation of people's abilities to use goods or resources in improving their well-being. The ability to choose from the capability set is based on ordering preferences and real options available to accomplish what he or she values depends on the intersection between his or her. Sen (2009) points out that a comparative assessment is fundamental to assess the magnitude of the state of affairs. For example, it would be justice to place much emphasis on the importance of increasing adolescent girls' capacities in SRH decision-making because empirical evidence showed that they are disproportionately affected by adverse SRH outcomes compared to adolescent boys (UNAIDS, 2020).

The second conceptual perspective of capabilities is related to Martha Nussbaum's philosophical claims of universal values in determining minimum thresholds of capabilities for achieving social justice and an egalitarian society (Nussbaum, 2011, 2000a, 1999). Nussbaum (2011) focuses on the comparative assessment of life in determining social justice. Also, Martha Nussbaum expanded the capability approach to capture gender dynamics of exercising agency in the decision-making process (GAGE Consortium, 2019). While Amartya Sen attaches importance to the robustness of space in mapping capability equality, Nussbaum (2000a) introduces the notion of threshold as a basis for claiming universal values and norms relevant to all human beings. According to Nussbaum (2011), a reasonable quality of life should be based on civic and moral obligations which must be foundational to citizens' constitutional right to demand particular thresholds of development from a government. As such, constitutional guarantees should reinforce that all persons deserve equality of opportunities to participate in development. This position influences policy orientation to development which prioritises the removal of obstacles to achieve human well-being.

In this context, the development process which prioritises capabilities is relevant to every person and justifies a living standard which guarantees human dignity. Corresponding to the notion of threshold is are central human capabilities relevant to

all people proposed by Martha Nussbaum (Nussbaum, 2000a). The list includes central human capabilities summarised as follows: the ability to live a healthy and long life, maintain bodily integrity, capacity to use senses, have emotional attachment to things and other human beings, ability to reflect critically on one's life, to belong to society, to have a harmonious relationship with nature, enjoying recreational activities, and one's control of the environment. However, Nussbaum (1999) cautions that central human capabilities need not to make different cultural values invisible in articulating justice nor be a mere portrayal of people's lives from a Western view of humanity. Yap (2017) argues that while universal indicators are a powerful communication tool in resource allocation, they provide a partial view in representation of indigenous people's social problems. Nussbaum (2000a) underscores that human beings value a sense of worth and dignity as the starting point of demanding values which serve social and political duties.

3.3 THE RATIONALE OF THE CAPABILITY APPROACH

The major theoretical influence of the capability approach is its contribution to the conception of human development (Comim, 2014). This study suggests that a capability approach would provide conceptual tools to understand the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Zimbabwe. The proposal that people must choose freely the lives they want resonates with the bricolage's goal of respecting diversity of people's realities as situated in particular social historical contexts. Moreover, the capability approach enhances the researcher's ability to communicate research findings in ways which strengthen the strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making in relation to their healthy and socio-economic lives. Amartya Sen highlights that an evaluation of capabilities is not only to realise just social arrangements, but it must also focus on the process of making social arrangements more just, even if it is apparent that perfection is impossible (Garza-Vázquez, 2021).

In addition, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is underpinned by the promise of making the world favourable to everyone. Emphasising capabilities enables us to embrace social justice in development. Taking into account social, economic and political contexts that shape opportunities or options available to adolescent girls to

improve their well-being is important. As highlighted by Nussbaum (2003), society has moral and ethical obligations for cultivating qualities vital to well-being and humanity. It is morally wrong to impose beliefs and values in addressing adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls. The capability approach invigorates the importance of contextualising values in humanising development which embraces human diversity regardless of one's views and beliefs about the world (Nussbaum, 2003; Sen, 2002a).

Moral values which exclusively emphasise protection in SRH decision-making are not sufficient for improving adolescent girls' well-being. Adolescent girls' capabilities in SRH decision-making should be treated as entitlements which they must claim. It is important to underscore that adolescent girls are experiencing sexuality at a particular stage in the life course, with its own peculiar challenges to social and cultural validation. Nussbaum (2000a) opines that if each person is treated as an end in development, then all persons are entitled to support, depending on their different situations to achieve valued lives they want to live. This gives rise to the moral significance of creating an enabling environment to increase capacities of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

Although the question of epistemic justice is not clearly articulated in the capability approach (Walker and Boni, 2020), capabilities are sensitive to differences in physical and mental states (Anderson, 2010). In the context of knowledge production, unjust distribution of shared epistemic resources indicates the objectification of some individuals or social groups as being unfairly distrusted and instrumentalised in communicating their experiences (Kidd, Medina and Pohlhaus, 2017, Fricker, 2007). Moreover, capabilities, such as skills, knowledge, voice and power, tend to manifest more in interpersonal relationships. As Scheffler (2015) points out, relationships have a bearing on the distribution of resources, hence the significance to understand equality as a broader ideal which governs relations among members of the community. This points to the significance of embracing collective capabilities to advocate for partnerships which contribute to mutual beneficial relationships.

3.4 KEY CONCEPTS OF THE CAPABILITY APPROACH

This section examines some key concepts of the capability pivotal to understanding the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls from multiple perspectives. The argumentation behind the capability approach evolved over the past decades and its advancement follows from refined foundational concepts (Robeyns, 2017; Gasper, 2006). Numerous key concepts contribute to ways of explaining processes which shape individuals' capacity to realise lifestyles which are indispensable to human progress and flourishing. These concepts enable scholars and researchers to expand the scope of applications of the capability approach across disciplines. The following concepts of functionings, capabilities, preference and choice are discussed:

3.4.1 Functionings

According to Sen (1999a), functionings are achievements or realisation of doings and beings central to people's lives. The realisation of doings and beings is not only determined by the level of satisfaction with commodities a person commands, but also influenced by the possibility of making a choice (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Robeyns, 2017; Basu and López-Calva, 2011). Functionings represent the real opportunity to choose when one actually has other options as an advantage, in comparison with others. From this perspective, the evaluation of achievements is not a priori determined. A person should choose functionings appropriate to the preferred life in a given context. An individual has to identify real freedoms necessary for improved well-being.

Functionings represent doings and beings which are useful for assessing well-being (Binder and Binder, 2016; Nussbaum, 2011). The representation of well-being depends more on a set of functionings rather than indicators of resources and utility. Alkire (2015) articulates that well-being is measured as a manifestation of freedom to realise activities and states that are indispensable to enjoy valuable life. As such, well-being is conceptualised by making sense of given characteristics and opportunities to a person's life. In this way, an assessment of well-being takes into account both subjective and objective positions about the values people hold. According to Prabhu and Iyer (2019), subjective analysis of well-being is based on the hedonistic views about people's obsession with activities which maximise pleasure and at the same

time reduce the chance of pain. Objective analysis of well-being draws from the eudemonic perspective which describes how people engage in a reflective process to make sense about their capacities so as to achieve self-realisation (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

A reflective analysis of human well-being shifts the focus from ordering outcomes as good or bad to prioritising context in determining the ability of a person to choose (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Sen, 2002a). In this way, individuals' decisions on what is right, rather than good for their lives, are viewed as immediate determinants to their well-being. The objective analysis of well-being considers economic, structural, and institutional factors to understand the state of affairs of people's health, security and longevity. For example, poverty and gender inequalities negatively affect adolescent girls' abilities to enjoy decent living standards.

An emphasis on doings and beings does not only emphasise productive life, but also represents subjective activities and states of individuals in making meaning about certain lifestyles (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Nussbaum, 2011). Nussbaum (2000a) points out that people seek pleasure, travelling, self-respect, being safe, being healthy, enjoying leisure, participating in community life and being socially integrated as vital functionings to improved well-being. Fundamental to this study is that functionings represent positive aspects of SRH among adolescent girls pertinent to living long, creative and innovative lives. Adolescent girls' capabilities and functionings in SRH are related to being educated about SRH, participate in decision-making, having a supportive environment. Contrary, unprecedented adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls indicate deprivations of doings and beings in the realm of SRH decision-making which affect their socio-economic and healthy lives.

3.4.2 Capabilities

Sen (2006) describes capabilities as actual opportunities or freedom which people capitalise to achieve their well-being and enjoy the lives they value or have purpose to pursue. As highlighted by Basu and López-Calva (2011), an individual's capabilities reflect real freedoms or opportunities to choose the type of life one is able to do and be, rather than what one is morally or formally prevented from doing. The concept of capabilities denotes the significance of freedom or opportunities in human

60

development. Capabilities are inextricably interwoven with functionings, although they can be discussed separately. In contrast to functionings, the discussion on capabilities focuses on the opportunity to choose (Nussbaum, 2011).

Capabilities comprise interpersonal comparison of functionings which represent a person's set of choices in line with preferences and interests. In doing so, individuals need not be coerced or manipulated to choose certain lifestyles for the sake of conformity, especially those who are in positions of disadvantage. The concept of capabilities is useful for identifying and assessing individuals' abilities to convert goods or resources when choosing one or another mode of life. Thus, the conception of capabilities revolves around the idea of what goods or services do to human beings rather than what goods or services are necessary to people (Sen, 2002a). Amartya Sen opts for a non-committal attitude towards the conception of capabilities which could be necessary to establish alternative modes of preferred lifestyles (Sen, 2009).

As highlighted by Ibrahim (2014), the ability to convert capabilities not only depends on goods or resources available, but it is also determined by social, cultural, economic, political and personal variables. The relevance of capabilities to one's well-being depends on circumstances, values, demands and aspirations (UNDP, 2019). Given that SRH is now framed within the discourse of human rights, adolescent girls should be supported to have capabilities to make decisions on SRH. Instead of focusing on maximising the subjective states, Sen (2009) articulates that focusing on capabilities to achieve human well-being gives more nuanced views about the type of life an individual values. Also, Nussbaum (2000a) highlights that a certain threshold level of capabilities for everyone enhances the equal opportunity to choose.

The moral and ethical grounds for enhancing human well-being had been explained using several types of capabilities. First, basic capabilities constitute innate qualities indispensable to functioning. Basic capabilities encompass nurtured cognitive, emotional, biological, physical and intellectual characteristics pertinent to developing practical reasoning, capacity to work and mobility. Amartya Sen describes basic capabilities as important to the ability to achieve elementary aspects of life (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019). In the context of SRH, the age at menarche signals the beginning of reproductive capability. Menarche indicates that adolescent girls have developed the

capability to reproductive behaviour. However, this basic capability could be converted into functioning on moral and ethical grounds (Nussbaum, 2000a). This implies that adolescent girls must not be coerced to participate in reproductive activities. People do not flourish through maltreatment and they deserve dignity.

Internal capabilities are another type which describe the developed state of a person and represent matured conditions for the exercise of required functionings (Nussbaum, 2000a). Additionally, the ability to do certain things should incorporate moral reasoning (Sen, 2002a). For example, converting bodily maturity into reproductive functioning involves a person's capacity to have control of SRH decision-making. Although bodily maturity, as an internal capability, directly influences reproductive functioning, it fully develops with external support (Nussbaum, 2000a). Put simply, for a body that is fully matured, the pleasurable sexual behaviour can be enhanced by respecting bodily integrity. Adolescent girls should enjoy lives free from sexual violence and also have the opportunity to decide when to become pregnant and with whom. Child marriage deprives adolescent girls of the opportunity to effectively develop internal capabilities that are fundamental to improved well-being.

The capability approach also pays attention to combined capabilities. Nussbaum (2011) suggests that combined capabilities describe the opportunity to actually choose functionings based on a combination of internal abilities and normative conditions. A society promotes the development of internal capabilities by creating an environment for individuals to enjoy their lives freely. Richardson (2007) highlights that the ability to choose from alternatives available can be enhanced through utilisation of internal capabilities, with support of external conditions. For example, educational and health services increase individuals' knowledge and skills requisite to develop the ability to make decisions on the lives they value. A country has the moral obligation to create opportunities for effective participation of citizens in aspects which affect their lives. Nussbaum (2011) argues that people lack combined capabilities in a country which focuses on promoting internal capabilities but denies people to express themselves.

There are also collective capabilities which are important in explaining the multidimensionality of well-being. Ibrahim (2006) describes collective capabilities as bundles of functionings persons might obtain by merely participating in a collective

action which enhances their abilities to achieve the chosen lives. Sen (2006) articulates that people are not only motivated to act for personal reasons, but they also participate in activities which do not have direct bearing on well-being. In addition, the capability approach highlights that persons acting individually are not mostly positioned to address the stratification of inequalities which shape human relations (Ibrahim, 2017). Collective capabilities broaden the scope of analysis to include the conditions necessary for groups of people to engage in collaborative learning experiences (GAGE Consortium, 2019). Collective capabilities have societal benefits especially to people who share similar challenges or deprivations. Collective capabilities are important to understanding the role of healthy relationships for improved well-being.

Collective capabilities are important to address the anxieties and fears about sharing comprehensive SRH knowledge with adolescent girls as potentially contributing to subversive behaviour and sexual permissiveness. Sharing comprehensive knowledge about SRH is a social conversion factor which could be realised in collective action. The discursive sharing of knowledge about SRH does not only benefit individuals per se, but also as a social group by engaging in critical dialogue. In addition, sharing comprehensive SRH knowledge would foster partnerships between adolescent girls and relevant stakeholders in increasing awareness about improving ASRH anchored in human rights discourse. Challenges faced by adolescent girls in SRH decision-making provide the basis for advocating transformative change to their participation in addressing aspects which affect their lives.

Nussbaum (2000a) argues that with educational and material support appropriate to context, people are capable of reflecting critically on their lives. Sharing comprehensive SRH knowledge should not be simply a transmission of concepts and ideas, but must also contribute to development of values for emancipation and social justice. Adolescent girls' access to SRH knowledge is circumscribed by power at different levels of social interaction and political deliberation. de Loma-Osorio and Zepeda (2014) highlight that the freedom to make choices could be enhanced through Paulo Freire's emancipatory discourse of empowerment, participation and collaborative learning.

3.4.3 Preference

A preference is described as a value judgement of alternatives in a given set of possibilities from which one would determine whether the option is right or wrong (Robeyns, 2021). The concept of preference reveals the knowledge about the kind of life a person chooses (Sen, 2002a). Although preference has been widely used in literature on human development, it remains an ambiguous concept. The conundrum is on whether or not preferences are salient features to outcomes derived from an action. Preferences are important to determine one's judgement of choice made depending on different aspects of social reality and also one's general expectations from performing certain actions. It is underscored that the link between preferences and ability to select preferred choice is shaped by social, economic and institutional factors. While individuals have different preferences about good life, communities share common values.

Preferences are evaluated based on the narrow sense of outcomes or the processes adopted to realise outcomes (Doss, 2021; Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Sen, 2002a). Sen (2002a) argues that preferences had been largely evaluated from economics perspectives, using a consequence-based approach. The consequential approach states that preferences are conceived by ordering the state of affairs which is judged by utilities generated from an action. In this sense, preferences are inextricably linked to subjective well-being. Exploring preferences in terms of state of affairs involves aggregating utilities, hence the risk of simplifying the situation. In African cultures, adolescent girls are not formally barred from imagination about their sexuality, but their social position restricts them to determine their sexual preferences in public. To know about adolescent girls' preferences in SRH decision-making allows to protect their rights. It is morally wrong to make rigid judgements about their preferences merely based on SRH outcomes. According to Sen (2002a), preferences are defined by the capacity to exercise freedom, which is more than a permission to act.

Although the characterisation of state of affairs is the bone of contention, Sen (2002a) highlights that it is salient to examine the process through which individuals develop the preferences (Sen, 2002a). In doing so, examining the process through which preferences might be developed broadens the scope to take into account factors beyond the control of the individual. People could have the freedom to choose based

on the circumstances in which they either independently lead their lives or want to collaborate with others to transform their lives (Doss, 2021; Sen, 2002a). From this reasoning, individuals' preferences are not dependent on the decision-making process itself.

The authenticity of preferences depends on different contexts. Also, tensions often exist between respecting personal judgement in preference formation and cross-cultural comparison of values. In African cultures, preferences are often by-products of negotiation and consensus. In addition, feminist and gender theorists reflect critically on the influence of power imbalances and dominant structures on girls' preferences in SRH decision-making (Wenner, 2020). This study argues that preferences of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making would be more realistic when judged on they are related to individuals' idea of self-control, one's understanding of roles and ability to act responsibly.

It is plausible to argue that preferences are not spontaneously formed. Preferences are also influenced by the process of adaptation to circumstances. Relevant to this study, restrictive gender norms set expectations which might lead to the development of adaptive preferences among girls (Robeyns, 2021; Maina et al., 2020). In this context, girls might appear happy but they would have adapted their preferences to believe in forced marriage. Adolescent girls' preferences might appear authentic when connected to the capacity to influence the kind of well-being they value, as long as they do not deliberately harm others, harm themselves or by others (Schroeder, Tallarico and Bakaroudis, 2022; Marino, 2019).

3.4.4 Choice

The concept of choice has been traditionally used in development to refer to an outcome of what a person actually does based on options available (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Foster, 2011). Choice also refers to the exercise of freedom to choose (Basu and López-Calva, 2011). Amartya Sen underscores that the evaluation of choice is more nuanced when it takes into account the democratic process of choosing and characteristics of options not chosen (Robeyns, 2017; Sen, 2002a). The representation of choice in the capability approach has to bear the importance of contextual factors (Sen, 2002a). Choice has a moral significance to the ability to enjoy

the decent living standards. This is because the option set and choice process can be manipulated to suit agenda and preferences beyond the control of the individual. It is important to assess choice as meaningful when one still has the opportunity to choose another option after deciding on the preferred option. Adolescent girls should have freedom to stay in school, look for employment, choose when to initiate sexual relation and decide on when to get married (Temin et al., 2018).

The lack of capability to choose an option directly or indirectly influences the characterisation of outcomes. When a person has options to choose, there is a high degree of certainty of making a meaningful choice. While tensions exist between freedom and the ordering of alternatives, the capability approach suggests that freedom is still relevant because having another alternative option needs not to be removed in the process of making a choice (Sen, 2002a). Moreover, an individual should at least have the capacity to exercise practical reasoning when choosing in the face of conflicting values. For Sen (2002a), choice itself shows how action reveals the value attached to the preferred option, such that the evaluation of the outcomes not only requires the information about well-being, but also understanding underlying factors.

A capabilities perspective considers the relationality of choice, shaped by institutional, social and cultural norms (Peter, 2003). The process of choice could become systematic by creating an enabling environment for making choice. Prabhu and Iyer (2019) argue that choice reflects the interaction of individuals within social arrangements in which norms, roles and rules define duties and obligations. UNFPA East and Southern Africa (2021) highlights that many teenage mothers endure economic hardships and gender-based violence because they have limited options, hence rely on the male breadwinner for survival.

3.5   VULNERABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CAPABILITY APPROACH

Through the capability approach lens, vulnerability pays attention to observable variability in capabilities and opportunities to cope with risky situations which hinder an individual's capacity to achieve valuable states of affairs such as income, health, and education. UNDP (2014) describes vulnerability as the prospects of undermining

people's capabilities and choices. Individuals are vulnerable when their capacities to exercise agency and make choices are compromised by physical, social, and economic conditions and also by subjectivities. The notion of vulnerability links lack of capacities to exercise agency and make choices to conditions of inequality and individual subjectivities. For example, adolescents are inherently in SRH decision-making because young age.

Vulnerability is a crucial concern in SRH decision-making and its socio-economic and health implications. Many adolescent girls are vulnerable to adverse SRH outcomes in the developing world. Adolescent girls' vulnerability to SRH outcomes can adversely affect their capabilities and functionings by disrupting their productivity, chances for social mobility and undermining the ability to take advantage of social capital (Agarwal and Panda, 2007). Some scholars caution that policies which treat girlhood as a stable and an internalised social identity would, ironically, complicate the vulnerability of girls by tolerating coercion to meet rigid patriarchal and gendered expectations (Cobbett, 2014; Butler, 2009). Within the capability approach, vulnerability may be attributed to an interplay of various characteristics, lived experiences and practices which negatively affect one's freedom to participate in decision-making so as to attain lifestyles he or she values (Frediani, Peris and Boni, 2019; Sen, 2009).

Bearing in mind that child marriage, for example, is a harmful practice, adolescent girls should make sense of vulnerability devoid of characterisation of victimhood in unitary terms. Put simply, advocacy for protecting adolescent girls from early marriages must not only be justified by identifying them as victims, but it also focuses on recognising their right to refuse to get into marriage regardless of the situation. Given that people are relational beings, Butler (2009) argues that there is the need to consider the precarious conditions which are beyond the control of a person, but threaten one's life. While SRH outcomes indicate the state of affairs, Buckler et al. (2021) note that pathways through which adolescent girls in Zimbabwe become vulnerable in the decision-making process reveal multiple lived experiences located either side of marginalisation. Poverty, discrimination, oppression, inequalities, power imbalance and unresponsive SRH services are conditions which increase adolescent girls' vulnerability in SRH decision-making.

The fact that individuals' capabilities and functionings are evaluated based on reasoned choices, there are challenges to interpret vulnerability based on different kinds of responsibilities and duties placed on marginalised groups (Khoja-Moolji, 2016). Following this perspective, vulnerability is contextualised and becomes a comparative characteristic which would be evaluated according to whether or not an individual is able to exercise agency. The social character of vulnerability depends on meaning, normativity and power to exercise agency in different contexts (Tamale, 2017; Butler, 2016). Norms are social constructions which reflect on what can be said and also what is believed to be true about the vulnerability of adolescents in different contexts (van Schalkwyk, 2018). In African cultures, girlhood and virginity are inextricably linked to regulation of adolescent girls' views and beliefs about intimate relationships. In a study in Zimbabwe, Matswetu and Bhana (2018) found that adolescent girls in Zimbabwe are simultaneously empowered and subordinated by actively embracing the responsibility of maintaining virginity for the benefit of continuing with education and increasing their chances of marriage in future.

Following the intersectionality theory, individuals can adopt multiple identities which influence their understanding of values, responsibilities and duties in different contexts. Social identities draw from diverse sources to conceive expectations. In this context, individuals are not independent to perform their roles and duties without public scrutiny. In African cultures, adolescent girls are expected to conform to heterosexual norms because patriarchal structures mostly align women's social status with motherhood and marriage. There is some social capital to be gained from motherhood and marriage. However, empirical evidence indicates that getting married at young age increases adolescent girls' vulnerability to multiple SRH issues such as gender-based violence, unmet need of contraception, unintended pregnancies and high fertility regimes (Woollett et al., 2021; Liang et al., 2019).

Following the capability approach, vulnerability could be construed as a predisposition to harm, especially of individuals occupying the position of subordination in decision-making. Physical harm in SRH decision-making is generally aggressive and direct, but emotional and psychosocial harmful consequences are intertwined with social constructions of pain and pleasure in sexual relationships (Verza, 2022). As adolescent girls' social realities in SRH decision-making were elaborated in Chapter

2, vulnerability could be better understood as historically-described rather than as prescriptive. To feel sexual pleasure or pain is not basically determined by biology or nature, but it is also shaped by distorted rules that an individual has unconsciously internalised to suppress emotions, needs and drives (Holma and Huhtala, 2016). This unconsciousness about distorted rules can increase individuals' vulnerability to SRH outcomes. Gender performance in sexual relationships presupposes women as passive and submissive, while men are viewed as active and dominant (John, Babalola and Chipeta, 2015).

Young women often experience more challenges than their male counterparts to live free from fear of sexual coercion and violence. There are different perceptions about entitlements to sex between girls and boys. In a study in Democratic Republic of Congo, Mulumeoderhwa and Harris (2015) note that boys felt entitled to have sex with their girlfriends and saw forced sex as a legitimate substitution of unsuccessful persuasion, while girls equated forced sex with rape. In Shona culture, premarital sexual activities of girls are traditionally frowned at and they are a source of embarrassment to the whole family.

3.6   AGENCY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development approach acknowledges the influence of diverse values on human progress rather than prescribing what people should take as universal. It can be construed that human development does not seek to homogenise or universalise the condition of human well-being by tolerating multiple dimensions that extrapolate human life in multiple contexts. In acknowledging the influence of people's diverse values, the process of development should not follow a priori and restrictive imagination of life. Thus, human development accommodates the holistic view of well-being (Clark, 2005).

The moral basis of advocating for human development is that individuals should not be hindered from choosing by authoritative powers that impose dominant objectives and values on people's actions (Sen, 2002a). Development should expand freedoms of people and also protecting them from deprivation, discrimination and vulnerability. Development is not a matter of analysing a particular life stage as a discrete event,

but as interconnected to other stages of life in order to capture the progressive and dynamic nature of life (Schuh, 2017). This means that the lived experiences of vulnerable and marginalised individuals should not necessarily be imagined manifestations of disadvantage (Buckler et al., 2021). There are possibilities that people can change their life situations for the better along the life course.

It is important to view adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls as representations of struggles to exercise agency. From the capability point of view, agency reveals one's ability to decide and act upon their choices and pursue the lives they value in light of their values (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019; Sen, 2006). In this way, adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making is evaluated as the ability to act upon their preferences within structures and institutions which shape their lives. This implies that adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making also has to consider the broader goal of social transformation pertinent to improved well-being. For example, adolescent girls might participate in the local community or public advocacy to fighting against sexual violence.

There is also the need to get insights into how power relations shape their agency to achieve their life goals. Adolescent girls as agents are socially reproduced through obligatory gender norms. Thus, becoming conscious about agency generally makes adolescent girls aware of themselves as incomplete creatures who are in many ways dependent on circumstances beyond their control to realise their well-being (Nussbaum, 2003). Agency is reproduced within multiple contexts which attach different meanings to different outcomes. For instance, agency involves resistance of the hegemonic power or knowledge that restricts the exercise of freedom to imagine alternative modes of life (Haugaard, 2021).

This study argues that the agency of adolescent girls must be acknowledged as important to contribute to their well-being. It is the moral responsibility of this study to acknowledge adolescent girls' capacity to contribute to well-being by amplifying their voices in the conscientisation of their preferences. As such, agency presupposes the oppressive practices of paternalistic interventions as obstacles to the capacity to freely make decisions. Patriarchal norms compromise the choice process among adolescent girls in various ways. Foster (2011) suggests that the process aspect of choice could

be compromised by (i) deliberately restricting the option set, (ii) manipulating the chooser's preferences and (iii) external domination of the selection process. The capability approach proposes an instrumental agency underpinned by participatory actions. The individual should be in a position to conceive his or her goals and actively take part in some collective action (Nussbaum, 2011).

Unlike adults, adolescent girls' capacities to determine their well-being is not self-evidently identifiable, generally because their agency is interpellated with lack of the disposition to act in a manner that positions them to be responsible and accountable to their actions. In addition, adolescent girls lack the habitus of adulthood in determining well-being, thereby rendering their actions susceptible to coercion and exploitation. Habitus, as Bourdieu assert, is a way of feeling comfortable and secure in the action and knowing how an event is likely to unfold in a particular situation (Kemmis, 2022). It is important to devise strategies of empowering adolescent girls to actively participate in discussions which influence views and beliefs about their well-being.

3.7 EMPOWERMENT OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

This study underscores that empowerment and participation are crucial in increasing adolescent girls' capacities to make decisions on SRH affecting their socio-economic and healthy lives. Kabeer (2021) describes empowerment as a process for creating an enabling context for historically marginalised people to acquire the ability to make decisions. Empowerment is also understood as a process of addressing power imbalances and sources of oppression by providing opportunities, resources and support to people such that they have voice and influence on aspects which affect their lives (Lenette, 2022; Aziz, Shams and Khan, 2011). Moreover, empowerment of girls is a goal articulated in the Agenda for Sustainable Development. Hammock (2019) asserts that marginalised people should be empowered to realise the joy of exercising freedom to make choices. Expanding capabilities is a form of empowerment since the process is not only confined to advantages conferred to a person, but it also involves raising consciousness about a person's obligations and duties to exercise agency (Sen, 2009). The capability approach is significant to adopt an action-oriented

agenda for substantial social change. Also, the capability approach embraces a process of making choices embedded in human rights, democracy, public scrutiny and public reasoning. This positions the capability approach as pivotal to develop a strategy which empowers marginalised and vulnerable adolescent girls to exercise freedom to choose in SRH decision-making.

In addition, the founding values, rights and freedoms expressed in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 20) of 2013 underscore the need for affirmative action with reference to the roles of government departments and state institutions in empowering vulnerable and marginalised groups to participate in public life. For instance, Article 13(1) of Chapter 2 states that the government must develop strategies of empowering marginalised people and communities.

The Zimbabwe government developed the National Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy II 2016 – 2020 to address ASRH challenges. The strategy identified four major drivers of SRH issues in Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). Poverty was identified as the major challenge to improving SRH among adolescents. Adolescents had been seen as lacking information on SRH. This has been compounded by inadequate SRH care which caters for adolescents. The policy and regulatory environment had been noted as not responsive enough to adolescents' SRH needs.

The major drivers of ASRH challenges in Zimbabwe reveal capability failures and deprivations which restrict opportunities or alternatives available to adolescent girls in SRH decision-making and ultimately negatively affect their freedom to make choices on aspects which affect their lives. This study argues that expanding adolescent girls' capabilities in SRH decision-making in Zimbabwe should not only stress the provision of SRH services, but it also has to strengthen legal and political processes in ways which make them responsive to adolescent girls' interests and priorities. Therefore, adolescent girls must be empowered in decision-making which influence their well-being (Ibrahim, 2014).

Although the Government of Zimbabwe showed commitment to address ASRH through laws and policies, agency and freedom of adolescent girls in SRH decision-

making are still ambiguously articulated to advance their SRHRs. Empowering adolescent girls in SRH decision-making must be anchored in the human rights framework. In addition, social justice is vital to creating a conducive environment for enabling the development of adolescent girls' capacities to make choices. The universal human rights principles are fundamental to make sense of the importance of increasing capacities of adolescent girls to make SRH choices in the Zimbabwean context. Moreover, consciousness of the right to make choice justifies the demand of state institutions and government agencies to enforce basic constitutional rights which safeguard adolescent girls' active participation in aspects which affect their lives (Sen, 2005; Nussbaum, 2000b).

Empowerment is crucial to creating the choice-making environment which enhances participation of marginalised and vulnerable people. Adolescent girls could be empowered through removing constraints on their ability to exercise agency appropriate to their developmental stage. Owens et al. (2022) argue that capabilities vital to exercise agency are shaped by individuals' own decisions and behaviours, as well as by structural circumstances, over the course of their lives. Enhancing the participation of marginalised groups must take into account the importance of increasing awareness about constraints on challenging the status quo. Frediani, Clark and Biggeri (2019) articulate that the capability approach is useful for examining the processes which shape people's values and also the factors which either constrain or enable people to pursue their goals.

The capacity to make meaningful choices should be a precondition of empowerment of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making. This plays out against unjust and dominant relationships (Polar et al., 2021). Adolescent girls are entitled to safety and respect for their dignity. Instead of being treated as problematic subjects to be fixed, strategies to improve adolescent girls' well-being must prioritise their voices in articulating interests and preferences. Respecting adolescent girls' voices not only creates consciousness about their capacities to participate, but it also facilitates critical dialogue for understanding the SRH decision-making from their own perspectives. As argued by Nussbaum (2000a), the context in which individuals develop internal capabilities should not impose restrictive standards as the condition of participation. A capabilitarian account of well-being elaborates on what doings and beings contribute

to the conception of the ideal outcome one would cherish and the capacity to participate in life (Robeyns, 2016).

The GAGE Consortium (2019) suggests a holistic approach to empowerment of adolescent girls in development which should focus on capabilities, change strategy and context. Figure 3.1 illustrates the framework which situates adolescent girls ecologically by recognising that empowering them would be effective when strategies are supported at family, community, national and international levels. The context which shapes adolescent girls' capabilities straddles from the personal to global level. At the personal level, adolescent girls have to develop both basic and internal capabilities crucial to human flourishing. As highlighted earlier, adolescent girls are categorised as still developing emotionally, mentally, psychologically and physiologically. This implies that adolescent girls are inherently vulnerable in SRH decision-making. GAGE Consortium (2019) suggests that it is necessary to go beyond the conception of vulnerability of individual adolescent girls by challenging the social status which defines them as a group. Therefore, empowerment involves helping adolescent girls to develop collective capabilities which facilitate partnerships towards common understanding of the situation.

As shown in Figure 3.1, certain pathways are suggested as important to capability expansion appropriate to adolescent girls' well-being. Capability expansion is expected to lead to the following outcomes: life skills, healthy lives, education and learning, voice, respect and critical consciousness. The pathways for capability expansion include empowering adolescent girls, promoting community social norm change, supporting parents, strengthening school systems, and strengthening ASRH services. Local communities can be engaged to raise awareness about the importance of transforming archaic norms and social practices which are detrimental to adolescent girls' well-being. As such, relevant stakeholders must be supported to lead community-based strategies as the starting point of social change (Ibrahim, 2017). The process of conscientisation is important for comparing a range of alternatives in expanding adolescent girls' capabilities in participation. Following Aristotle's notion of *phronesis*, individuals should be acquainted with the most reasonable way to act in particular situations (Massingham, 2019).

It is also imperative to strengthen the curriculum which provides education on SRH. From a Foucauldian perspective, education produces subjects who are able to critique the norms and values and also have the intellectual capacity to develop values (Bartky, 2020). Moreover, education provides an intellectual space for practical reasoning about their own values in relation to the lives they seek to achieve. Amartya Sen's perspective of capabilities explains an evaluative space to develop values or preferences (Frediani, Clark and Biggeri, 2019). Additionally, Jürgen Habermas' communicative theory underscores that dialogic communication is important to interpret preferences as discussed and negotiated, instead of treating them as just preferred (Patrón, 2019).

The Maputo Plan of Action 2016 – 2030 emphasises the significance of universal availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability of SRH services in strengthening comprehensive education on SRH. It is plausible to argue that comprehensive SRH knowledge should be addressed within the project of promoting social justice. Drawing from the capability approach, strengthening comprehensive education on SRH should take into account diverse capabilities to convert resources into types of functionings which individuals may value (Robeyns and Brighouse, 2010). Comprehensive education on SRH provides the basis for raising awareness about the importance of knowledge in decision-making.
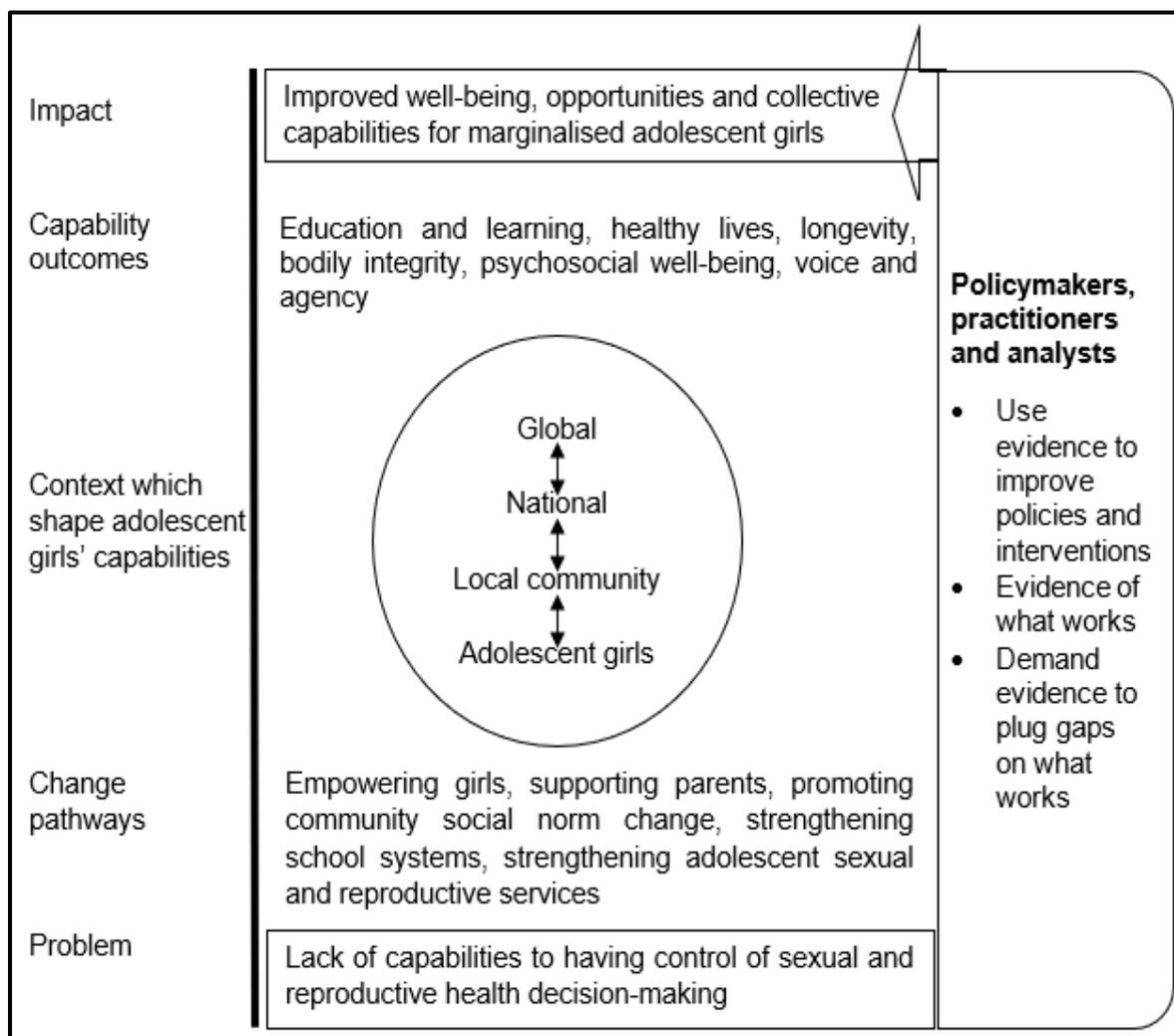
Figure 3.1: Conceptual framework for empowering adolescent girls in SRH decision-making and human development (Adapted from GAGE Consortium, 2019)

3.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter was about the conceptual framework developed for this study. The motivation was to articulate the foundational views about the multidimensionality of well-being. This involved an outline of the origins of the capability approach. A rationale of a conceptual framework was explained. The chapter also examined the idea of vulnerability within the capability approach and the conception of agency in human development. Key concepts of the capability approach were described. The chapter highlighted participation and empowerment of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at understanding the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Relevant literature had been reviewed to discuss the situation under study. An overview of global adolescent population is given. An analysis of the burden of SRH issues among adolescent girls from global to national level is given. A critical reflection on the influence of power on decision-making has been undertaken. This chapter also discusses freedom and social justice. An articulation of how human development inform our understanding of well-being is provided. A Zimbabwe context is highlighted. The policy context of ASRH is examined.

4.2   GLOBAL ADOLESCENT POPULATION

Global estimates show that the number of adolescents increased from 1.1 billion to 1.3 billion from 1994 to 2023 (UNDESAPD, 2024; Liang, et al., 2019). Levels of adolescent population in selected regions are given in Table 4.1. At least 144 million adolescents are in developed countries. It is noted that more than 90% of adolescents are found in the developing world, estimated at 1.2 million. About 803 million adolescents are found in the Northern African and Asian region, constituting 61% of adolescents in the world. Latin America and the Caribbean countries account for at least 105 million adolescents. The Sub-Saharan African region accounts for 278 million adolescents.

Table 4.1: Adolescent population by selected regions (thousands)

Region	Age group (years)	Male	Female	Total
More developed countries	10-19	74046.5	70139.8	144186.3
Developing countries	10-19	609556.8	571139.9	1180696.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	10-19	53430.6	51439.4	104870.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	10-19	138501.3	139331.2	277832.5
Eastern and South-Eastern Asia	10-19	162019.8	145451.6	307471.4
Europe and Northern America	10-19	66352.9	62871.4	129224.3
Northern Africa and Western Asia	10-19	53934.2	51660.0	105594.2
Central and Southern Asia	10-19	202437.4	187283.1	389720.5
Global	10-19	683603.4	641279.7	1324883.1

Source: UNDESAPD (2024)

4.3 THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ISSUES

The burden of SRH issues among adolescents has been mostly interpreted as a concern which is weighing on public health (Melesse et al., 2020). Adolescent girls encounter numerous barriers to access SRH services (Maziwisa, 2021; Liang, et al., 2019). Psychosocial, biological, cultural, economic and political factors increase adolescent girls' risky to multiple SRH issues. Adolescent girls experience multiple SRH issues such as unsafe sexual practices, STDs, unintended pregnancy, early childbearing, child marriage, unsafe abortion, sexual violence and maternal mortality (Austrian et al., 2018). This underlines the burden of SRH issues which affect adolescent girls.

Particular attention to adolescent girls in this study does not imply downplaying the fact that adolescent boys also deserve to be provided with SRH information and services. Empirical evidence indicates that adolescent girls in developing countries are disproportionately affected by adverse SRH outcomes vis-à-vis their male counterparts due to patriarchal gender relations and heterosexual norms (UNICEF, 2020; UNFPA, 2020). For example, more girls enter into marriages or unions vis-à-vis boys. Additionally, it has been noted that most of the deaths among adolescent girls

are attributed to maternal mortality (UNFPA, 2022a; Save the Children, 2021). It is not possible to discuss all SRH issues within the scope of this study. Several SRH issues are selected based on empirical evidence. This study discusses the following SRH issues, which though presented separately are related: adolescent pregnancy and childbearing, unsafe abortion, child marriage, sexual violence and maternal mortality.

4.3.1 Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing

Adolescent pregnancy and childbearing constitute the SRH burden among adolescent girls around the world. Notably, about 21 million of those aged 15 – 19 years are falling pregnant each year and 50% of pregnancies are unintended (UNFPA, 2022a). According to UNFPA (2022a), a third of women in developing countries gave birth in adolescence. Of these, 45% have their first birth before celebrating their 18th birthday. Births which occur in adolescence are measured using the adolescent birth rate (ABR). The ABR refers to live births which occurred among females aged between 10 and 19 years per 1000 in a year (UNFPA, 2013).

Based on data from UNDESAPD (2024), Figure 4.1 shows trends in ABRs between 1994 and 2023, across the world. Globally, ABR decreased from 4 to 1 birth and 73 to 39 births per 1000 females aged 10 – 14 years and 15 – 19 years, respectively. It is revealing that, on average, developed countries have the lowest ABR compared to developing countries. In developed countries, ABR decreased from 0.5 to 0.1 births per 1000 females aged 10 – 14 years and 32 to 9 births per 1000 females aged 15 – 19 years between 1994 and 2023. In developing countries, ABR decreased from 5 to 1 birth per 1000 females aged 10 – 14 years and 81 to 43 births per 1000 females aged 15 – 19 years between 1994 and 2023. Remarked decline in ABR has been recorded in Central and Southern Asia where ABR fell from 8 to 0.4 births per 1000 females aged 10 – 14 years and from 127 to 26 births per 1000 females aged 15 – 19 years between 1994 and 2023. A positive sign that efforts to address adolescent pregnancy and childbearing are yielding positive results. In Latin America and Caribbean, ABR fell from 3 to 2 births per 1000 females aged 10 – 14 years and 87 to 51 births per 1000 females aged 15 – 19 years between 1994 and 2023. Adolescent birth rate remains high in Sub-Saharan Africa, although it marginally fell from 10 to 3 births per 1000 females aged 10 -14 years and 133 to 94 births per 1000 females between 1994 and 2023. UNICEF, UN Women and Plan International (2020)

highlights that East Asia and the Pacific is the exception as ABR slightly increased from 21 to 25 per 1000 girls in the 15 – 19 age-group between 1995 and 2020.
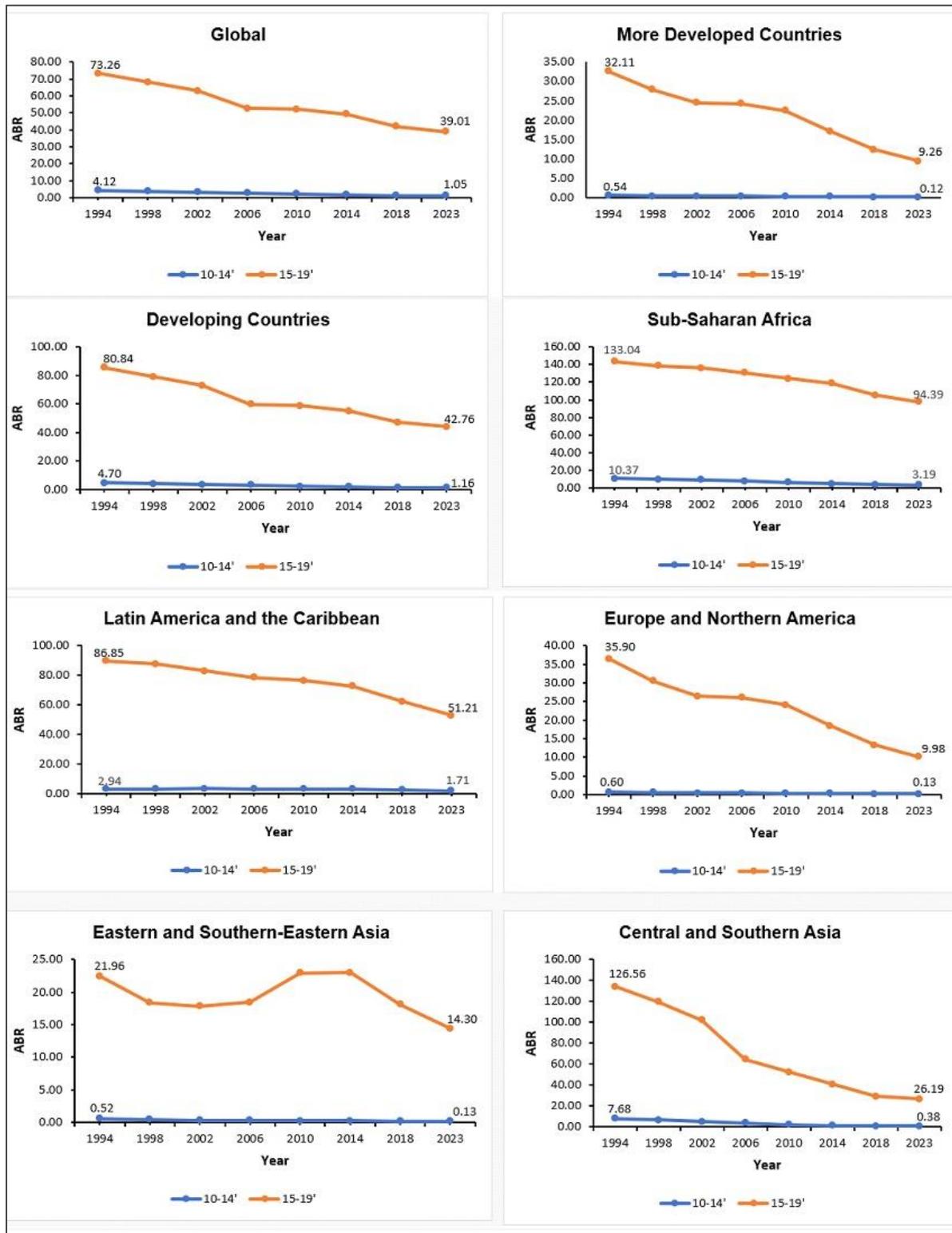
Figure 4.1: Trends in adolescent birth rates by selected regions, 1994 – 2023 (Data adapted from UNDESAPD, 2024)

Adolescent pregnancy and childbearing among those under 18 years, indicate that adolescent girls' choices are troubled by gender inequalities, reproductive injustices and asymmetrical power relations in SRH decision-making. Although unintended pregnancy is not always unwanted (UNFPA, 2022b), there is a possibility that it is more influenced by lack of control of SRH decision-making. For example, adolescent girls mostly struggle to influence the use of contraceptives. Estimates have shown that 43% of girls aged between 15 and 19 years who had sexual experience lacked access to modern contraceptives (High Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up, 2021). Analysis of data from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in 32 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, 69% of adolescent girls have the capacity to decide on SRH (Ahinkorah et al., 2020).

While statistics provide a static state of the phenomenon, the reality is that adolescent girls are exposed differently to societal support for adopting healthy sexualities because of variations in exposure to sexuality education and enforcement of legal sexual regulation and heterosexual norms across the world. UNFPA (2022a) argues that the agency of girls is devalued when their SRH needs are not fully supported and prioritised. As such, unintended pregnancy among adolescent girls reveals the violation of their SRHRs. It is imperative that adolescent girls should not only need protection from falling pregnant while not yet ready, but they also have to develop the capacity to make choices which reflect the lives they value and wish to pursue.

Zulu et al. (2022) underscore that adolescent pregnancy is inextricably linked to increased health and economic consequences which negatively affect both the mother and the child. Teens who get pregnant and experience childbearing mostly live in conditions of deprivation and lack the social support to acquire contraceptives. The situation is more precarious in developing countries where SRH services are more accessible in urban areas than in rural areas and public health laws imposes restrictive measures to young people under 18 years. This has deleterious consequences on adolescent girls' well-being, as nearly half of adolescent mothers gave first births before celebrating the 18th birthday, globally (UNFPA, 2022a). In less developed countries, child motherhood exposes adolescent girls to high fertility regimes. Demographic analyses established that 74% of adolescent mothers under 15 years who give birth for the first birth mostly have a second birth before attaining 20 years

(UNFPA, 2022a). The Zimbabwe Public Health Act (Chapter 15:17) any person under 18 years requires the consent of the adult caregiver to access SRH care and medical treatment (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2021).

4.3.2 Unsafe Abortion

The World Health Organisation (2021a) asserts that unsafe abortion accounts for between 8% and 11% of all maternal deaths which occur among women of the reproductive group. UNFPA (2022a) indicates that about 5.7 million girls in the 15 – 19 years age group have unsafe abortion each year, worldwide. It has been noted that unintended pregnancies are often associated with high incidences of unsafe abortion. As highlighted by World Health Organisation (2021a), 61% of women of childbearing age who unintended fall pregnant end up having unsafe abortion. Most of unsafe abortions involving adolescent girls take place in developing countries (UNFPA, 2022c). This situation is unprecedented in Sub-Saharan Africa which stands at 77%, compared to 45% in the world (UNFPA, 2022c).

Unsafe abortion shows the extent to which SRH decision-making is entangled with lack of respect for adolescent girls' SRHRs. Vulnerable adolescent girls lack the capacity to make choices which reflect their interests and priorities. Poverty creates conditions which could force adolescent girls to take risks in sexual relationships. For example, it had been noted that some girls in Malawi engaged in unprotected sex knowingly in exchange of money with men and boys (Nash et al., 2019). This study argues that protection of adolescent girls' rights in SRH decision-making is fundamental to safeguarding their dignity and bodily integrity (Sully et al., 2020). This entails increasing adolescent girls' capacities to make choices on whether and when to get pregnant and have children in ways which do not diminish their well-being. Moreover, unsafe abortion in developing countries do not only affect individuals, but the effects also weigh heavily on the already incapacitated health delivery system. World Health Organisation (2021a) indicates that the world spends US$553 million every year on treating major complications from unsafe abortion.

Additionally, abortion is either prohibited or highly restricted in many developing countries. Abortion is tolerated in situations when the pregnancy is detected to pose a threat to life of the woman, resulted from rape, a product of incest, and if the foetus

has serious genetic malformations (World Health Organisation, 2021a). African Union Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa articulates the position of African member states and nations on the issue of abortion. Article 14(2)(c) underlines that, as a way of protecting reproductive rights of women, abortion must be supervised by a medical professional, allowed when the pregnancy is risky, resulted from rape, sexual assault or incest. Romero et al. (2021) note that abortion laws and policies are more restrictive in the Latin American and the Caribbean countries. Bankole et al. (2020) found that 45% of women in Sub-Saharan Africa reside in countries which have very strict abortion laws, 47% are in countries with laws which are moderate and 8% live in countries with liberal attitude to abortion. In Zimbabwe, the Termination of Pregnancy Act (Chapter 15:10) bestows exclusive power to the State on deciding whether or not an abortion is permissible.

4.3.3 Child Marriage

Child marriage is another SRH burden affecting adolescent girls and its effects on well-being are multifaceted. MacQuarrie, Juan and Fish (2019) describe child marriage as a marriage or an arrangement which signifies a marital union involving a boy or girl under 18 years. According to UNICEF (2023), the number of girls in marriage or in a stable union before attaining 18 years is estimated at 12 million in 2022, globally. Girls married while still children increased from 15% to 35% between 1997 and 2022 in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF, 2023). Figure 4.2 shows the extent of girls married while below 18 years in selected regions. Thirty seven percent of girls are believed to have entered into marriage or union while below 18 years in West and Central Africa. Girls are least likely to get married as children in East Asia and the Pacific, estimated at 7%. A marked fall in child marriage has been recorded in South Asia from 59% to 28% between 1994 and 2020 (UNICEF, 2022; UNICEF, UN Women and Plan International, 2020). Little change of incidences of child marriages had been observed in Latin America and the Caribbean countries in the last two decades (UNICEF, 2019).
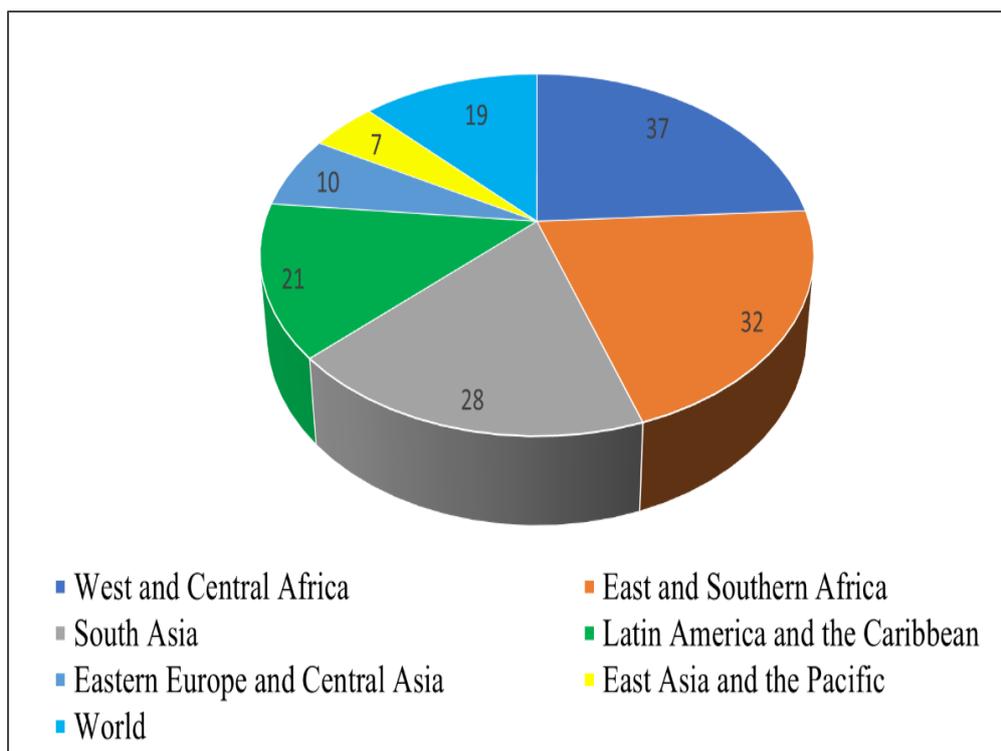
Figure 4.2: Percentage of women aged 20 – 24 years first married or in union before the age of 18 years (UNICEF, 2022)

Child marriage features as one of the major challenges to attain SDGs. Child marriage has been identified as one of harmful practices which must be eradicated by the year 2030 under Target 5.3 of SDG 5 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Seff, Steiner and Stark (2020) noted that girls who had early sexual debut were mostly getting married earlier than they wished in Uganda, Nigeria and Tanzania. An analysis of data from MICS revealed that 34% women in the 20 – 24 years age group in Zimbabwe had been married before celebrating the 18th birthday (ZIMSTAT and UNICEF, 2019).

Poor standards of living account for cases of child marriage. Poverty deprives adolescent girls of the capacity to make decisions on SRH. UNICEF (2023) states that girls in high-income households are three times to avert marriage in childhood compared to those in poorest households. UNICEF (2019) highlights that 39% of women who are lowest income group are often married before celebrating the 18th birthday years compared with 8% in the richest quintile in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. Girls in low-income households are pressured to get married

earlier for financial and social benefits associated with marriage (Lyn, 2022; ZIMSTAT and UNICEF, 2019).

Studies have shown that virtually all first births among adolescent girls under 18 years take place in marriages or unions (UNFPA, 2022a). This shows girls are pressured to get married once they discover that they fall pregnant. In Sub-Saharan Africa, societal expectation that sexual desire must be fantasised within the context of marriage at most compounded the situation (Sarfo, Yendork and Naidoo, 2022; Kamanzi and Shilunga, 2021; Liang et al., 2019). In a study in Tillabéri and Maradi regions of Niger, Saul et al. (2020) noted that social expectations created social ostracism of young women who chose to get married at their own time. Those who passed the idealised age for proper marriage were seen as disgraceful and society made their situation harder to find male suitors, leading to uncertain futures. Given the pervasiveness of gender inequalities in Africa, Olamijuwon and Odimegwu (2022) argue that sexual abstinence is not sufficient to protect girls from oppressive norms because it is not premised on strategies for empowering girls to wait until they have the capacities to choose safe and satisfying sexual relations. As a result, this narrative might have additional unintended consequences on the girls they intend to protect (Olamijuwon and Odimegwu, 2022).

Child marriage not only complicates the well-being of adolescent girls, but it also negatively affects overall national development. Sayi and Sibanda (2018) articulate that child marriage frustrates efforts for investing in the demographic dividend and it also contributes to rapid population growth. Evidence suggests that marriage in childhood detrimentally affect the well-being of adolescent girls such as dropping out of school, abrupt disruption of social life, early pregnancy, maternal and child mortality, intergenerational poverty and intimate partner violence (Plan International, 2022; UNICEF, 2021a). Additionally, adolescent girls have increased risk of suffering from mental health issues associated with marital problems. Discrimination and stigma could result in loneliness, anxiety, fear and grief (UNICEF, 2021b).

4.3.4 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a phenomenon which affects adolescent girls in many settings. It manifests in multiple forms which encompass maltreatment such as forced sex, rape,

sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual abuse. According to UNICEF (2020), sexual violence refers to any actual or attempted sexual act which is characterised by unwanted comments or advances directed to a person in any setting regardless of their relationship. The United Nations Women (nd.) describes sexual violence as a situation whereby a person participates in any sexual act against their will. The capacity to consent is essential to determine whether or not the sexual act reflects elements a form of sexual violence. The liberal understanding of consent justifies the significance of securing individual freedom and legitimising relationships. This implies that an independent choice must set a precedence over sexual relationships. Therefore, United Nations Women (nd.) asserts that having sex with a person against their will or those who have no capacity to give consent is sexual violence.

Demographic and Health Surveys and MICSs produce national representative population-based data on sexual violence. The indicators of sexual violence used by DHS and MICS draw from gender-based violence indicators, with particular reference to women. The DHS and MICS reports describe sexual violence as use of threats or to physically force a woman to perform sexual acts against her choice. This definition supposes an inherent ability to give an affirmative consent by a woman and her actual preferences are well known a priori. However, the relationship between what one prefers and the capacity to consent is not easily discernible, particularly from the perspective of adolescent girls. Therefore, there is more to consent than absence of coercion. Furthermore, the documentation of sexual violence and exploitation of girls becomes difficult to detect with globalisation and digital technologies that present new challenges to critically analyse the concept of consent (UNICEF, 2020).

Pearce (2013) argues that the context surrounding the concept of consent is significant when assessing the intellectual capacity of an individual. As postulated by Pearce (2013), the social model of consent suggests that a person can suffer from sexual violence in ways which are not easily discernible. According to the social model, consent can manifest as coerced, normalised, survival and condoned. Coerced consent describes a situation where a child or a young adolescent who does not give consent is manipulated to consent and perform a sexual act. The perpetrator grooms the victim into relations of dependence, such that the dependent is coerced into sexual activity through offering money or gifts.

A normalised consent is influenced by societal norms that shape people's attitudes towards violence in sexual relationships. Sexual violence is normalised such that it is used in some occasions to validate oppression of girls in sexual relations (Shikukutu and Ramrathan, 2022) or perpetrating harmful cultural practices (Schroeder, Tallarico and Bakaroudis, 2022; Warria, 2018). For example, in Malawi, girls are forced to have sex with older men as part of transitioning into adulthood in the *fisi* rites of passage (Warria, 2018). Additionally, survival consent is where a child or young adolescent girl is driven by economic circumstances to have sex against her actual interests in exchange of money or gifts. In Epworth township on the outskirts of Harare in Zimbabwe, girls as young as 12 years engage in prostitution to get money for buying basic needs (H-Metro, 2016). Condoned consent occurs where practitioners' practices are oblivious to sexual exploitation of children or young adolescent girls, hence condoning it. As UNFPA (2022b) argues, unintended pregnancies are often used by policymakers as gender stereotypes to justify restrictive measures to premarital sex of adolescent girls.

Given the complexity of defining sexual violence, finding data that reflect the magnitude of sexual violence among adolescent girls is difficult (UNICEF, 2020). However, UNICEF, UN Women and Plan International (2020) reported that 13 million girls who belong to the 15 – 19 years group were forced to perform sexual acts in their lifetimes. Also, World Health Organisation (2021b) states that 24% of adolescent girls between 15 and 19 years were physically forced to engage in sex by a partner in their lifetime. These statistics provide the visual representation of sexual violence as a huge SRH burden which is unprecedented in regions beset by wars and political conflicts. Sexual violence is often used as a weapon of war mainly directed at women (Stark et al., 2022; Olaluwoye et al., 2022).

4.3.5 Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality is another SRH burden among adolescent girls (Save the Children, 2021). As defined by the World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank and the United Nations Population Group (2019), maternal mortality as the death which occurs to a woman while pregnant regardless of the period or at most 42 days after giving birth, which is attributed to complications or management of the pregnancy. The Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (MMEIG) highlights that

accurate estimates of maternal mortality remain a challenge due to under-reporting of deaths (World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank and the United Nations Population Group, 2019). In addition, most Sub-Saharan African countries' data on maternal mortality lacks validity due to poor functioning of civil registration and vital statistical systems (Musarandega et al., 2021). Maternal mortality data for adolescent girls is conspicuously absent. Therefore, this section provides the general description of the levels of maternal mortality based on data for women who are of childbearing age.

About 295 000 maternal deaths were recorded in 2017 worldwide, translating to 211 deaths per 100 000 births (World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank and the United Nations Population Group, 2019). Maternal mortality is notably high in many developing countries, with Sub-Saharan Africa accounting for 66% (Okonofua, 2021). This is followed by the Southern Asian region where MMR is 157 per 100 000 live births. High rates of maternal mortality indicate that many countries fell far behind of achieving Target 3.1 of SDG to reduce MMR below 70 deaths per 100 000 live births by 2030 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

Despite high levels of maternal deaths, there is evidence of falling MMRs, globally. The World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank and the United Nations Population Group (2019) estimates that MMR declined by 38% from 211 deaths per 100 000 births in 2000 to 157 deaths per 100 000 births in 2017. The greatest decline was observed in Southern Asia where the rate declined by 59% from 348 to 157 deaths per 100 000 live births between 2000 and 2017. Maternal mortality ratio fell by 52% in Central Asia, 50% in Eastern Asia and 54% in Northern Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, MMR showed a 38% decrease between 2000 and 2017.

Both levels and variations of maternal mortality reflect inequalities in health care between developed and developing countries. The inequalities are more pronounced by poverty and lack of efficient health delivery systems. UNICEF, UN Women and Plan International (2020) highlight that almost one quarter of adolescent births worldwide are not attended by a skilled health personnel. The situation is deplorable in South Sudan and Chad, where almost three in four adolescent mothers undergo labour in the absence of a skilled birth attendant. The High Level Commission on the Nairobi

Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up (2021) suggests that efforts to reduce maternal mortality must not have a narrow focus on effective delivery of services, but it must also focus on safeguarding the right to autonomous decision and bodily integrity. High maternal mortality from developing countries also indicates the influence of social and economic conditions on well-being between countries and within countries (Okonofua, 2021).

4.4 POWER RELATIONS AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

Although many studies have elaborated on the widespread adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls in the developing world, the multiple dimensions power in SRH decision-making among adolescent girls has been given scant attention (Jones, Presler-Marshall and Samuels, 2018). Additionally, phallogocentric narratives had been used to make sense about adolescent girls' lack of capacity to have control of SRH decision-making in ways which tends to reproduce the patriarchal hierarchy and hegemonic gender relations (Akurugu, 2020, Conroy, Ruark and Tan, 2020). Power interacts with other factors to create the context in which adolescent girls lack capacities to make decisions and choices which are beneficial to their well-being. This section focuses on multiple facets of power which shape adolescent girls' capacities in making decisions on SRH and other aspects related to their lives.

This study argues that lack of capacity to have control of SRH decision-making does not suggest a weaker subject in relation to another, but it alludes to power imbalances in different contexts. Haugaard (2021) asserts that power has multiple meanings which cannot be readily interpreted the same in different contexts. Asymmetrical power relations create the context in which the decision-making process plays out against adolescent girls' ability to make autonomous choices. Power can be located in a continuum of social interactions which determine agency in decision-making (Gaventa, 2021).

Haugaard (2021) defines power as the capacity to perform an action which manifests in agency. It is articulated that the concept of power is important to reflect on how adolescent girls make sense of their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. In addition, conceptualising power as multifaceted enhances an in-depth

understanding of the capacity to make decisions (Conroy, Ruark, and Tan, 2020). Haugaard (2021) describes the following forms of power: power to, power over, power with, and power within. Power-to refers to the ability of a person to do something. Power-over is where an individual has control over the other or a group to do something even if they do not like to do it. Power-with indicates the willingness between actors to collaborate to do something. Power-within describes an individual's or a group of people's consciousness about the capacity to do something. The concept of power increases awareness on the importance of a transformative process of increasing capacities of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

This section draws on the interrelated four dimensions of power to conceive a holistic understanding of decision-making (Haugaard, 2021). The first dimension of power describes a pluralist and overt or visible power as articulated by Robert Dahl (Abraham, 2016). This dimension allows to identify the one who has an upper hand in decision-making. This implies that people, whether as individual or a group, who have control over the decision-making process and potential resources are the ones who possess power (Lukes, 2005). People or a group of people who hold power constrain the capacities of the dominated to make decisions by manipulating various mechanisms and instruments such as laws, identities, standards, positions, norms and symbols. In such circumstances, hegemonic knowledge enables subordination to be productive in ways which the powerful gets the dominated to do something with little or no resistance. The powerful also use violence and coercion to manipulate the dominated.

Given that the first dimension of power only captures overt or visible relations of domination, it is restrictive in theorising the underlying conditions which create and reinforce barriers to be involved in decision-making. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz suggested another dimension of power which examines both visible and hidden power (Lukes, 2005). Hidden power operates in the form of control from the capacity to influence the nature of the agenda. Agenda setting involves covertly excluding certain issues and voices which the powerful people or group of people perceive as in conflict with their interests (Gaventa, 2021).

Agenda setting is characterised by mobilising bias. The bias is mobilised through socialisation, coercion, influence, authority, force or manipulation (Lukes, 2005). In doing so, power becomes two dimensional, as it emphasises on the influence of both active and non-active participation on outcomes of decision-making. Social structures are responsible for reproducing power through bias. In this context, this might perpetrate the subordination to oppressive social structures.

Lukes (2005) proposes a third dimension of power to examine how invisible power shapes attitudes, views and agentic behaviours of individuals. Instead of focusing on the influence of structural forces working behind the scenes to constrain or enable participation in decision-making, the attention is on how control is achieved through ideologies which sustain unequal power relations (Crawford and Andreassen, 2015; Hayward and Lukes, 2008). Conflict arises from the suppression of objective interests of the dominated by those who are in positions of authority (Hayward and Lukes, 2008).

Contrary to the view about indispensability of conflict in making meaning about power relations, Lukes (2005) articulates that power can be exercised even if conflict cannot be actually observed. Moreover, conflict may be averted before it becomes visible in the process of making decisions through amending rules of engagement. As such, the exercise of power is shaped by ideologies, norms and values which are responsible for maintaining the unjust status quo (Gaventa, 2021). Although people or a group of people exercise power in a manner which serves objective interests, the actions or inactions are shaped by internalised ideologies, norms and values. However, ideologies, norms and values produce power relations which perpetuate their oppression and exploitation of the dominated (Bates, 2010; Hayward and Lukes, 2008).

According to the third dimension, power is interpreted by identifying the individuals who are morally responsible for oppressive and exploitative relationships (Hayward and Lukes, 2008). The analysis of power seeks to expose the effects of dominant ideologies, norms and values on endowing the powerful individuals with the power to maintain the oppression of the dominated. Lukes (2005) highlights that the bias of structures or the system is, to a larger extent, reproduced through social practices and

expected behaviours of individuals. In this context, barriers to SRH services could be addressed through reforms of policies and laws which limit the powers of service providers and increase the capacities of adolescent girls to claim the right to healthcare.

It is highlighted that the three faces of power are concerned with objective identification of those who possess power. The fourth dimension of power expands the analysis of power to encompass processes responsible for the formation of subjectivities in relationships. In this context, power relations are not always directly traced to observable events. Drawing from the Foucauldian genealogical perspective, power is inextricably related to the social construction of subjects in relationships. Power is exercised by having the capacity to control the environment of action and indirectly influence the actions of others (Schubert, 2021). However, the resistance of domination is not directly connected to conditions of disempowerment. Instead, the exercise of power by autonomous subjects, regardless of social position, is more linked to the subjection of subjects to ideologies, authority and institutions (Bacchi and Bonham, 2014). As such, all the subjects involved share the knowledge about agency, norms, desires, interests and even the language of threats which shape their social realities (Abraham, 2016).

From the Foucauldian perspective, power is pervasive in relationships. The exercise of power is not driven by objective interests, but by social networks which are built upon trust, solidarity, mutual respect and royalty to organise conformist agentic behaviours (Akurugu, 2020). Michael Foucault argues that power becomes productive in social structures through disciplinary practices which are actualised by social actors (Bartky, 2020). In doing so, power is responsible for mechanisms and technologies that forge the conformity of subjects to norms and predispositions (Haugaard, 2021; Lorenzini, 2018). Adolescent girls' views and perceptions about making decisions on SRH responsibly can be interpreted as being shaped by power relations embodied in nation-state institutions. The media and formal education indoctrinate adolescent girls with certain predispositions, the legislature enables the regulation of ASRH and the health sector influences the policy through the biomedical approach. In addition, disciplinary power acts through heterosexual patriarchy to sustain asymmetric power

relations in socialisation of subjects to conform to expected gendered agentic behaviours.

Human rights provide a political basis for accountability and transparency in promoting adolescent girls' SRHRs for human development. The decision on SRH is intertwined with the right to life, education, health care, livelihood and participation. Adolescent girls are constrained, enabled or motivated to make SRH choices by power (Crawford and Andreassen, 2015). UNFPA (2021) states that SRH decision-making among adolescent girls must be protected from violence, discrimination and coercion. As such, the analysis of adolescent girls' experiences of SRH must not be restricted to identifying observable power, but also to understanding the dynamics of power relations which shape gender roles and social identities (Chadwick, 2018).

4.5   TYPES OF FREEDOM

Central to this section is the concern about how freedom should be reasoned in strategies for improving well-being of adolescent girls. From human development perspective, improving well-being involves enlarging freedoms of individuals. However, freedom is a concept which is interpreted from different strands. As highlighted by Sen (2006), freedom is so complex that no type of freedom is an end in itself because one type of freedom can be used to advance freedoms of other types in different situations. Brown (2017) articulates that understanding freedom is inextricably linked to different modes of agency. This underscores different motives people have when demanding freedom to make decisions on aspects which affect their lives. This study focuses on SRH decision-making as an aspect which affects adolescent girls' well-being. In doing so, the interpretation of types of freedom is undertaken to advance the importance of improving well-being related to achieving social justice.

Freedom is intertwined with power. Hayward and Lukes (2008) argue that power imposes constraints on freedom through oppressive structures. Since the 1994 ICPD, strategies for improving adolescent girls' well-being and enhancing their SRHRs are now prioritised (UNFPA, 2021). While freedom should be indispensable to the ability to make decision on SRH, its applicability across cultures remains contentious. The

African Union (2016) advocates for a culturally sensitive education on SRH for adolescents which must derive its legitimacy from local communities. This opens up to different interpretations of freedom across diverse cultural settings. Given diverse values and identities across cultures, societies may interpret freedom depending on particular situations and in line with pursuing their own destinies (Neocosmos, 2018; Mignolo, 2011). This section examines the following types of freedom: freedom as non-interference, freedom as self-mastery, freedom as non-domination, freedom as capability and freedom as critique.

4.5.1 Freedom as Non-interference

In an essay titled 'Two concepts of liberty', Isaiah Berlin articulates the concept of freedom as non-interference (Hardy, 2002). The standard liberal explanation of freedom as non-interference states that people must be free from external barriers, constraints or obstacles when making choices from the options available (Bhakuni, 2021; Doyle, 2020). People must be given the opportunity to choose freely whatever they want (Horton, 2013). As such, individuals are said to be free to make choices when they do not subordinate their interests to the will of others. Central to freedom as non-interference is that individuals can make rational and autonomous choices. Limitations which are beyond control and characteristics inherent to the individual do not affect one's freedom to make choice, although they increase the vulnerability to the ill-will of others (Pettit, 2011). For example, young age does not negatively affect one's ability to choose when options are available. Individuals must be given chances to grow or develop themselves according to their own choices.

Brown (2017) articulates that freedom as non-interference is important to justify policies and laws relevant to protect individuals' freedom to enjoy the lifestyles they value. Promoting SRHRs has direct bearing on adolescent girls' freedom to make choices that enhance their well-being (UNFPA, 2021). In addition, the global pro-choice movement popularised the 'my body my choice' motto to raise awareness about the need for respect of bodily autonomy in SRH decision-making (Price, 2020). The movement seeks to eliminate barriers and constraints on making SRH choices freely. Consequently, adolescent girls' lack of control of SRH choices negatively affect their socio-economic and healthy lives (UNFPA, 2021).

Putterman (2006) opines that Isaiah Berlin's defense of unrestricted exercise of freedom has been largely concentrated on protecting political freedom from government interference in people's privacy. Moreover, interpreting freedom is also invariably shaped by social, cultural and historical realities (Hirschmann, 2021). In African cultures, patriarchal gender relations are organised in such a way that even if adolescent girls are not coerced, their choices reflect conformity to certain roles. In this context, it is paradoxical that leaving adolescent girls alone to make decisions in ways they want would increase their vulnerability.

Additionally, freedom as non-interference is oblivious to the effects of oppressive environments on determining characteristics of options available in relation to one's interests and preferences (Bhakuni, 2021). It would be misleading to identify freedom from a single choice influenced by a benevolent dictator despite a range of options available. Pettit (2011) opines that the authenticity of choice can also be derived from the consequences culminating from choosing among options available. Moreover, SRH decision-making occurs in circumstances which are often insecure, unstable and uncertain. Thus, freedom as non-interference is not adequate to understand how intersectional forms of oppression affect adolescent girls to make choices freely (Bhakuni, 2021; Ross, 2017).

4.5.2 Freedom as Self-mastery

Isaiah Berlin also theorised freedom as self-mastery and it is also referred to positive freedom. Freedom as self-mastery extends the moral value that freedom is earned (Christman, 2021). A rational individual can independently make choice, although the choice is endorsed through certain processes or procedures (Pettit, 2008). As such, freedom is constrained by the moral authority of hegemonic discourses and dominant institutions. The freedom to make choice is authenticated by the opportunity to act and the quality of agency (Doyle, 2020). Quality of agency denotes the subjective and moral imperative of self-control, self-regulation, self-determination or self-realisation (Christman, 2021). This means that autonomous individuals are able to act freely in ways that reflect control of actions, preferences, thoughts and desires (Brown, 2017). Thus, freedom to act is associated with adapting, experimenting, correcting and learning (Pendenza and Lamattina, 2019). An individual is not considered free if driven

by passions, impulses, emotions and desires which increase the risk of harm to the physical, psychosocial, emotional or mental well-being.

The exercise of freedom encompasses developing abilities, having resources to acquire moral agency and using instrumental relationality to have control of one's decisions (Christman, 2021; Roberts, 2017). The capacity to progressively fulfil one's interests has a moral dimension. Paragraph 7.3 of the Programme of Action of ICPD emphasizes an individual's right to make decisions freely and responsibly on who and when to have sex and when to have children (UNFPA, 2004). Therefore, people are inspired to make decisions on SRH in light of realising human capacity and potential.

Freedom as self-mastery embraces the importance of social and political strategies to strengthen adolescent girls' abilities to make SRH choices. Such strategies are built upon a moral imperative to ensure that adolescent girls lead healthy, innovative and creative lives. Butler (2009) underscores that social, economic and political institutions must address obstacles which hinder individuals to utilise opportunities available in order to secure their lives. Adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls reveal choices entangled in the matrix of power relations of race, patriarchy and neoliberal capitalism (Ross, 2017).

4.5.3 Freedom as Non-domination

Philip Pettit conceptualised freedom as non-domination as a common good and to describe the independence of individuals from any form of domination (Bryan, 2021; Alexander, 2010). It generally denotes that an individual is regarded as free if he or she is not dominated by others (Nielsen and Landes, 2016). Freedom as non-domination pays attention to power relations as crucial to determine whether one is able to choose freely (Beckman and Rosenberg, 2017). From this view, the ability to choose does not necessarily mean an individual is free. Individuals are not free when they do not have the capacity to choose in line with their interests and priorities (Alexander, 2010). This implies that a person is not dominated when he or she has control over the nature of his or her choice and options available (Koggel, 2020).

The freedom to choose might be enhanced by curtailing arbitrary control over the dominated through rule of law (Nielsen and Landes, 2016). For instance, in Zimbabwe,

adults' arbitrary control over the circumstances through which adolescent girls under 18 years might get married were curtailed by the Marriages Act (Chapter 5:17). The Act coded a child marriage as a criminal offense. Child marriage indicates how girls' rights are violated in SRH decision-making (Horii, 2019). Also, child marriage is an impediment to freedom to participate in development. As such, freedom as non-domination could enhance adolescent girls' voices and agency in SRH decision-making (Ross, 2017).

4.5.4 Freedom as Capability

Freedom as capability is based on values articulated in the capability approach. Sen highlights that freedom is both intrinsic and instrumental to development (Sen, 2006). The instrumentality of freedom is characterised by political freedom, availability of economic facilities, existence of social opportunities, the guarantee of transparency, and protective security (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019). Freedom entails expanding both capabilities and opportunities of achieving the valued life (Chandler, 2013). Sen (2000) elaborates that freedom involves processes which enhance people's agency and actual opportunities to circumvent preventive risks and insecurities which threaten well-being. People enjoy freedom when they have the capabilities and material conditions for doing and being what they want with their lives.

Autonomy is described as an appearance of the internal capacity to freely deliberate on one's ability to achieve basic human flourishing (Khader, 2019). The concern is on how society imposes constraints on people's abilities to pursue the lives of their own choosing (Brown, 2017). The capabilities available characterise the choice-making context. Freedom is associated with reflective choices. In doing so, lack of freedom is a manifestation of adaptive preferences. In addition, adaptive preferences are unreliable to reflect actual attitudes of individuals to their lives (Mitchell, 2018).

The importance attached to freedom as capability often translates to individual initiative, social effectiveness and national progress (Sen, 2000). From this viewpoint, freedom is not treated as a common good. Instead, development ought to free individuals by expanding their capabilities to lead their own preferred lives (Chandler, 2013; Nussbaum, 2003). People have to pursue the lives they want to lead according to their real preferences (Velástegui, 2020). Thus, freedom is measured in terms of

how individuals are faring and how a country promotes health care, educational attainments, nutritional status, literacy, employment, social respect and political participation (Christman, 2021; Alexander, 2010).

As pointed out by Nussbaum (2003), freedom as capability focuses on evaluating how people are free from poverty, illiteracy, violence, malnutrition and illness. Therefore, society must empower people to pursue lifestyles which improve human well-being. Such empowerment is treated as non-interference as long as the strategies are implemented within the framework of the rule of law and in the spirit of respecting human rights (Alexander, 2010; Nussbaum, 2003). As a result, it is immoral to place blameworthiness upon those who are experiencing deprivations. Freedom as capability is useful to having alternative views about adolescent girls' experiences of SRH decision-making. In doing so, empowerment of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making must be understood from their perspectives. Adolescent girls' SRH issues ought to be understood as unfreedoms which could be addressed through empowerment rather than use of punitive measures. Increasing adolescent girls' informational, educational, health and income-earning capabilities contributes to their abilities to choose the lives they want.

While freedom as capability places much emphasis on the individual's control of choice, Mitchell (2018) argues that it pays less attention to the effects of the excesses of institutional measures on one's choices in oppressive environments. Alexander (2010) points out that evaluating freedom by how individuals make their choices might fall short of critiquing how dominant structures set priorities in the distribution of resources. Since freedom as capability does not categorically take domination as a concern, it is not adequate to address how the legitimacy of institutional constraints in securing capabilities and functionings. As reminded by Nussbaum (2003), the utility of preferred choices is not adequate to explain social justice in situations whereby unjust background conditions shape preferences. Additionally, Wenner (2020) points out that people depend on each other, especially in the formative years, and relationships formed from such dependence mostly influence preferences, values and self-understanding.

4.5.5 Freedom as Critique

Freedom as critique describes the ability to choose as transformative. According to Schubert (2021), a Foucauldian analysis of power contextualises freedom as embedded in processes of socialisation and subjectification. Freedom can be described as a critical reflection on one's subjectification and socialisation about identities and moral values within social structures (Schubert, 2021). Such critical reflection must never become hegemonic because the critique concentrates on the contradictory character of ideologies and discourses which enable the socialisation and subjectification of individuals (Neocosmos, 2018). Freedom is associated with resisting dominant ideologies and discourses, such that individuals are free to turn themselves into subjectivities which they desire. There is no reasoning independent of power because mental representations of social reality are socially and historically situated. Hirschmann (2021) argues that choices evolve as subjectivities and the subjectivities manifest in social and discursive practices.

Individuals are subjected to paternalistic structures which force them to conform to norms and rules (Newman, 2022). While recognising the role of power in conceptualising freedom, power is not necessarily an obstacle or barrier to choose freely. In this context, freedom is attained through resisting domination. Since domination is associated with control of the environment of action, the exercise of freedom is enhanced by expanding capabilities. The notion of freedom is seen as a practice which positions self-transformation as its principal focus (Butler, 2001).

Freedom as critique pays attention to emancipatory terms of defining the self within the limits of what one can know (Butler, 2001). People do not know how really free they are because subjects and subjectivities are produced through discourse. To appreciate the practice of freedom through critical reflection on adolescent girls' control of SRH decision-making, there is also the need to look closely at how epistemic justice provides multiple ways of defining the self and constructing social reality. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) argues that epistemic freedom is fundamental to cognitive justice by creating the autonomous space for critical reflection on the constitution of the subject and the theorisation of the world.

Neocosmos (2018) underscores that freedom in Africa is threatened by the increasing poverty and suffering from many forms of deprivations. It has been noted that poverty contributes to early childbearing and early marriage among adolescent girls in Africa (UNICEF, 2022). Additionally, individual freedom in Africa is often conflated with the discourse of national liberation which is largely framed in political terms (Manji, 2019). In doing so, autonomy and emancipation are seen as achievable through parliamentary democracy framed within the language of rights (Neocosmos, 2018). While autonomy is promoted through citizenship and democracy in modern society, ethnic and traditional cultural idioms in Africa also play a prominent role to give a moral sense to the demand for basic human flourishing (Neocosmos, 2018; Mamdani, 1996). Ikuenobe (2021) articulates that personhood is a status which could be achieved through symbolic practices and rituals.

4.6 INEQUALITY, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

Given increasing global interest in adolescent girls' well-being, it is important to explore inequalities which influence human development of adolescent girls. Prabhu and Iyer (2019) argue that the global inequality is its intertwining with poverty to determine lack of opportunities among the poor. Inequality generally refers to differences in well-being among individuals or groups of people within or between countries. From a capability perspective, inequality denotes unjust differences in capabilities arising from deprivations which hinder people to participate freely in developmental issues which affect their lives (Carmo, 2021). Inequalities within developing countries reflect lack of bargaining power among vulnerable people to influence policies for enlarging capabilities for human flourishing (UNDP, 2019). Therefore, inequality is not only determined by differences in basic capabilities possessed by individuals, but is also defined by oppression and restriction to individual or collective freedoms (Carmo, 2021).

In contrast to the neo-classical economic model of trickling-down effect, the human development approach frames people as the crucial component of development. Human development views inequality as a phenomenon which could be understood from a multidimensional perspective. It characterises human well-being not as a

product of aggregate measures of economic distribution, but as achievements in living standards, health and education (Klugman, Rodriguez and Choi, 2011).

Carmo (2021) asserts that inequalities are described by differentiation of social identities and categories at the individual, group or institutional level. For instance, gender is a category which is frequently used to describe inequality within a population. The development process can reinforce gender inequalities by appropriating a set of capabilities based on different social status within society. Adolescent girls are categorised by gender to emphasise their vulnerability to adverse SRH outcomes. Moreover, the High Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up (2021) articulates the significance of SRHRs to human well-being. Experiences of adverse SRH outcomes are reflections of inequalities which shape their capacities in decision-making. Adolescent girls face challenges in making SRH choices for leading healthy and socio-economic lives and also enhancing human dignity (UNFPA, 2022c). This section discusses the following: standard of living, health, education and human security.

4.6.1 Standard of Living

The concept of standard of living is interpreted in ways which bring about multiple insights into human well-being. Poduzov (2008) highlights that standard of living describes an estimated level of well-being which is interpreted through different and competing approaches. There are three approaches to describe standard of living (Barreiro-Gen, 2019). A standard of living denotes (i) the utility of a person, (ii) economic provision or opulence and (iii) the ability to exercise freedom and the capability to live well. The first two definitions presuppose the influence of income or consumption on the level of well-being which is categorised as an optimal standard of living. This section discusses insights about the characterisation of the standard of living. However, much emphasis has been placed on standard of living as a capability to live valuable lives. There is increased and widespread recognition of the dimensions of human well-being as indicators of standard of living (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

Firstly, the definition of standard of living which focuses on the utility of a person is foundationally grounded in the economic welfare approach. The economic welfare approach focuses on how the utility of life is measured by monetary-related

expenditures and is traced to the workings of Arthur Cecil Pigou (Backhouse, Baujard and Nishizawa, 2021). Economic welfare approach describes the standard of living as the states which influence the economic well-being of the individuals (Yamazaki, 2021). Income or money is instrumental to the ability to acquire goods and services to achieve a minimum social and economic status. Drawing from Adam Smith's insights, people are perceived to have achieved lives of dignity when they are able to interact with others in public without feeling shame and when they involve in community life (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

In the contemporary context, an individual has to sustain an income or an expenditure above the poverty datum line. The poverty datum line is the threshold that is used to identify people who fall short of income to meet recommended consumption levels. From this view, a standard of living may be derived from disposable income and improved consumption of goods and services. Therefore, an aggregate increase in national real income, expressed as gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP), would inevitably lead to increased consumption.

Secondly, living standards are interpreted as the economic provision or an opulence of consumer goods and services which individuals can choose to use freely (Barreiro-Gen, 2019). The characterisation of standard of living as economic provision or opulence has its roots in Adam Smith's (1723 - 1790) work on explaining the political economy of how production and distribution of commodities could be organised to satisfy demand (Mupedziswa, Malinga and Ntshwarang, 2021). The structure of prices modifies the amount and quality of commodities available to people. The level of standard of living is more tied to people's tendency to choose goods with the highest marginal utility. As such, differences in the standard of living indicate disparities of accessing opportunities determined by the market. Empirically, the standard of living is often derived from household surveys which measure variables of income and consumption. The standard of living is derived from an objective view of well-being (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

Thirdly, standard of living is a type of freedom or capability which suggests normative values crucial to human well-being. The view of capability negates the idea of wealth maximisation as the ultimate goal of enhancing human well-being. Amartya Sen

advocates for transcending the objective measure of standard of living by taking into account adaptive preferences and structural factors to explain the quality of life (Gasper, 2006). By taking into account adaptive preferences, the evaluation of the standard of living identifies how people may take hardship or luxury for granted which would give misleading images of an objective well-being.

From the capability perspective, standard of living generally denotes a positive view of freedom in which individuals are seen to have freedom to do what they value. Fundamentally, standard of living cannot be simply a unitary value of achievement, but also shows how capabilities and commodities possessed by individuals contribute to their material well-being. This draws on a pluralistic approach to explain the utility of a person. Contrary to the neoclassical measurement of the standard of living based solely on utility maximisation or its proxy of monetary income, the human development approach suggests an explanation which takes people's freedom seriously in understanding the valued lives they seek to pursue (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019).

Additionally, capability perspectives contribute to the conceptualisation of standard of living in the human development approach. The human development approach provides alternative perspectives on standard of living which go beyond the aggregate interpretation based on a single index such as GDP and GNP. Alternative indicators for multidimensional explanation of standard of living were developed. In 1990, UNDP published the first human development report which introduced alternative indices for measuring well-being. The human development index (HDI) was one of the indices introduced to measure both social and economic outcomes of human well-being (Rao and Min, 2017). Klugman, Rodriguez and Choi (2011) indicate that the HDI is a multidimensional yardstick of aggregating basic capabilities of well-being into a summary measure that is comparable across countries.

The HDI is a composite indicator which is used to compare inequalities between regions and countries (Permanyer and Smits, 2020). Low HDI indicates high inequalities while high HDI shows low inequalities (Herre and Arriagada, 2023). Using the HDI, inequalities are more pronounced in developing regions compared to developed regions. As shown in Figure 4.3, inequalities in Europe and Central Asia are remarkably lower than those found in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing

from the capability approach, many people in developing countries are vulnerable to poverty and other deprivations to human well-being due to disparities in exchange entitlements and in opportunities to fully participate in the markets (Sen, 2002a).
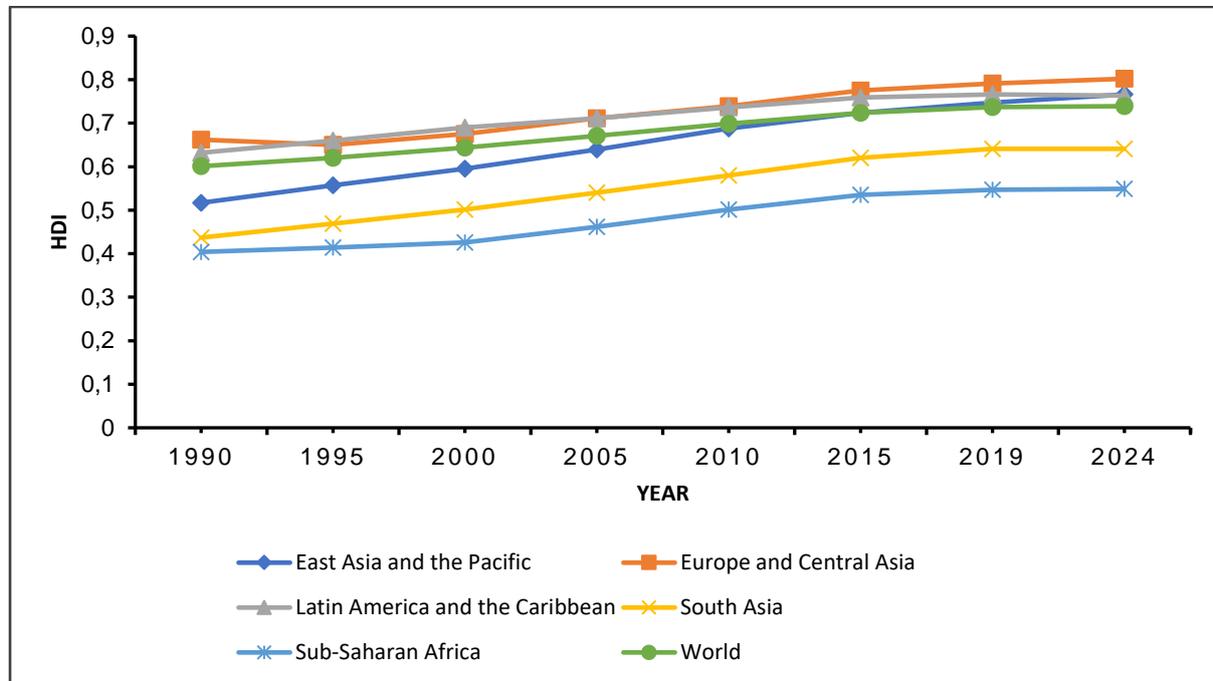
Figure 4.3: Trends in human development by selected regions, 1990 – 2024 (United Nations Development Programme, 2019, 2024)

Since the UNDP introduced the HDI to measure human development in 1990, more indices have been developed such as the multidimensional poverty index (MPI), gender development index (GDI) and social progress indicator (SPI) (Rao and Min, 2017). The human development approach acknowledges the instrumental role of income in converting capabilities into what they want to be and do, either individually or collectively (UNDP, 2019). This implies that the utility of income can be interpreted as a social and cultural phenomenon (Prabhu and Iyer, 2019). The HDI captures income through the proxy of gross national income per capita (GNIC). The GNIC is the sum total of the income of residents in a country over a particular period of time (Barreiro-Gen, 2019). Income as a variable, along with life expectancy and average numbers of schooling, determines the standard of living.

The World Bank publishes yearly data on the GNIC of more than 190 countries. The GNIC indicator indicates both the level of inequality and standard of living between

countries. Classification of countries shows whether they are high, middle or low income. According to the World Bank, GNIC greater than US$12 695 shows a high-income country, countries with GNIC between US$4 096 and US412 695 are referred to as upper-middle income, lower-middle income countries have GNIC between US$1 046 and 4 095, and countries with GINIC of less than US$1 046 are classified as low income (Hamadeh, van Rompaey and Metreau, 2021).

The GNIC is used to illustratre inequalities in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Oxfam International (2022) reports that inequalities are more marked in the SADC region than any region in the world. Among the countries with high inequalities in the world, six are found in Southern Africa, namely South Africa, Zambia, Eswatini, Namibia, Mozambique and Botswana. In all SADC countries, 14% of national income is controlled by the top 1% of the population and it is as high as 25% in Angola, Malawi and Mozambique (Oxfam International, 2022). Based on the GNIC, Mozambique, Madagascar and Democratic Republic of Congo are in the bottom ten of the poorest countries in the world. Ranking of selected SADC countries by GNIC is shown in Figure 4.4.
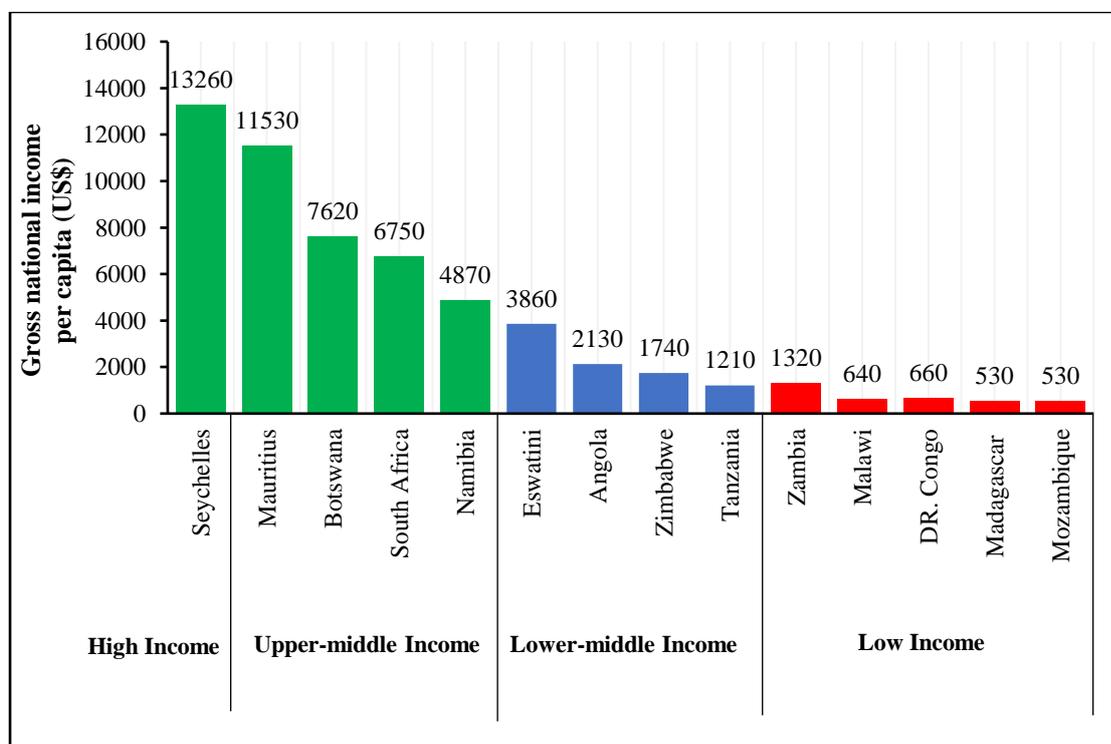
Figure 4.4: Ranking of SADC countries by gross national income per capita (Data derived from World Bank, 2024)

The intersection among income inequality, poverty and gender affects the social and economic status of individuals. Income inequality is associated with fewer opportunities for social mobility among poor people due to lack of freedom to enlarge the capability set (UNDP, 2019). Also, adolescent girls from poor households tend to be more vulnerable to violation of their SRHRs. As highlighted earlier in this chapter, adolescent girls from poorer households generally tend to marry or are in a union earlier than those from better-off households. UNICEF Mozambique (2015) points out that the effect of poverty on child marriage is more visible in households where girls lack economic opportunities.

4.6.2 Health

Health is one of the dimensions which are used to measure inequalities and well-being in human development. The capability approach states that health constitutes both objective and subjective elements of well-being. Amartya Sen postulates that objective well-being indicates achievements or functionings which are non-feeling physical and mental health components (Gasper, 2006). Subjective elements of well-being consist of emotions, happiness, satisfaction, and fulfilment. In the context of SRH, individuals should have safe and satisfying sexual relations to attaining self-fulfilment and protecting themselves from preventable risks. Health is a basic capability that depends on being in a state of good nourishment.

Health inequalities refer to unjust differences of health outcomes between countries, groups of people or individuals (Arcaya, Arcaya and Subramanian, 2015). Adverse health outcomes hinder people from fully developing their potential demographic, social and economic status. Many parts of the developing world are characterised by sharp disparities in accessing modern health care. Marginalised people often struggle to participate in strategic development and policy deliberations on resource allocations to health care. Deprived health status has negative impacts on mortality patterns and life expectancy. Evidence has shown that the world is still beset with high neonatal and under-five mortality rates and low life expectancies. Figure 4.5 shows under-mortality rates in selected regions between 2000 and 2023. Under-five mortality rates are falling across all regions. Globally, the mortality rate of children under-five fell from 76 deaths to 36 deaths per 1000 live births between 2000 and 2023 (UNDESAPD, 2024). In Europe and Northern America, under mortality rate decreased from 10 to 5

deaths per 1000 live births during the same period. A significant fall occurred in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia from 39 to 15 deaths per 1000 live births. Sub-Saharan Africa also experienced a marked decline from 151 to 69 deaths per 1000 live births, although it is still high.
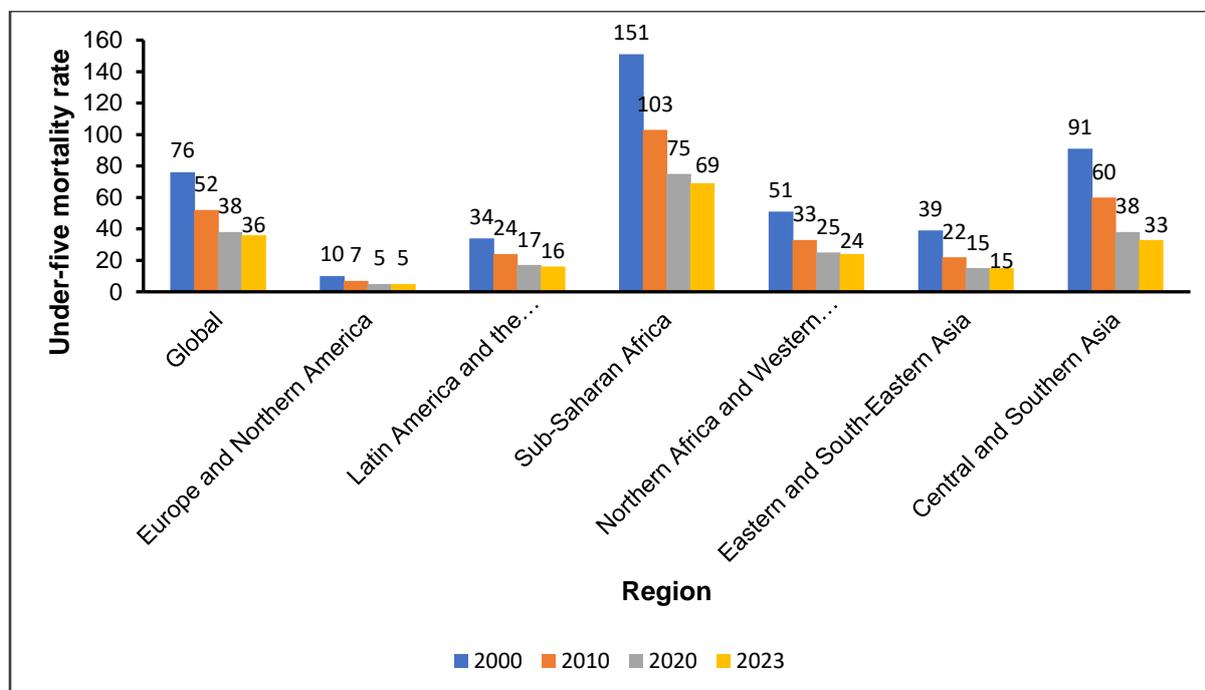
Figure 4.5: Under-five mortality rate by selected regions, 1990 and 2023 (UNDESAPD, 2024)

Overall, deaths in children under-five years declined from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5 million in 2020 (World Health Organisation, 2022). Despite a global decrease, many developing countries are still experiencing high levels of infant and child deaths. World Health Organisation (2022) notes that half of the 5 million deaths of under five years children are concentrated in Pakistan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, India and Nigeria. The same report indicates that babies born in Africa have 10 times the risk of dying within the first month compared to those in the developed world. Many developing countries are still far from achieving neonatal and under-five mortality targets in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Target 3.2 of SDG Goal 3 expects a world in which neonatal mortality will be around 12 deaths per 1000 births and under-five mortality to 25 deaths per 1000 births by 2030 (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

Human development is also concerned about how individuals or populations should live long and healthy lives. Longevity measures the health of a population in human development. Healthy people have a high chance of living longer. Life expectancy represents the probability of living to a certain average number of years. Life expectancy is inextricably connected to other demographic variables. It is generally influenced by under-five mortality rates such that countries with high under-five mortality rates have low life expectancies. According to the World Health Organisation (2022), gains in life expectancy in developing countries have been largely attributed to improved child survival as reflected in the 55% decrease in child mortality between 2000 and 2020 (World Health Organisation, 2022). Life expectancy is also influenced by social and economic development.

4.6.3 Education

Human development also uses level of education as a variable to assess human well-being. Education determines the social and economic status. Thus, increasing educational opportunities among adolescent girls improves their employability, income earning capacity, civic participation and capacity to delay marriage (World Bank, 2021; Pincock, 2018). Girls enrolled in schools has increased phenomenally over the past decades. About 55% of the total increase in primary and secondary school enrolment worldwide is attributed to a growing number of in-school girls from 469 million to 649 million between 1995 and 2018 (UNESCO, 2020). Despite well-proven benefits of education to individuals and countries, many adolescent girls are still out of school in developing countries (Wondon et al., 2018).

According the UNESCO (2018), countries which achieved parity in primary educational attainments increased from 56% to 65%, lower secondary parity increased from 45% to 51% and parity almost doubled in upper secondary education where it increased from 13% to 24%. Save the Children (2022) notes that 46% of girls in Afghanistan were not going to school because they formally banned from attending school by the Taliban. The World Bank (2022b) observes that education has markedly reduced inequalities in Southern Africa. Inequalities fell from 60% in 2008 to 56% in 2018 in South Africa and from 56% to 45% between 2004 and 2015 in Namibia (World Bank, 2022b).

Social, economic and political institutions determine the distribution of public resources for ensuring equality of education between boys and girls (UNESCO, 2021). Prabhu and Iyer (2019) argue that educational attainments are not only influenced by unequal access to resources, but also depend on how gender expectations influence the distribution of benefits from education. From a capability approach, equality of opportunities should be achieved by eradicating barriers to accessing education and to expand the capabilities of individuals. The capability approach also considers interpersonal differences of mental, physical and psychosocial capacities beyond the control of individuals in enlarging individuals' freedoms to education. However, the emphasis on the individual partially explains how equality in opportunities manifests in education and ultimately translates into a just society (Garza-Vázquez, 2021). UNESCO (2021) points out that equality is a state of affairs which can be observed in inputs or outcomes.

Gender inequalities negatively affect the distribution of opportunities in education between boys and girls and the barriers weigh heavily on girls' ability to participate in education. Given variations in supportive learning environments between boys and girls in many developing countries due to cultural values and punitive policies, girls who fell pregnant are often forced to discontinue education and consider marriage as the ideal option. At least 30 out of 55 African Union member countries have now either adopted or removed restrictive and discriminatory policies or laws to allow girls who fall pregnant and become mothers to stay in school or return to continue with their education (Human Rights Watch, 2021). World Vision International (2020) highlights that eight countries in the top ten with highest percentages of out-of-school children are found in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted education between 2020 and 2022 around the world, as all schools closed for face-to-face lessons. According to the World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF (2021), more than one billion learners were affected as schools were forced to close to prevent spreading of COVID-19. Many adolescent girls dropped out of school in record numbers around the world due to pregnancy or early marriage during COVID-19 pandemic. According to World Vision International (2020), school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to soar numbers of teenage pregnancies, by as much as 65% as girls spent more time

out of school leading to greater risky sexual behaviour and sexual exploitation. In rural Kenya, Zulaika et al. (2022) observed that the risk of dropping out of school among girls rose from 3.2% in pre-pandemic years to 9.4% during the pandemic, and the risk of the girls getting pregnant doubled.

4.6.4 Human Security

Human security is another important dimension of human development. It shifts focus from conceiving social problems within the project of protecting territorial integrity of the state as a whole to a concern about threats to safety of people and communities (UNDP, 2022). Human security is anchored in advocating for the protection of people from threats which cause sudden or gradual disruptions to well-being and human flourishing such as hunger, violence and disease. Simply put, human security is about how people freely exercise their choices and not being exposed to inhumane treatment (UNDP, 2022). This reinforces the respect of human rights in development. According to Šehović (2018), thinking about human security in terms of individuals' well-being was first articulated in a published human development report in 1994. It resulted in changing perspectives about the sources of threats to human well-being. Policymakers, researchers and government authorities now have more responsibility to conceive dangers and threats to human well-being from the perspectives of the people who are actually experiencing the certain conditions affecting their lives.

Bearing that human security increases our awareness about violence and forced choices, attention had been paid to the gendered nature of social problems which render girls insecure in SRH decision-making within families and local communities. Gender norms shape ideas about different expectations of socially-patterned behaviours and interactions between men and women thereby creating unequal perceptions about safety and trust in public and private spaces (Zimmerman et al., 2021; Nussbaum, 2005). Girls experience forms of violence such as domestic violence, rape, sex trafficking, child sexual abuse and revenge pornography (Addadzi-Koom, 2021; Nussbaum, 2005). In addition, girls are often booed by men for dressing in ways that are perceived inappropriate for public appearance and are blamed for inviting attack upon themselves (Mapuranga, 2020; Mtenje, 2020). From the capability perspective, individuals require security against interference with the ability to make choices and also against ill-happenings to their well-being (Qizilbash, 2016).

Human security embraces social cohesion as useful to develop people's collective capabilities vital for human fulfilment. Manca (2014) describes social cohesion as how groups of people become connected and share solidarity in creating an inclusive society. Social cohesion frames the social basis of respect, trust, belonging and diversity. It tends to capitalise on the diversity of members of society so as to reduce the effects of inequality on relationships (Manca, 2014). The level of human insecurity is a reflection of antagonistic relationships which characterise a certain society. Human security enables to explore the dangers and threats to adolescent girls' abilities to choose freely.

Patriarchal systems face the dilemma of protecting adolescent girls within the context in which they are generally oppressed and marginalised in SRH decision-making. For example, Warria (2018) argues that the *cindakula* rite of passage of sexual cleansing in Malawi renders girls vulnerable to sexual exploitation and disrespect of their dignity. Adolescent girls who reach puberty are forced to have penetrative unprotected sexual intercourse with a hired *fisi* (an older man) as a process of cleansing, purifying and initiating them into adulthood and womanhood. Although sexual cleansing is viewed as a form of initiating adolescent girls into adulthood, they do not have freedom to choose with whom and whether to have sexual intercourse. Moreover, the younger the girl, the greater the vulnerability to SRH issues (Warria, 2018).

Empirically, high levels of adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls reflect deep-seated underlying gender and socio-economic inequalities. In addition, harmful practices and sexual violence often increase during times of crisis (World Vision International, 2020). Adolescent girls face increased risks of adverse SRH outcomes in regions and countries with high levels of internecine warfare, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, poor social services and poor health care. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) induced by conflict or war is a global phenomenon which might affect any person. However, girls in countries experiencing internecine warfare are mostly at the receiving end of all forms of SGBV due to the climate of impunity and poor economic conditions (Aroussi, 2020; UN Women, 2017). The United Nations Human Rights Council (2022) notes that, in South Sudan, forced marriage and sexual slavery are used as tactics to terrorise rival communities such that one in two adolescent girls is forced to enter in a marital union before they attain 18 years. Conflict-related forms of

sexual violence are difficult to discern because they invoke systemic processes of political and ethnic extermination. As noted by Alam and Wood (2022), in Myanmar the military purposefully targeted the reproductive capacities of the Rohingya communities by publicly encouraging rape and sexualised torture during forced displacements and massacres.

4.7 THE ZIMBABWEAN CONTEXT

The year 1980 ushered in an independent Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwe government launched a growth with equity in February 1981 which was popularised through the *Growth with equity: an economic policy statement* which outlined the state's Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation for an inclusive and egalitarian society (Kararach, Otieno and Makuve, 2016; Bijlmakers, 2003). Broadly, the discourse of inequality in post-colonial Zimbabwe in the 1980s was reinforced by spatial delimitations of regions into urban areas, areas of commercial activities and communal areas. These regions reflected race-based differences in economic development, such that urban areas and areas of commercial activities were well-developed and modernised, while communal areas were characterised by abject poverty. The situation of the Black African population in communal areas was compounded by the land segregation policy.

During the colonial period, communal areas were designated in agroecological regions which are characterised by erratic rainfall and are highly susceptible to droughts. In doing so, socio-spatial disparities were viewed within the context of social, legal, physical and market constraints in rural communities which manifests through inaccessible productive resources and social services (Kanyenze et al., 2011; Mehretu and Mutambirwa, 2006). After independence, the Zimbabwe government adopted a spatial dimension of development planning and poverty reduction. Perceived as an artifact of colonial legacy, poverty had been, until recently, predominantly seen as a rural problem. To reduce poverty, the Zimbabwean government increased the proportion of national budget to social expenditure from 26% in 1980 to 35% in 1990 (Alwang, Mills and Taruvinga, 2002).

4.7.1   Redress of Education and Health Inequalities, 1980 – 1990

The equity policy was implemented in the education and health sectors. The priority of the first decade after independence was to decentralise social services through the primary health care (PHC), universal elementary education, sanitation and hygiene services (Kanyenze et al., 2016). Given the effects of racial discrimination on indigenous people, health and education facilities were poorly distributed in rural areas. Racial discrimination in education and health implemented through outright restrictive laws which created under-investment in education and health facilities in communal areas. People in communal areas were deprived of modern health care. According to Auret (1990), the Rhodesian government allocated 32% of the 1979/80 budget for health to Parirenyatwa Hospital (then Andrew Fleming Hospital). The pervasiveness of poverty among the black African population was epitomised by a high prevalence of poor sanitation and hygiene. In 1981, between 74% and 83% of the households in communal areas used the bush as a toilet (Auret, 1990).

The Zimbabwe government officially provided primary education for free and made it compulsory in September 1980. The Ministry of Health adopted the PHC strategy in 1982 to provide low-cost preventive health care and clinical health services by people in rural areas, especially among the poor (Kanyenze et al., 2016). To demonstrate its commitment, the Zimbabwean government increased the health budget allocation to preventive health care. Government spending on health care rose from Z$53.5 million (approximately US$83.6 million) to Z$421.47 million (approximately US$166.59 million) between 1980 and 1990 (Kaliyati, 1998).

The PHC was fronted by village health workers who educated rural people about improved sanitation facilities and good hygiene practices. Village health workers also took part in distributing family planning tools. In addition, the PHC policy ensured that health services were available and accessible to villagers. This was achieved by ensuring that people were not to walk more than 10km to access PHC services. From these strategies, Zimbabwe became one of the countries to develop the most effective PHC system in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1980 and 1990 (Azevedo, 2017). In addition, Zimbabwe also received increased overseas development assistance (ODA), specifically for projects in health and education during this period (Colclough et al., 1990).

Overall, such strategies positively influence the demographic change and determine education and health outcomes among the general population between 1980 and 1990. Life expectancy is an indicator of the health status. As indicated by UNDESAPD (2022), life expectancy among females marginally increased from 61 to 63 years between 1980 and 1990 in Zimbabwe. Life expectancy for men and women combined remained constant at 59 years during the same period. Rising in life expectancy followed from improved child survival, among others, as indicated by falling mortality rates for infants and children under five years during the same period.

Drawing upon data from the Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Surveys, it is indicated that under-five mortality rate showed a downward trend from 104 to 75 deaths per 1000 births between 1979 and 1988 (Central Statistical Office (CSO) [Zimbabwe] and Macro International Inc, 2007; ZIMSTAT and ICF International, 2016). The infant mortality rate (IMR) also decreased from 64 to 50 deaths per 1000 births during the same period. Child health significantly improved due to the expanded immunisation programme, improved sanitation and hygiene. The provision of ante-natal and post-natal care was free of charge. Based on children's Road to Health cards, Auret (1990) observes that 75% of children had been fully immunised in 1989.

Major gains of the equity policy for social and economic redistribution were also noted in the education sector between 1980 and 1990. Raftopoulos and Pilossof (2021) highlights that the free and compulsory education resulted in the country's first ever Grade 1 intake of 376 392 children in 1980, representing a 121% increase. Zimbabwe received commendations from the international community for expanding education and the resultant increases in student enrolments during this period. Table 4.2 shows that pupil enrolments rose from 819 586 to 2 267 269 in primary schools between 1979 and 1989. Increases in education enrolments were also reported at secondary level from 66 215 to 653 353 during the same period. The government's priority in expanding education was to close the gap of educational opportunities between the previously marginalised and war-ravaged rural population and the urban African black population.

Table 4.2: Education enrolments at primary and secondary level in Zimbabwe, 1979 - 1989

Level	1980	1983	1985	1987	1989
Primary	1 235 994	2 044 487	2 216 878	2 264 662	2 267 269
Secondary	74 321	316 438	482 000	615 836	653 353

Source: Raftopoulos and Rory Pilossof (2021)

By the mid-1980s, challenges to implementing free education and health services were emerging. The unintended consequence of the Marxist-Leninist inspired policy was that the Zimbabwean government ended up offering social services for free to almost all people. For example, when the equity policy was introduced, Bijlmakers (2003) highlights that more than 90% of the black African population was earning below the benchmark of the income to qualify for free health care. In addition, there were loopholes in administering the equity policy. The decentralisation of education and health services during this period did not translate into the process of democratisation of social services in Zimbabwe.

The policy decision-making process seemed to prioritise improving health and education by maximising coverage with near non-existence of mechanisms to recover the costs. Participation of citizens in influencing the trajectory of political, social and economic development was marginal. The fact is that the education and health sectors were, and are still, wholly dominated by public institutions. In this context, it appears that the government expects the universal coverage to positively influence on the social, economic and health outcomes among the people. This implies that the Zimbabwean government was concerned with reducing inequalities associated with health, education and standard of living by making the services available to everyone.

Moreover, the health information provided by the village health workers was either technical or prescriptive, and far removed from pertinent discussions on the underlying conditions shaping health inequalities in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The information on family planning methods which was disseminated by village health workers to women did not have substantive impact on gender inequalities. Child marriage, for example, remained nearly constant in Zimbabwe since 1980. The Zimbabwe Demographic

Health Surveys (ZDHS) revealed that young women aged 20 – 24 years who got married or were in a union before celebrating the 18th birthday marginally decreased from 34% to 32% between 1989 and 2015 (ZIMSTAT and ICF International, 2016; CSO [Zimbabwe] and Macro International Inc, 1995).

In the education sector, the equity policy was based on mass production and massive construction of infrastructure. Raftopoulos and Pilossof (2021) point out that the mass provision of education was more reactionary to the popular desire for immediate benefits of independence. Moreover, the free education paradigm did not imply that schools were to depend on the government for all their financial needs. Rather, students were to pay building funds, development fees, sports fees, school levies and other charges that might be determined by school development committees. These levies became a huge barrier to accessing education among the poor. Parents struggled to pay the levies.

While the redress of inequalities and poverty reduction were noble, shortfalls were noted in the education's limited contribution to people's capabilities to improve their income in the long run during this period. In economic terms, school dropout has detrimental effects on human capital development, thereby leading to intergenerational poverty. The high dropout rates in the late 1980s indicate that the majority of the population lacked skills to compete in high-income labour markets. Given the high percentage of dropouts at the end of the 1980s, fewer people had acquired skills required for employment in formal and high paying jobs. As a result, unemployment remained high among the black Africans. As cited by Sachikonye (2012), Kanyenze noted that the annual employment rate grew at an average of 2.7% against the labour force growth of about 3% per annum between 1986 and 1990.

The above information is indicative that the equity policy marginally increased people's capabilities to improve their living standards. By the end of the 1980s, Zimbabwe was experiencing budget deficits and unsustainable expenditures on social services due to lack of cost-recovery mechanisms (Sachikonye, 2012; Bijlmakers, 2003). Additionally, Mwatwara and Mujere (2015) contend that the creation of a centralised economy with socialist leanings culminated in contradictory responsibilities as the Zimbabwean government was the regulator and also became the major producer,

consumer and employer at the same time. At the onset of 1990, the majority of Zimbabweans experienced a dramatic deterioration of the capacity to maintain a minimum level of standard of living.

4.7.2 Structural Adjustment, 1991 – 2000

Still committed to eradicating socio-economic inequalities and poverty reduction, the Zimbabwean government formally shifted from the socialist development strategy to a structural adjustment programme in 1991. Confronted by high budgetary constraints on funding social services, the Zimbabwean government instituted two phases of social and economic reforms underpinning the structural adjustment programme. The major priority of the structural adjustment programme was to promote economic growth for high income and enhanced employment opportunities. This was to be achieved through aligning economic development planning to market forces (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). The first phase was implemented between 1991 and 1995 with advice from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Kanyenze et al., 2011). It was officially publicised as the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). ESAP was characterised by privatisation of state enterprises, deregulation of the labour market and austerity measures for social services. However, ESAP was negatively affected by the 1992 drought and HIV/AIDS. The demand for health services, in particular, rose mainly due to an increase in illnesses associated with HIV/AIDS.

By the mid-1990s, it was observed that at least 60% of the population were below the national poverty datum line (Alwang, Mills and Taruvinga, 2002). After 1995, the Zimbabwean government introduced a second phase of structural adjustment and instituted social and economic reforms to cushion negative effects of ESAP. This second phase was formally consolidated in the policy document titled *Zimbabwe programme for economic and social transformation (ZIMPREST) 1996 – 2000*. While the second phase sought to address negative impacts of ESAP, the Zimbabwean government continued with the structural adjustment strategy. The Government of Zimbabwe (1998) highlighted that a social dimension of structural adjustment was important for providing a social safety net for workers and households. During ESAP, a Social Development Fund was established to provide safety for families whose incomes were below the threshold of Z$400 per month (approximately US$73 based

on 1992 exchange rate). In addition, ZIMPREST included decentralisation of the decision-making. The parliament, local government, civil society, trade unions and private sector authorities were included as key stakeholders in shaping the trajectory of social and economic policies in terms of budgeting and planning processes (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998).

The impacts of ESAP drew the attention of many researchers and scholars (Kararach, Otieno and Makuve, 2016; Kanyenze et al., 2011; Bijlmakers, 2003). It was noted that the living standards of many people deteriorated between 1991 and 1995. The 1995 national poverty assessment study survey indicated that poverty increased to 62%, nationally (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). About 81% of households in communal areas were failing to meet economic needs while 39% in urban areas were facing the same situation. Deregulation of the labour market resulted in high unemployment due to retrenchments. Kanyenze et al. (2011) note that employees in the non-agricultural sector decreased from about 929 800 to 844 000 between 1991 and 1992.

Demographic indicators revealing a reversal of life expectancy and increases in IMR and under-five mortality rate. The UNDESAPD (2022) estimated that life expectancy rapidly fell from 59 years to 45 years between 1990 and 2000. Life expectancy of people who lived to the age 15 years fell from 50 years to 35 years during the same period. The ZHDS surveys also showed that IMR and under-five mortality rate increased between 1990 and 1994, from 53 to 65 deaths per 1000 births and 77 to 102 deaths per 1000 births, respectively (CSO [Zimbabwe] and Macro International Inc, 2007 and ZIMSTAT and ICF International, 2016). Between 1995 and 1999, both mortality rate of under five years and IMR declined from 102 to 82 deaths per 1000 births and 65 to 60 deaths per 1000 births, respectively. As observed by the UNDP (2019), the HDI slightly changed from 0.498 to 0.452 between 1990 and 2000.

4.7.3 Post-2000 Economic Crisis

There are numerous researches and scholarly works on the post-2000 economic crisis induced by political conflicts in Zimbabwe (Kararach, Otieno and Makuve, 2016; Mlambo, 2015; Sachikonye, 2012; Kanyenze et al., 2011). The social and economic situation after 2000 is shrouded by contestation of economic paradigms and political discourses which reconfigure the narratives of the development trajectory. The

118

development thinking in Africa is now influenced by perspectives of globalisation and the dwindling states' control over their economies (Neocosmos, 2012). This illustrates the intersection among power, commerce, culture and politics in shaping the underlying dynamics of the development strategy. Since 1980, the Zimbabwean government has been facing many challenges to increasing disposable incomes and ensuring decent standards of living of the population. This study argues that meeting people's needs through redistribution of resources must not only be seen as a matter of allocation of resources and commodities, but also a question of civic and moral responsibilities.

Bearing in mind the Zimbabwean government's concerns about improving the standards of living of people, it is important to not only think about poverty and other deprivations to people's well-being from perspectives of the state. The consequences which arose from the selected development strategies might also be understood from the perspectives of those who were affected by those strategies. In case of inequalities, the priorities of vulnerable groups might be missed in the process of defining the required needs in allocating resources and commodities. National poverty assessments are more based on claims of needs, with little reference to priorities (Reader, 2006). As revealed by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZIMVAC) (2022), the major priorities for development among the youths in rural areas of Zimbabwe are job creation (83%), income generating activities (77%) and skills development (52%).

Given the escalating economic crisis between 2000 and 2008, indicators of human development revealed rapid deterioration of standards of living in Zimbabwe. The hyperinflation eroded savings and the currency's purchasing power. The depreciated purchasing power of local currency resulted in people's struggles to purchase basic commodities, paying social services and servicing debts. The ZHDS surveys indicated that increasing poverty negatively affected the demographic momentum in the rapid falling of the under-five mortality rate and IMR observed between 1995 and 2000. The mortality rate of children below five years marginally increased from 82 to 84 deaths per 1000 births between 2001 and 2010 (ZIMSTAT and ICF International, 2016; CSO [Zimbabwe] and Macro International Inc, 2007). The IMR marginally declined from 60

to 57 deaths per 1000 births during the same period. According to UNDESAPD (2022), life expectancy increased from 45 to 51 years between 2000 and 2010.

Notwithstanding the scarcity of data on poverty of adolescents and young people in Zimbabwe, a discussion of the dynamics of poverty in the general population since the turn of the 21st century is given. National representative data on poverty in Zimbabwe are mainly drawn from poverty income expenditure surveys, income consumption and expenditure surveys, poverty assessment study surveys, ZDHSs, MICSs and ZIMVAC. It has been noted that poverty marginally declined from 63% in 2003 to 57% in 2019 (ZIMSTAT and World Bank, 2020). The social and economic status of the population severely deteriorated between 2001 and 2008, as indicated by high unemployment, food insecurity and outbreaks of cholera. Urban poverty increased at a faster rate than rural poverty and is more characterised by unemployment and lack of access to incomes to secure food, shelter, clothing, education and other needs that improve people's living standards (Gaidzanwa, 2012).

The creation of a Government of National Unity (GNU) and introduction of a regime of multiple foreign currencies in 2009, resulted in improvements in disposable incomes and reduction in cost of living due to low inflation and stabilised prices of commodities. Human development conspicuously improved after 2009 as indicated by the falling under-five mortality rate, IMR and rising life expectancy. The under-five mortality rate and IMR declined between 2010 and 2015, from 84 to 69 deaths per 1000 births and 57 to 50 deaths per 1000 births, respectively (ZIMSTAT and ICF International, 2016). Life expectancy rose from 51 to 61 years between 2010 and 2020, albeit a slight decrease to 59 years in 2022 (UNDESAPD, 2022). As measured by the HDI, the quality of life in Zimbabwe improved after 2010. The UNDP (2019) indicates that Zimbabwe rose from a low human development country to a medium development in 2018. The HDI increased from 0.472 in 2010 to 0.563 in 2018.

While the progression of HDI appears to follow the same pattern of economic trends, the factors that influence human development in Zimbabwe reflect high skewed income and wealth distribution, gender inequalities and changes in humanitarian assistance. Apart from low income due to hyperinflation, the withdrawal of major donors and international development partners to fund government projects severely

affected the vulnerable people. It is argued that international development assistance and donor funding which bypass the government may not have meaningful impact on health and education outcomes among vulnerable people in Zimbabwe. The education and health sectors are highly dominated by government-owned facilities and services.

It is also interesting to note that positive changes in HDI appear to correlate with poverty dynamics in Zimbabwe. Evidence has shown that the level of household poverty in Zimbabwe has a weak link to social and gender relations. Based on consumption and expenditure patterns, ZIMSTAT and World Bank (2020) observe that poverty in households under female control (32%) was lower than in households which were headed by a male (68%). Gaidzanwa (2012) argues that men dominated waged labour and their opportunities declined since the late 1990s, while more women derived their incomes from the informal sector. This evidence presents particular conceptual problems in examining the relationship between gender and development. In some sense, it is imperative to consider analytical tools that take into account the historical explanations of gender inequalities in Zimbabwe. The incremental effect of income is not sufficient to account for changes of poverty dynamics within households. Gender differences should also be analysed within the context in which the demands of income are conceived and met. This should also consider how gender is intertwined with class in shaping consumption and expenditures.

4.8 POLICY CONTEXT OF ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

This section explores the policy context of ASRH from the global, continental to national level since the early 1990s. The 1994 ICPD ushered in a new era of addressing SRH issues through a human rights-based population control (Durojaye, Mirugi-Mukundi and Ngwena, 2021; UNFPA, 2004). United Nations member states and nation countries reached a consensus on international standards for promoting SRHRs of all people, including adolescent girls (UNFPA, 2022b). International standards are used to provide guidelines for integrating SRHRs into laws and policy by states and nations. It is imperative to understand SRHRs as embedded in human rights discourse (Pizzarossa, 2018). Nussbaum (1997) argues that when governments draft constitutions, it is the language of rights they use to identify groups which deserve

special protection from arbitrary domination and violence. Moreover, human rights are fundamentally about individual freedoms (UN Women, 2019).

The consensus that culminated from the 1994 ICPD set a foundational basis for promoting SRHR which was strengthened in line with achieving SDGs (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016). The idea of promoting SRHRs is to enhance individuals' ability to choose and advance self-determination. Since 1994, there has been a consensus that adolescents can develop the ability to choose freely and responsibly if they have access to comprehensive SRH knowledge and there exists an enabling environment to do so. Policymakers and governments are obliged to ensure that all forms of barriers to attain the highest standard of SRH are removed (Durojaye, Mirugi-Mukundi and Ngwena, 2021). At the same time, individuals should claim SRHRs as similar to entitlements to human rights already protected by national laws in order to guard vulnerable and marginalised groups against exploitation, discrimination and oppression. Furthermore, policies and laws which promote health, education, security, empowerment and decent standard of living of young people are relevant to addressing adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls.

Numerous international and continental protocols on SRH published since the 1994 ICPD are important for analysing the policy context of addressing SRH issues among adolescent girls at the national level. Pizzarossa (2018) articulates that the history of recognising international standards on SRH at continental and national levels has not been without controversy because the promotion of SRHRs is saturated with moral, religious, ethical, political and philosophical contentious perspectives. Moreover, social, cultural and political validation of ASRH remains a sensitive issue. The 1994 ICPD Programme of Action strongly emphasised a human-centric relationship between population and development.

The interface between population and development is no longer about controlling numbers, but protecting the rights of people in decision-making. In this context, SRHRs are now an integral component of development. Chapter 4 of the Programme of Action of the ICPD describes gender equality and empowerment as inherent to promote the autonomy of girls' social, economic and health status (UNFPA, 2004). The United Nations Economic and Social Council (2016) highlights that individuals

must realise the capabilities to reproduce and make decisions in a responsible manner. Additionally, SDG 3 ensures that people must have healthy lives and improved well-being (United Nations General Assembly, 2015).

Unabated adverse SRH outcomes, indicates the challenges for integrating SRHRs into policy at continental and national levels. The international standards on SRHRs demonstrate the symbolic significance of what should be done to create pre-conditions for promoting autonomy in SRH decision-making. Given that human rights have a political dimension which is framed through deliberation (Bhakuni, 2021; Sen et al., 2020), the implementation of SRHRs in United Nations member states and nations has never been similar due to different national values. While the ICPD programme of action was a product of consensus among 179 countries, each country interpreted SRHRs of adolescents in policies and laws in line with its historicity, traditions and realities. In Africa, the African Union prioritise an approach to education on SRH for young people which is sensitive to cultural norms (African Union, 2016). This implies that the interpretation of international standards remains open and the level of integration into national policies and laws depends on the volition of each member state and nation. Diouf (2003) argues that postcolonial African states conflated precolonial communitarian values with postcolonial politics and practices of administrative modernity to redefine the meaning of young people in nation building.

The African Union responded to the global call for improving SRH among adolescent girls through instituting protocols, charters and policies which seek to empower girls, eradicate harmful practices and eliminate every discrimination of girls in decision-making. The African Union's position on protecting adolescent girls from gender-based violence and cultural practices which are harmful to their well-being considers pragmatic motives of equality and equity. There is the interaction of culture, customs, human rights and citizenship in conceptions of autonomy and independence of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making. Moreover, traditional leaders are involved in parliamentary deliberations on laws and policies outline adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making. The African Union (2015) underscores that religious and traditional leaders are key stakeholders in eliminating harmful cultural practices such as child marriage. Neocosmos (2012:474) argues that "tradition is lived in Africa and is not just a state conception."

123

Following the 1994 ICPD, the African Union developed policy, protocols and plans of action to guide member states and governments on integrating SRHRs into national laws and policies. The Continental Policy Framework on SRHRs (hereafter Continental Policy Framework) was adopted in October 2005 in Gaborone in Botswana at a Ministers of Health Conference (African Union, 2007). The document was given political legitimacy by the heads of state and government at the African Union summit in January 2006 in Khartoum, Sudan. Informed by the United Nations' development agenda for millennium development goals (MDGs), the Continental Policy Framework aimed at accelerating the harmonisation of reproductive health into development initiatives at national, sub-regional and continental levels.

The Continental Policy Framework identified issues and challenges which require strategic interventions for improving reproductive health in Africa (African Union, 2006). The African Union identified critical SRH issues which must be addressed by member states and governments such as adolescent reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, contraception, maternal mortality and morbidity, unsafe abortion, SGBV, infant and child mortality, STDs and female genital mutilation (African Union, 2006). The challenges to address SRH are related to lack of policies and laws, services, infrastructures, human resource development and partnership. The African Union (2006) outlines that member states and governments should address SRH issues by increasing resources for strengthening health services. Integration of comprehensive SRH services into the PHC delivery system is seen as vital to ensure their availability, affordability and accessibility.

The Continental Policy Framework was operationalised through the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA) 2007 – 2015. The MPoA 2007 – 2015 set to endorse MDGs such as promoting gender equality and empowering women (MDG 3), reducing mortality among child (MDG 4), improving the health of pregnant women (MDG 5) and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (MDG 6). To achieve effective delivery of the PHC system, the African Union encouraged member states and governments to forge partnerships with civic organisations, private sector and relevant development agencies. After 2015, the African Union launched a revised MPoA 2016 – 2030. The African Union (2016) adopted the MPoA 2016 – 2030 with the goal to ensure comprehensive SRH services are universally available and accessible in Africa

through empowerment of vulnerable groups, good governance, respect of human rights, and financial support.

Fundamental to the revised MPoA 2016 – 2030 is the continuity of the principal role of the PHC system to ensure that comprehensive SRH services provided to those who need them at the lowest level of the health delivery system, hence the need to increase budget allocation to health-related infrastructure, financial resources and human resources. In this way, SRH issues are largely addressed in the existing centralised health delivery system. It has been noted that, in many African countries, adolescents' dreams, needs, preferences and priorities remain unmet because they are either misinformed or uninformed about SRH services which promote their needs (Assefa, 2021). Moreover, the health delivery system has limited capacity to address underlying gender norms and cultural practices which have a strong bearing on ASRH (Maziwisa, 2021).

The power imbalances embedded in patriarchal gender relations impede adolescent girls' agency to choose the lives they want. Hirschmann (2021) argues that moving from the status quo, policies and laws must not only focus on expanding options available, but also creating an environment which enables people to have imaginations about the future they desire. In addition, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa attaches importance to SRHRs within the project of protecting girls and women from exploitation, coercion discrimination and violence. While evidence of adverse SRH outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa might justify the need for an effective health delivery system, SRHRs should also have to be promoted in ways that expand adolescent girls' freedom to have flourishing lives. This is imperative because mainstreaming gender in development programmes involves a redress of asymmetrical power relations which restrict adolescent girls' capacity to make decisions on their socio-economic and healthy lives.

Regionally, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) developed the SRH strategy for the period of 2006 – 2015 (SADC, 2008). The SRH strategy for the SADC region 2006 – 2015 sets out nine strategic priorities for action which sought to programme the provision of comprehensive SRH services in line with evidence-based

SRH policies. The strategic priorities were based on strengthening health systems, providing quality reproductive health services, integrating STDs, HIV/AIDS into other SRH and primary health care, strengthening public-private partnerships, mainstreaming gender into all reproductive health programmes, developing surveillance systems, identifying and monitoring key reproductive health issues, periodic monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilisation and initiating advocacy and policy development. The second regional strategy for SRHRs 2019 – 2030 was developed by the civic organisations and it was adopted by SADC ministers of health and ministers in 2018 in Windhoek, Namibia (UNFPA, 2018). The SADC strategy for SRHRs 2019 – 2030 is being promoted through a multisectoral approach to SRHRs to encompass sustainable development, gender equality and well-being for all people in the SADC region.

The African Union and SADC emphasise that member states and governments are encouraged to ratify continental and regional protocols and strategies. A political legitimacy of these ratifications must be recognised through integrating SRH into national laws and policies. It is against this background that the study examines the Zimbabwean government's efforts to ensure that SRH services are made available, affordable and accessible to everyone. As highlighted in Chapter One, the Zimbabwean government integrated ASRH in the strategic response to HIV/AIDS in the early 1990s. The programming of ASRH in strategies for addressing HIV/AIDS specifically focused on behavioural change (Chikovore et al., 2010). In 2009, the Zimbabwean government adopted the NASRH Strategy 2010 – 2015 as the first step to providing comprehensive SRH services among adolescents through a multi-sectoral approach (Blum et al., 2015). The Zimbabwean government set up youth centres to provide counselling services and condoms. Onsite youth-friendly corners were created in health facilities to provide voluntary counselling, HIV testing and contraceptive methods. A school-based life skills training and counselling was also implemented. The SRH services are also provided by the ZNFPC (Matswetu, 2019). However, Maziwisa (2021) highlights that most of the youth-friendly centres are found in urban areas.

The Zimbabwean government launched the NASRH Strategy 2016 – 2020 in 2016 and aimed at preventing SRH related morbidity and mortality among adolescent girls

(Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). To improve ASRH, the NASRH Strategy 2016 – 2020 prioritised addressing unplanned pregnancies, child marriages, early childbearing, SGBV, maternal mortality, HIV and STDs. It was anticipated that adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls could be prevented through economic empowerment, increased knowledge about HIV and SRH, integrated ASRH and HIV services and policy and legal reforms (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). Despite the political commitment to address ASRH challenges, the responses have been largely limited to public health concerns about SRH. Since the mandate to chair the coordination of the NASRH Strategy had been vested in Ministry of Health and Child Care (MHCC), budget allocation to ASRH had been mostly determined by overall health priorities (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016).

The Zimbabwean government also made some legal reforms which fundamentally improve protection of adolescents in SRH decision-making. The Sexual Offences Act (Chapter 9:21) and the Criminal Law (Chapter 9:23) enable the litigation of sexual violence and violations of sexual consent. Gender-based violence, harassment and assault are prosecuted through the Domestic Violence Act (Chapter 5:16). In May 2022, the Constitutional Court of Zimbabwe order the age of consent for sexual intercourse to be raised to 18 years from 16 years (Veritas Zimbabwe, 2022). The 18 years age of consent is now effective at law through Statutory Instrument 2 of 2024 gazetted on 12 January 2024. The Government of Zimbabwe also amended the Education Act to address discriminatory practices related to SRH and to promote comprehensive sexuality education in schools. The Education Amendment Act No. 15 of 2020, section 4(1a) states that schools must provide sanitary ware and other menstrual health facilities to girls.

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed literature relevant to the analysis of the connection between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls. This involved discussion on the global burden of SRH issues among adolescent girls, power and decision-making, freedom and social justice. A discussion on the relationship between inequalities, human development and well-being of adolescent girls was discussed. The Zimbabwean context of the socio-economic and health factors was given. It was

also important to evaluate the policy context in which SRHRs are being promoted among adolescent girls.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The methodology chosen ideally suited for a process of selecting relevant methods and tools for achieving the research tasks according to how the situation under study has been theoretically problematised (Thambinathan and Kinsella, 2021; Fairclough, 2010). In this context, the researcher engaged participants in a dialogue on aspects of SRH decision-making and how they make meaning of those aspects in enhancing their socio-economic status and in improving their healthy lives. The methodology of this study was grounded in qualitative research. The description of the methodology principally revolves around the implementation of participatory action research (PAR). A description of how PAR design was conceptualised for this study is given. The chapter also describes sampling and how participants were recruited. The process of gathering and analysing data is explained. A description of trustworthiness and ethical considerations is given.

5.2   DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

The study was carried out in Chimanimani District which is located southeast of Zimbabwe, along the Mozambique-Zimbabwe border (Figure 5.1). The district comprised of 23 administrative wards and virtually rural (Chimanimani Rural District Council, nd.). Chimanimani is one of the districts which make up the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe. One of the spectacular landforms are the Chimanimani Mountains, which stretch along the border with Mozambique. Alongside the notion of the physical landscape are the climatic conditions which vary with altitude. Climatic conditions are characterised by relatively cool temperatures and high annual rainfall on the highland eastern side while dry and arid conditions are common climatic features of the lowland western part of the district. The district had been hit by a number of cyclones since 2000, with massive destruction of the human settlements and livelihoods. In 2019, cyclone Idai was the most devastating one in the history of the extreme climatic events in the country. According to Oxfam International (2019), cyclone Idai caused displacement of 51 000 people, more than 340 died and many unaccounted for.
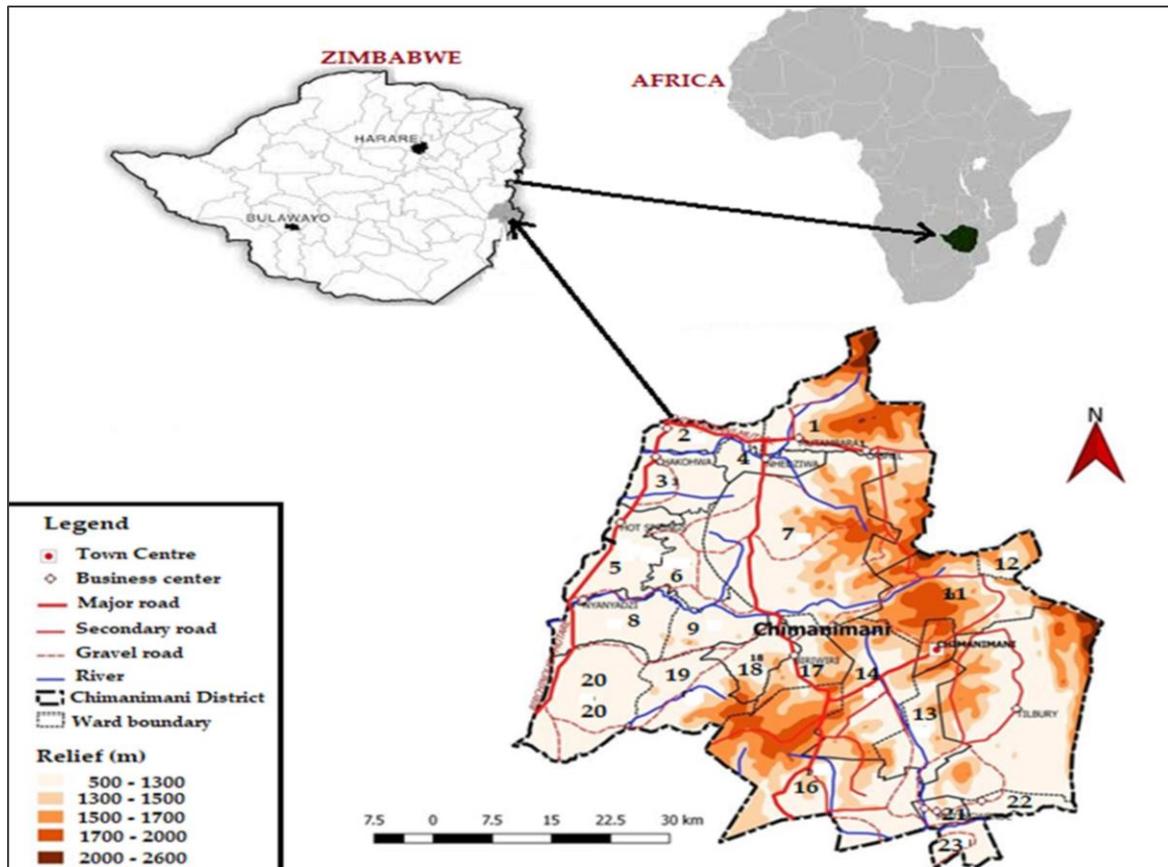
Figure 5.1: Map of Chimanimani District (Chingombe and Musarandega, 2021)

Plantations, commercial farms, communal lands, resettlements and state land (for example Chimanimani National Park and Haroni Botanical Reserves) are the major land designations. Like any other rural areas in Zimbabwe, communal areas constitute the major land use in Chimanimani district. Communal areas are by-products of the colonial invention of Black African communities which became geographically bounded and located in peripheral regions (Hughes, 2006). Almost all communal areas in Chimanimani district are systematically located in semi-arid and arid agroecological regions not viable for commercial farming in the absence of irrigation. These communal areas are based on the establishment of chieftaincy. As a result, these communal areas have a dominant ethnic group. The largest ethnic group in Chimanimani District are the Ndau people.

Rural areas benefited from the policy of redistribution in the 1980s when the Government of Zimbabwe embarked on building schools, clinics and hospitals in historically marginalised areas. Many schools, clinics and hospitals were built in rural

areas, although the quality of services in these institutions deteriorated following the post-2000 economic crisis. Donors also complemented government programmes in communal areas. During the time of the fieldwork, the researcher observed nutritional gardens and projects for water supply, implemented by World Vision Zimbabwe and Africa Ahead, respectively. The majority of households engage in agricultural activities. Connectivity through communication improved with the advent of mobile phone technology. Most parts of the district are covered by mobile network.

Despite changes in governance of rural areas after independence in 1980, communal areas are still lagging far behind in terms of development vis-à-vis urban areas. Structural injustices created by colonisation and the current lack of political willingness to address these injustices determine relative low living standards in communal areas of Zimbabwe, as illustrated by social, economic and demographic indicators. Apparent is the remoteness of most of the communal areas in Zimbabwe. Most roads are seasonal thereby accessing remote areas is strenuous during the summer season.

The 2022 national census reported that at least 153 619 people reside in Chimanimani District (ZIMSTAT, 2023). Of these, 48% are males and 52% are females. Data from the 2022 census on the population of adolescents in the district were not available at the time of this study. The 2022 census comprehensive district profiles were not yet published by the time this thesis was completed. The researcher extrapolated adolescent population in Chimanimani District based on the 2012 census. According to Manicaland provincial census report of 2012, there were about 32 873 adolescents in Chimanimani District (ZIMSTAT, 2013). Of these, 16 845 were males and 16 028 were females. The researcher used exponential growth model to estimate the current adolescent population in Chimanimani District using the following formula:

$$P_{2022} = P_{2012} * e^{tr}$$

Where:

P_{2012} = initial population of adolescents (2012)

P_{2022} = current estimate of adolescent population (2022)

r = national population growth (1.5%) published in the 2022 census (ZIMSTAT, 2023)

t = time interval between

$$P_{2022} = P_{2012} * e^{10*0.015}$$

Estimated adolescent population in Chimanimani District is shown Table 5.1. It is estimated that there are 38 193 adolescents in Chimanimani District. Of these, 19 571 are males and 18 622 are females.

Table 5.1: Estimated adolescent population in Chimanimani District

Age Group	Males	Females	Total
10 – 14	9349	9119	18468
15 – 19	7496	6909	14405
Total	16845	16028	32873
Estimated (2022)	**19571**	**18622**	**38193**

Source: ZIMSTAT (2013)

5.3   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research paradigm describes shared beliefs, worldviews and philosophical assumptions about the ontological, epistemological and methodological choices that inform specific ways of researching about the problem of concern (Chakraborty, 2020; Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Chilisa (2020:18) describes paradigm as "a methodological approach with a philosophical base that informs assumptions about perceptions of reality, what counts as knowledge and ways of knowing and values". This study accentuated that different perspectives about ASRH in Zimbabwe were shaped by particular beliefs, worldviews, perceptions, practices and history. In line with the ontology of the bricolage, it is important to view social reality as socially and historically situated (Kincheloe et al., 2018). As described by Kincheloe et al. (2018), bricolage metaphor allows the researcher to embrace the novelty and creativity of multidisciplinary research. In this context, this study involved contextualising the use of multiple paradigms as they were needed to achieve the task at hand. Therefore, the researcher-as-bricoleur drew from constructivist, interpretivist, transformative and

critical paradigms to inform decisions within the evolving research context (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2018).

5.4   RESEARCH APPROACH

Guided by the bricolage theoretical framework, a methodology anchored in qualitative research was considered as ideal for this study. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) describe qualitative research as an interpretive and naturalistic approach to making representations of people's lives, by locating the social position of the researcher in the world. According to The Critical Methodologies Collective (2022), qualitative research involves interpreting diverse practices, processes and situations which enable to make sense about the world. The qualitative research approach involved the use of interpretive and critical methodological perspectives to reflect on the implications of power relations to understand participants' social realities. McClelland (2019) argues that critical methods enable to reflect critically on how power shapes knowledge production in research. Therefore, a qualitative research approach was useful to promote participatory democracy and social justice, by enabling participants' voices.

Additionally, qualitative research privileges the intersection of context, process, agency and subjectivity in understanding how the researcher interacts with participants (Denzin et al., 2017). In doing so, the researcher made meaning about decisions on methods to use based on particular historical moments in qualitative research. This study focused on the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls. McClelland (2019) noted that ASRH is not only a sensitive issue, but it is also characterised by controversies and moral panics. In African cultures, adolescent sexuality is socially and culturally constructed through taboos, myths, norms and beliefs. As such, a qualitative research approach enabled the researcher to open up to difference, pluralism, reflexivity and pragmatism when fostering critical dialogue within the existing structures.

5.5   STUDY POPULATION

The study population was drawn from adolescent girls who fit within the 16 – 19 years age range and lived in Chimanimani District during the time of the research comprised

the study population. The United Nations system refers to any person who fit in the 10 – 19 years age group as an adolescent (World Health Organisation, 2018). The adolescents are often place into two distinguished categories, that is early adolescence (10 – 14 years) and late adolescence (15 – 19 years).

The researcher found it imperative to undertake a study with adolescent girls in Zimbabwe on the connection between SRH decision making and human development. Voices of adolescent girls are often marginalised within structures which determine their lives and agency in SRH decision-making, in particular. In addition, in Zimbabwean rural communities, adolescent girls experience double-edged exclusion in deliberations on their lives due to their age and gender. Moreover, deliberations on SRH decision-making among adolescents remain paternalistic. Acknowledging adolescent girls' agency in discussions on aspects which affect their lives would increase capacities of adolescents to participate in development at all levels.

5.6   ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPANTS

Participants were drawn from adolescent girls who fit in the 16 – 19 years age range, regardless of marital status, educational level, social status, disability and personal values, among others. As highlighted by UNICEF (2021), social, cultural and legal contexts are fundamental to determine the criteria one ought to use to identify eligible participants. Since participation was voluntary, adolescent girls who declined to participate were excluded.

The researcher observed relevant laws which determine the capacity and competence of adolescent girls to make decisions on participating in research. The Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 20) of 2013 defines children as individuals who are still below the age of 18 years. Children are defined by the law as lacking the capacity and competence to make independent choices. Moreover, the researcher made judgements about the eligibility of adolescent girls who were children in relation to legal provisions which specify their conduct in SRH decision-making in Zimbabwe. The 2022 Zimbabwe Constitutional Court Order (CCZ 3/22) raised the legal age of sexual consent from 16 years to 18 years in the case of *Kawenda vs Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and Others* (Veritas Zimbabwe, 2022). The

Constitution Court Order came into effect through the Criminal Laws Amendment Act (Protection of Children and Young Persons) No. 1 of 2024. The Constitutional Court of Zimbabwe highlighted the significance of protecting children from violations of their rights as one of the major reasons for raising the age of sexual consent.

While discussions on SRH with adolescents are tolerated in Zimbabwe, such conversations are not expected to have a direct influence on their decisions and interactions in the public domain. Therefore, recruiting adolescents under 18 years created a delicate situation which required creativity and reflexivity to deconstruct power relations which guided such interactions. The researcher made pragmatic considerations when making decisions on specifying the age-groups of adolescent girls who were eligible to participate. Taking into account the kind of knowledge this study sought when identifying participants was necessary (Magnusson and Marecek, 2015). While it would be important to give all adolescent girls aged 10 – 19 years the opportunity to participate in research, the researcher considered to benchmark the lower age at 16 years to give a legal convenience for accessing participants in this study. As a postgraduate student, it was vital to consider the limitations and also the costs of further engaging multiple stakeholders. During the fieldwork, the age of sexual consent was still at 16 years, according to the Sexual Offences Act (Chapter 9:21). Thus, the age at sexual consent provided the practical justification for using 16 years as the lower age of eligibility of participants under 18 years. The idea of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in this study was depicted in a broader framework for promoting SRHRs and social justice. The emphasis on SRHRs and social justice enhanced the significance of undertaking research which sought to increase capacities of adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making which have bearing on their healthy and socio-economic lives.

Given the historical, cultural and religious dynamics which elicited the significance of protecting adolescents from sexual exploitation and violence in Zimbabwe, the study considered the eligibility of participants under 18 years within the context of raising awareness of the importance of SRHRs to their well-being. Moreover, the Zimbabwe Constitutional Court also acknowledged the need to provide SRH services to adolescents not yet attained the majority status (Veritas Zimbabwe, 2022). Despite legal protection from sexual violence and exploitation, evidence had shown that many

young adolescent girls still stare at the risk of early pregnancy and getting married as children (UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2023a). In addition, the intersection of age with gender, marital status, education, and religion informed decisions on eligibility of individual adolescent girls to participate in the research. This study utilised a bricolage theoretical framework (full details in Chapter 2) and tenets of PAR to adopt a reflexive research process of assessing adolescent girls' capacities to participate, given specific circumstances and situations. Moreover, the research process was developed with the aim of enabling voices of the vulnerable and marginalised adolescent girls as part of promoting a democratic and inclusive research process.

5.7   SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

Vasileiou et al. (2018) indicate that the determination of the sample size when carrying out a qualitative study is influenced by theoretical, ontological, epistemological and practical perspectives since the research problem should be investigated in its natural setting. The sample size is generally determined by data saturation (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). Additionally, the sample size in a participatory study is determined by the commitment to promote social justice, participative democracy and inclusiveness (Mudau, 2018). Thirty-two adolescent girls aged between 16 and 19 years constituted the sample size.

Chimanimani District was purposively sampled for being the study area (the study area was described in detail in Section 5.2). Purposive sampling involved selection of the study area in view of judgements of the researcher around the potential of the choice to be the most informative (Moser and Korstjens, 2018). The researcher gained the interest in carrying out the research of this nature in Chimanimani District from pragmatic and theoretical judgements. Pragmatic, Chimanimani Rural District Council had partnered with NGOs to fight against child marriage and sexual violence. Billboards were erected about messages urging local communities to complement government efforts in fighting against sexual violence, child abuse, and child marriages. Local communities had to work together with law enforcement agencies to bring perpetrators to justice. Such interventions by the local government attracted the researcher's attention. Theoretically, despite the national concern about increased violations of adolescent girls' SRHRs like child marriage and sexual violence

(Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2021), the political will to improve ASRH from a human rights-based framework is still fragmented. As a result, discussions on SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in Zimbabwe mostly focus on negative outcomes, thereby neglecting the importance of increasing their capacities. Given the area of the district (that is 356 808 km^2), the researcher selected one ward which became the research site. The location of the selected ward had some geographic advantages over other wards in the district. It was conveniently located nearer to where the researcher worked and easily accessible through the major highway. This enabled the researcher to make frequent visits with limited challenges. The researcher decided to keep the location of ward anonymous to protect the integrity of adolescent girls and some participants were below 18 years.

5.8   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is described as a process, plan or framework that could be used for data gathering and analysis (Maxwell, 2022; Ngozwana, 2017). The research design chosen was grounded in the qualitative research approach. Considering designing the methodology embedded in qualitative research was vital for embracing interpretive, constructivist and critical perspectives about social reality and also engaging participants for transformative learning and social change (Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Also, being reflexive was a methodological stance which was important to navigate power relations on knowledge production (Chilisa and Phatshwane, 2022; Tracy 2013).

Additionally, the researcher also acknowledged power relations as a means to anchor the research design within the framework of deconstructing relational actions for meaningful participation (Kovach, 2018). Using participatory action research (PAR) facilitated designing the research which aligned to values of social justice and transformation. The PAR approach allows a research praxis which the researcher could collaborate with participants to advance knowledge about the problem of concern and action for social change (Chevalier and Buckles, 2019). Kemmis and McTaggart (2007) elaborate that the PAR involves a process which is spiral and comprises self-reflective cycles of plan, act, observe and reflect. As such, the researcher established that PAR was useful for creating spaces for engaging

participant adolescent girls in ways which increased their capacities to influence the research process as well as having voices on a phenomenon which affects their lives. Methodologically, PAR enabled participants to engage as collaborators in the research process (Yap, 2017).

Historically, the agency of indigenous people around the world had been historically marginalised as they occupied positions of passive subjects and ultimately other ways of knowing about the social world remained invisible (Barnes and McCreanor, 2022; Smith, 2021; Thambinathan and Kinsella, 2021). It is worth explaining that the researcher utilised PAR with the belief that it would be the most effective approach to understand the situation under study, by negotiating positionalities which shape engagement with various stakeholders during the fieldwork in ways which increase the visibility of marginalised adolescent girls. Furthermore, adolescent girls' participation took place in an already interpreted world and their actions were embedded in existing structures which socialised them beliefs, habitus, moral values and norms about relationships (Kirshner and Kamberelis, 2022; Maxwell, 2022; Carter and Duncan, 2018).

5.9   ORIGINS OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Modern understanding of action research is attributed to researches conducted by social psychologist Kurt Lewin in the 1940s (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). Action research asserts that participation of people who experienced the situation under study in knowledge production is vital to create the basis for acknowledging different types of perspectives. The emergence of PAR in developing countries was informed by critical theoretical traditions, Paulo Freire's theory of critical consciousness, Bateson's holism and Habermas' communicative theory, among others (Lenette, 2022; Chevalier and Buckles, 2019; Clarke, Friese and Washburn, 2015). As a scientific method for doing research, PAR began around 1960s and 1970s in the developing world in correspondence with social movements which were collaborating with grassroots people to promote strategies for emancipation, empowerment and decolonisation (Glassman and Erdem, 2014). These movements, as Smith (2021) points out, found legitimacy on shared language and discourse which effectively

improves communication of ideas and ideological perspectives among indigenous people, despite cultural differences.

In 1977, the World Symposium of Action Research and Scientific Analysis represented the historic epoch in establishing PAR as a research approach embedded in indigenous methodologies and appropriate for producing decolonised knowledge (Kovach, 2018; Setty and Witenstein, 2017). The Symposium culminated in the general acceptance of PAR across the developing world as a praxis to combine methodology, ethics and philosophy of life in research (Lenette, 2022). Researchers utilised PAR to promote democratic participation, pluralism, transformation and empowerment of those who were directly affected by injustices (Goessling, 2020; Nyemba and Mayer, 2018).

In Latin America, PAR gained popularity in researches which embraced critical pedagogy, adult education and liberation theology (Lenette, 2022; Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014). The Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire introduced the process of conscientisation in critical pedagogy and adult education in the 1970s, which later became influential in emancipatory strategies of grassroot social movements across the world (Boone, Roets and Roose, 2019). Freire used participatory methods to conscientise marginalised communities about the impact of dominant ideologies on shaping inequalities in human relations and development (Boone, Roets and Roose, 2019). During the same period, the Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda conceptualised key principles of PAR such that the understanding of social reality could be more enhanced through commitment to a research praxis which addresses power relations which shape the ways in which the researcher relates to participants (Lenette, 2022; Rahman, 2008).

As noted by Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014), the emergence of PAR in Asia had been associated with collaborative works anchored in liberationist ideology and the tradition of human rights. The goal was to facilitate new ways of understanding citizenship, rights and social justice among indigenous people. Advocates of PAR were also motivated by Freire's conscientisation process for inclusive participation in the production of knowledge which increases awareness about their social realities (Setty and Witenstein, 2017). Earlier movements of PAR in India borrowed heavily

from Mahatma Gandhi's strategies of defiance and passive resistance to organise themselves and voice their concerns about oppression, discrimination and exploitation (Kindon, Pain and Kesby, 2007). After independence in 1971 in Bangladesh, some NGOs utilised Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy to promote adult education (Rahman, 2008). For example, Rajesh Tandon contributed to the popularity of PAR in Asia through the establishment of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in 1982, which focused on knowledge production, capacity building and policy advocacy (Tandon, 2017).

According to Nyemba and Mayer (2018), Marja Liisa Swantz is credited for introducing PAR in Sub-Saharan Africa when doing researches with women groups in Southern Tanzania in the mid-1960s. Marja Liisa Swantz's goal of using PAR in Tanzania was to make research outcomes relevant on community development strategies for addressing social injustices which were negatively affecting people's lives (Swantz, 2008). During this period, the Ujamaa social and economic policy provided the fertile ground for experimenting with PAR in Tanzania, particularly in rural areas (Swantz, 2008). The Ujamaa ideology influenced pro-poor movements to adopt a pragmatic approach to addressing inequalities and alleviating poverty in local communities.

Additionally, increased utilisation of PAR in Tanzania was motivated by indigenous women's fight against drug abuse and violence within local communities (Hall and Tandon, 2017). Rahman (2008) highlights that researches based on PAR were also carried out in West Africa in the 1970s. For example, villagers in the Bamba-Thialene zone in Senegal carried out collective developmental actions, focusing on people's needs and resources. In Burkina Faso, the Naam leaders, in collaboration with their European friends, used collective discussions as ways of mobilising resources for income-generating activities and reviewing the progress of their programmes.

In Zimbabwe, the use of PAR researches might be associated with researches, in the early 1980s, on conscientising people about the effects of injustices and inequalities created by colonial rule on their lives. People engaged in critical reflection on challenges created by colonial domination, oppression and exploitation. Additionally, PAR researches carried out in the early 1980s in Zimbabwe provided the impetus for the formation of grassroots movements for spearheading community development

(Rahman, 2008). Participatory researches in community development strengthened individuals' participation as active agents in defining their values from their own perspectives (Kindon, Pain and Kesby, 2007).

One of the case studies of integrating participatory researches into community development in Zimbabwe was the formation of a village movement called Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) in 1980, with activities concentrated in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe. The organisation is still active in addressing challenges to rural development from the perspectives of local communities (ORAP, nd.). Local communities took advantage of government constituted village committees and cooperatives to coordinate people to participate in rural development. In the process, the idea of participation at the national level was conceptualised within the paradigm of decentralisation. As such, beliefs and values about involving local communities in decision-making were promoted through government structures (Mutimukuru-Maravanyika, 2010). This indicates that values about community engagement evolved within the discourse of decentralisation promoted by government agencies in Zimbabwe.

In the 1990s, PAR facilitated critical dialogue in research by drawing from Jürgen Habermas' concept of the public sphere as communicative spaces comprised participants who aimed at reaching mutual understanding and consensus about strategies to explore a phenomenon of interest (Kemmis, 2008; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005). The concept of public sphere was important to guide in constituting an inclusive research process which enabled participants to voluntarily participate and contribute freely in discussions on the situation under study. Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014) argue that participants would be positioned to adopt roles of speaker, listener and observer in honest ways which strengthen meaningful engagement. As illustrated in Figure 5.2, participation involves an experimental process which underpinned series of cycles: plan, action, observe and reflect (Cornish et al., 2023; Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014). A series of cycles made it permissible for participants to influence the research process and to resist organisational constraints on recognising subaltern knowledge in formal learning (Cammarota, 2010).
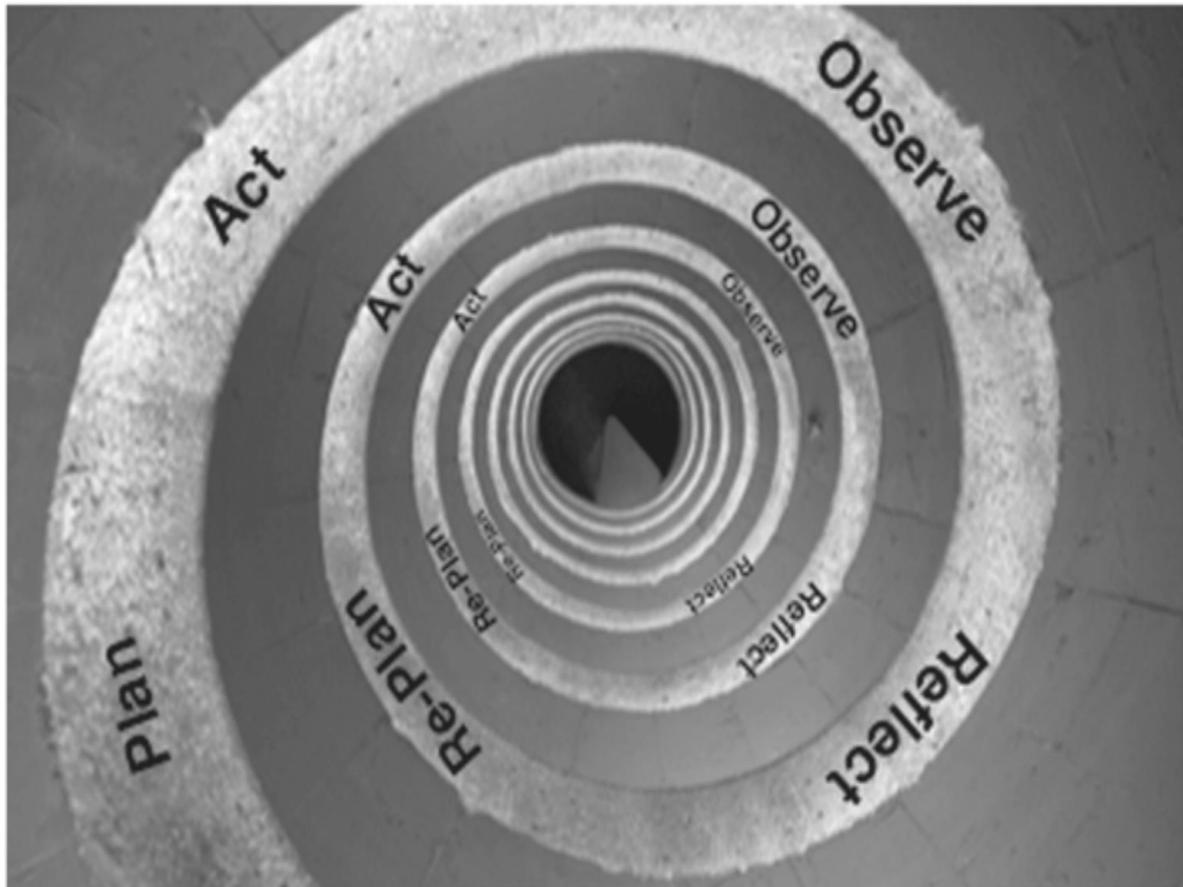
Figure 5.2: Participatory action research cycles (Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014)

The PAR approach was important for this study in applying reflexivity and pragmatism during recruitment of participants and gathering data using multiple methods. The researcher employed a research process which was open and responsive to the use of methods and techniques in ways which empower vulnerable participants like adolescent girls and democratise research. Adopting critical inquiry in implementing the PAR process was important for addressing challenges which shape the participation of marginalised and vulnerable social groups in research (Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014). Fahs and McClelland (2016) underscore that CPAR enhances the researcher's capacity to contest widely held views and beliefs about a situation under study. In the case of this study, CPAR enabled the researcher to contest views and beliefs about conversations on SRH decision-making between an adult male researcher and adolescent girls. It is important to underline that ASRH is a global concept shrouded by ideological assumptions derived from diverse worldviews and values (Kesby and Gwanzura-Ottemoller, 2007). This means that ASRH requires

a critical methodology which reflects critically on the representation of participants' social realities (McShane, 2021; Stern, 2019).

With increasing recognition of the intersection between human rights and SRH (UNFPA, 2021), PAR appeared to be both theoretically and practically significant in engaging adolescent girls in discussions on understanding the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development. The researcher-as-bricoleur respected multiple ways of knowing about the situation under study. In this way, a collaborative process was used to enhance the agency of marginalised adolescent girls. Therefore, the research empowered adolescent girls, by mobilising them to participate in a strategy of increasing their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making.

5.10   OBJECTIVES OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Using PAR, the researcher engaged participants in co-creation of knowledge. As such, construction of knowledge embodied in this study was through collaboration, participation and democratisation (Kirshner and Kamberelis, 2022; Lenette, 2022). The crucial element of the research praxis was to frame the role of relationships in engaging adolescent girls and producing knowledge. Lenette (2022) underlines that participatory democracy and social transformation are dynamic processes which do not subscribe to the creation of permanent hierarchies. Participant adolescent girls were both knowledge resources and partners (Stern, 2019). Therefore, the objective was to foster collaboration with adolescent girls through co-construction of knowledge which not merely resulted from surprising changes, but also from transformative learning experiences (Kirshner and Kamberelis, 2022).

In line with PAR, the study also sought to promote social justice, by creating a space of capabilities formation and raising consciousness (Walker and Boni, 2020). Due to the fact that data gathering was conducted in a participatory manner, it was necessary to facilitate communicative action for giving participant adolescent girls opportunities to have self-reflection, problem-solving skills and critical thinking about their lived experiences and social realities. Hawkins (2008) reminds that a PAR design must cultivate inclusiveness and amplifying voices of all participants by respecting each individual's history, personality, perspective, knowledge and know-how in the process

of conducting research. In doing so, attention was drawn to address power and privilege in knowledge production through adopting multiple methods.

Given its pragmatic and reflexivity, PAR informed ways of utilising multiple and diverse research methods which were responsive to contemporary human needs in local, national and global contexts (Lenette, 2022; Russell, 2019). Thus, the promotion of PAR in social science research respected the participation of historically marginalised and vulnerable individuals for social change (Setty and Witenstein, 2017). In this way, research embodied transformation of attitudes, values, personalities and beliefs at both individual and societal level. A collaborative process facilitated critical reflection and critique of existing social practices in ways that contributed to transformative change among marginalised adolescent girls (Hawkins, 2008). According to Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014), PAR helps to emancipate people from irrationalities, unsustainability and injustices which might emerge from implementing the research process through critical reflection. A PAR process was important to understanding conditions which might cause marginalised and vulnerable people to reluctantly open up on issues which negatively affect their well-being. Fahs and McClelland (2016) assert that researches on critical sexuality are increasingly paying attention to ways that silences have direct bearing decisions on designing research and how these are reinforced by questions which render descriptions of lived experiences as if they could be easily communicated to another person.

5.11   ONTOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

The ontology of PAR found strength in critical reflection and collaborative learning on making meaning about people's lives and the social world (Kirshner and Kamberelis, 2022; Lenette, 2022; Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005). The representation of the social world takes place within the context in which people interact, build relationships, perceive their lives and take actions. From this understanding, ontology of PAR is based on the pluralism of social reality situated in institutional, relational and spatial arrangements which have bearing on participants' lives (Kindon, Pain and Kesby, 2007).

As such, the researcher respected the host community's history, knowledge systems, worldviews, moral values, norms, cultural beliefs, language and decision-making bodies as vital to understanding the situation under study (Brydon-Miller, Kral and Aragón, 2020; Stern, 2019). The researcher held meetings with the ward councillor and the headman to facilitate community engagement and to foster collaboration with key stakeholders in the research site. Kesby and Gwanzura-Ottemoller (2007) caution that SRH decision making not only to be seen as an individual or independent phenomenon, but more socially and historically embedded such that its materiality is drawn from the socio-cultural organisation of a particular society. The intersubjective character of participant adolescent girls' lived experiences of SRH decision-making was understood to have existed through socialisation, learning and experiential. In this way, the research process was implemented in ways that did not deliberately aim at disrupting or destroying the structures of the host community which were accountable to social and cultural authenticity.

Kesby and Gwanzura-Ottemoller (2007) assert that PAR treats people possessing abilities to act in reflexive manner and self-change. In this context, both the researcher and participant adolescent girls reflected critically on the underlying influence of social justice, equality, security, human rights and moral values on perceptions, practices and attitudes towards SRH decision-making. Of particular importance, PAR enables the researcher to respect the virtue that human beings are worthy life of dignity regardless of age, class, sexuality, disability, gender and race. Also, collaboration in knowledge production demonstrates a commitment to produce knowledge which is corroborated by participants.

5.12   EPISTEMOLOGY OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

It is imperative to underscore that relationships are embodied actions vital for knowledge production in PAR (Kovach, 2018; Hawkins, 2008). Relationships enable the process of knowing about a particular social world to be participatory. The researcher used partnership, networking and collaboration to frame the kind of relationships relevant to engage various stakeholders and participants in different contexts. In addition, strategies of building relationships helped to navigate power relations within the hierarchy. Hart, cited by Kindon, Pain and Kesby (2007), argues

that building partnerships with adults who have power and authority in support of child-led initiatives is important for sustaining collaboration in PAR.

As Kindon, Pain and Kesby (2007) highlighted, PAR demands methodological innovation and draws from various theoretical perspectives such as critical theory, feminism, Marxist, neo-Marxist, intersectionality theory and phenomenology. The researcher acknowledged the significance of multiple identities on resisting the categorisation of adolescent girls' capacities to participate in research as biologically induced. As argued by Lenette (2022), participation is heavily influenced by social, cultural, economic and political realities in which knowledge production becomes contextual and meaningful to participants. Meaning making, therefore, occurred in a relational context. By virtue of relating to a particular social and historical background, adolescent girls have a part to play in collective action for resisting dominance and silencing of their voices in discussions on issues which affect their lives. The researcher facilitated the establishment of the research team which comprised of co-researchers and himself. The research team was crucial of relationship building during the fieldwork by acting as the decision-making body. Profiles of co-researchers were provided in subsection 5.16.3.

5.13 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER IN PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Distinguishing the researcher's role is important in enhancing transparency and negotiating power dynamics within the research context. The researcher developed the research topic, formulated research questions and designed tools for data collection. The PAR approach enabled the researcher to facilitate dialogue with participants. Borrowing from an Ubuntu perspective, each person owes his or her ability to participate in research to the willingness of others to share their experiences. The researcher played a role to foster reciprocity in ways which increased participants' trust of the research process. Underlying PAR, the research process should cultivate a sense of humanity among stakeholders involved in the research (Goessling, 2020).

As a co-learner, the researcher created the context for conscientisation of the situation under study. In PAR, Mudau (2018) argues that the researcher does not treat the

researched as subjects or respondents, but adopts a position of a co-learner in a mutually beneficial relationship. In this process, the researcher utilised methods according to how they were relevant to emerging circumstances and events within the research context. The researcher employed the bricolage to navigate multiple positionalities in addressing unequal power relations in research. Thus, the researcher-as-bricoleur played the role of the trainer, learner or observer in a single study.

Furthermore, the researcher played the role of building capacity of co-researchers during the implementation of PAR. Key to capacity building, the researcher facilitated strategic planning meetings and trained co-researchers on the PAR process. A bottom-up approach to capacity building enhanced an inclusive and democratic research process. Lenette (2022) articulates that a bottom-up approach does not require a researcher to assume the position of an expert who has a know-it-all attitude. In addition, capacity building also enhanced participants' problem-solving skills and self-reflection in order to sustain a PAR process.

5.14 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

The fieldwork commenced in July 2022 and wrapped up in August 2023. The PAR process involved planning, action, observation and reflection (Chevalier and Buckles, 2019; Kjellström and Mitchell, 2019). The implementation of PAR in this study consisted of three phases. First phase involved the entry into the research site and seeking permission from gatekeepers. The researcher conducted consultative meetings with the ward councillor and headman as part of raising awareness about the situation under study. Second phase involved strategic planning and establishing the research team. The researcher made consultations on strategies for identifying and inviting eligible co-researchers. Meetings were conducted for introducing co-researchers to the PAR research design, training on ethics in research, doing a SWOT analysis and familiarisation with strategies for recruiting participants. The third phase involved the recruitment of eligible adolescent girls and conducting data gathering.

5.15 PHASE ONE – ENTRY INTO THE RESEARCH SITE AND SEEKING PERMISSION

When the researcher first arrived in the study area in July 2022 to undertake the fieldwork, the immediate task was to conduct some investigations to locate the homestead of the ward councillor. The proposed plan was to seek permission from the ward councillor. As an elected official responsible for coordinating developmental projects at ward level, the researcher thought that the councillor would be the ideal-type resource person who could easily facilitate access to participants in the research site. The researcher presumed that the gatekeeping status could be easily identified within the political authority of the ward councillor. Therefore, the starting entry point into the research site was to visit the ward councillor before conducting any activity related to fieldwork.

After having the meeting with the ward councillor on the purpose of the research, the ward councillor agreed in principle to carry out the fieldwork in the research site, but advised the researcher to seek permission from the district council offices. Clark (2010) points out that the gatekeeper can withhold or refuse to grant permission due to fear of bureaucratic interference and of losing control of the representation of their political reality. It was important to understand the totality of the Zimbabwe local government's exercise of control over the official narrative of territorial claims and governance of rural communities.

Additionally, seeking permission to access participants is problematic since the gatekeeper can be an individual, a group or an organisation (Clark, 2010). Also, the relationship between the researcher and gatekeepers was established within existing structures which had an historical context. Using PAR, the researcher adopted reflexivity in altering the conduct of seeking permission based on the knowledge emerged from interacting with gatekeepers so as to be responsive to changing circumstances and to pursue alternatives without changing the orientation of the ethical procedures (Goessling, 2020; Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon, 2014). In doing so, the researcher as a methodological bricoleur recognised the importance of being pragmatic and strategic in making decisions on how to sustain the activities and relationships vital to achieve the research aim. The researcher visited the district council offices to seek permission. From discussion at the district council offices, we

agreed that expert advice from the MHCC might be necessary before the permission could be granted, given that the research had a component of SRH. The mandate to coordinate national SRH is under the MHCC (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016). The researcher visited the MHCC district office to seek expert advice on how to work around the challenges. The MHCC did not show interest in this research. The researcher further engaged the district council office. The permission was granted after the researcher agreed to the district council's demand to adhere to their guidelines and regulations (Appendix A).

The district council referred the researcher back to the ward councillor with the permission letter. It had also been advised that the researcher must formally pay a courtesy call to the local headman. Paying a courtesy call to the headman was a sign of respecting chiefly polities as custodians of African indigenous culture and key stakeholders in the local government bureaucracy in Zimbabwe. Also, this visit was an opportunity to appraise the traditional leadership about the orientation of the research as well as to acquaint with specific customary practices which guide discussions on SRH issues with young people within the research site. A meeting with remarks:

> *I have no problem with the research subject. Please take my phone number*
> *and you can call me in case you need help to solve conflicts with some local*
> *members.*

The governance of communal areas in Zimbabwe at the ward level is overseen by elected councillors and traditional leaders. It is notable that both the councillor and the headman work within the bureaucracy of the Ministry of Local Government and Public Works (MLGPW) as they are key stakeholders in community development. Councillors are positioned to coordinate development projects in their respective wards. Traditional leaders, as bearers of customary authority, are responsible for giving permission to developmental projects and for enforcing fines (*kuripisa*) on people who breach cultural protocols. Such relations between democratic leadership and traditional leadership are characterised by collaboration and conflict in the struggles for power and authority over community development.

Furthermore, in the case of Zimbabwe, the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act (MOPA) is one of the major legal instruments used to regulate people's actions or organisational practices for forming a public sphere. Although MOPA states that clearance from a regulating authority is not always mandatory for public meetings, the interaction of people with formal administrative systems of the Zimbabwean government and the State is characterised by competing interests which inevitably require wider consultations and negotiations. This, in turn, demanded the researcher to continue seeking advice from ward councillor and having feedback meetings with co-researchers to evaluate progress made. As such, this legal instrument had a direct bearing on the researcher's conduct during fieldwork. The researcher frequently sought the guidance and support of the ward councillor. The meetings were important for earning trust of the local community. After successful meetings with community leaders, the next phase involved establishing a research team comprising the researcher and five adolescent girls.

5.16   PHASE TWO – STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ESTABLISHING RESEARCH TEAM

To ensure that the study was participatory and aligned to social transformation (Goessling, 2020), adolescent girls were actively involved in co-production of knowledge. Phase Two involved establishing the research team and profiling of co-researchers was undertaken. The research team focused on strategic planning for implementing the PAR process. Meetings were conducted for carrying out a SWOT analysis and devising strategies for recruiting participants.

5.16.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is described as a process of capacity building and conscientizing the indispensability of creating and sharing knowledge about people's lives (Hall and Tandon, 2017). The first meeting for strategic planning was conducted in an open space at one of the local schools in the ward. This open space was the usual venue for general meetings of the local community. The venue of the meeting was organised by the ward councillor. The researcher invited the councillor to the first meeting to facilitate networking with adolescent girls invited to join the research team. This was because the councillor coordinated the process of identifying and inviting adolescent

girls as co-researchers. Also, the councillor's presence, as a community leader, improved the image of the researcher to co-researchers and the local community. The councillor was responsible for leading introductions at the first meeting. It was also the opportunity for the councillor to stress to co-researchers the importance of participating in researches and actively engaging in development activities in the ward.

The researcher introduced the co-researchers the study topic, purpose, and objectives. The researcher trained co-researchers on the PAR process and research ethics. The meeting for strategic planning was significant for outlining how the PAR process was to be implemented and also to be evaluated for credibility. The agenda of the meeting focused on activities, resources, responsible people, targets and outcomes. At the meeting, members discussed the modalities for recruiting participants and data gathering. Table 5.2 shows the activities adopted during the strategic planning meeting.

Table 5.2: Activities adopted in strategic planning meeting

Activities	Resources	Responsible person	Time frame	Success indicator
Meeting for strategic planning	Notebooks, pens, phones, airtime, data bundles	The Researcher Mr Itai	1 week	Messages sent to adolescent girls invited to be co-researchers Meeting conducted Research team established
Recruitment of eligible adolescent girls for interviews	Flyers, phones, pens, notebooks, airtime, data bundles	Co-researchers The Researcher	$2\frac{1}{2}$ weeks	Flyers distributed Messages sent using WhatsApp and Short Message Service (SMS), Adolescent girls invited using word of mouth at public gatherings involving young people Used networks and referrals
Identifying venues for focus group discussions	Schools, community halls, open spaces used for community meetings,	The Researcher Co-researchers	1 week	Venues identified
Call for selected adolescent girls to attend focus group discussions	Notebooks, pens, phones, airtime, data bundles	Co-researchers The researcher	1 week	Messages about dates and venues sent to participants Participants attended and participated in focus group discussions

5.16.2 Establishing the Research Team

The researcher facilitated the establishment of the research team to strive for participatory democracy in this research. The process of identifying and inviting adolescent girls to join the research team was initiated through an open announcement characterised by physically distributing flyers in the selected ward. This was to improve transparency and inclusiveness. Flyers were distributed at strategic points such as shopping centres, where people gathered water, and public gatherings. The ward councillor provided assistance with logistics and was actively involved in distributing the flyers. Adolescent girls were also identified using networking and referrals. The researcher also sought advice and guidance from older women when needed.

Given time constraints, the first five adolescent girls who responded to the call and conditionally accepted to be co-researchers were invited to meeting for deliberating formation of the research team. These adolescent girls were to join the research team as co-researchers. According to Lenette (2022), co-researchers are people who experience the lifeworld under study and become active agents in collaborating in knowledge production. The researcher and co-researchers constituted the research team which acted as the decision-making body. The research team was formally established during the first meeting by asking informed consent of adolescent girls who were in attendance. The five girls were given informed consent forms to sign. A research team was essential for facilitating the use of innovative approaches responsive to power dynamics which shaped the participation of marginalised and vulnerable adolescent girls in research. Brown (2022) argues that power dynamics should not always be approached from a position of striving to achieve fully egalitarian participation, but also should be reflexive to the research context so as to maintain participants' well-being and interests.

Given that this study involved adolescent girls, the researcher was aware of cultural practices and moral values which are often appropriated to determine the interaction between adolescent girls and adult men in discussions on SRH issues in Zimbabwe. It is culturally discouraged for an adult man to discuss SRH issues with adolescent girls in situations where they open up about their beliefs, values and attitudes towards SRH. The conversations are expected to take place in compartmentalised and institutions sanctioned by gender (Mpofu and Salawu, 2021). In addition, the relationship between adolescent girls and an adult male is naturally characterised by power imbalance in a patriarchal society. Patriarchal gender relations are shaped by dominant power to create unequal levels of interaction defined by gender and age. The researcher utilised communitarian ways of constituting social identities and social relations. Thus, it was necessary to ensure that co-researchers felt a sense of belonging to the research team by negotiating multiple positionalities. In this way, the researcher adopted multiple identities which were contingent on circumstances. Wamba (2017) indicates that a researcher's ability to identify his or her positionality is achieved through locating himself or herself within shifting networks of interaction.

153

5.16.3 Profiling Co-researchers

Using a template (Appendix B), the process of documenting profiles of co-researchers was undertaken in order to situate them within the research context. The importance of profiling co-researchers was to provide information necessary for justifying the social basis of forming relationships in this research. In addition, profiling co-researchers enhanced understanding of group dynamics which had influence on sustaining relationships. Adolescent girls who were invited to the first meeting and became co-researchers were asked to write their own profiles. These co-researchers wrote about their personal lives, family backgrounds and life goals. Pseudonyms were used to protect co-researchers' privacy and confidentiality. The profiles of co-researchers are presented below and not bearing their real names.

Rockybee was 19 years old and was not married. She stayed with her parents at the time of the fieldwork. She had completed Ordinary Level and passed a few subjects not enough for further studies. Rockybee wanted to sit for the examinations again for the subjects she failed. She was attending weekend classes at the time of this study. Her wish was to go to college and then look for a formal job. She ventured into a poultry project to raise money for her studies. She was selling broilers and eggs to people in the community.

Shamiso was 17 years old and was not married. She was staying with her mother and siblings. The father and mother were divorced. The father was providing financial and material resources for her education and personal needs. She was doing Form 5 at the time of the fieldwork. Her ambition was to go to university and study Crop Science. The support and encouragement of her mother and friends motivated her to focus on education first in her plans. Her dream was to succeed in life so that she might get a job which would be paying enough to support her parents and siblings. She described herself as someone who socialised with peers and was interested in participating in youth activities taking place in the community.

Marygold was 19 years old and married. She had one child and was pregnant during the time of the fieldwork. She was proud of her marriage. Her highest level of education was Ordinary Level. She had not passed the minimum subjects required to enrol to study a diploma at college. She was still looking forward to re-sitting the subjects she

failed. Her challenge was lack of money for both school and examination fees. Although the husband was supporting her idea of going back to school, his income from self-employment was not enough for family support and paying school fees.

Mazvita was 18 years old and married. She had two kids during the time of the fieldwork. Mazvita got pregnant while in Form 2. The pregnancy abruptly changed her life as she dropped out of school. She eloped to her boyfriend's homestead. Her boyfriend accepted the fatherhood of the baby and stayed together as husband and wife. Her parents were not happy when she fell pregnant, let alone when she chose to get married. The parents tried to force her to consider her education over marriage. She refused to go back to school. Her wish was to start a small project for supplementing the family income. Her source of motivation to stay in marriage were her children. She wished to give her children a life better than the one they were living.

Tariro was 17 years old and was not married. She depended on her parents for all material needs. Tariro described her family thus:

We live a moderate life.

She was in Form 4 at the time of the fieldwork. She spent most of her time indoors and reading. Her ambition was to pass Ordinary Level and become a nurse. Tariro considered school as the major priority of realising her life plans. After self-reflection on the challenges faced by her friends who were married, she convinced herself to focus on her personal development before thinking about marriage.

5.16.4 SWOT Analysis

An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) was done to guide activities related to the implementation of PAR. Quincy, Lu and Huang (2012) describe SWOT analysis as a method used in strategic planning with the aim to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which have a bearing on a project. During the strategic planning meeting, the research team carried out a SWOT analysis which enabled the research team to create the context in which the activities were to be carried out. Using SWOT analysis, the research team identified and examined internal and external factors that either enable or hinder the implementation of PAR. Also, SWOT analysis enabled the researcher and co-researchers to actively

involve in strategic planning. It had been assumed that co-researchers' contributions to the contextualisation of the research process through SWOT analysis were crucial to achieve the research aim and to improve their participation as a social group with special knowledge. As Goessling (2020) points out, PAR situates co-researchers as having valuable expertise that is crucial to achieving the research aim. The research team undertook brainstorming of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to research activities. SWOT analysis was also used to identify resources and timeframe for working towards the success of the research.

Strengths

The research team identified several strengths associated with the study. These strengths enhanced the implementation of the PAR process. One of the strengths was that the research team consisted of adolescent girls from diverse familial, social, economic and religious backgrounds. This enhanced the understanding of how discourses are embodied in social relationships and interactions (Pérez and Canella, 2015). Co-researchers demonstrated commitment to participate in the research. The inclusion of some adolescent girls as members of the research team ushered in novel knowledge of accessing adolescent girls in research.

The research gained social acceptance and support from the district council, ward councillor, traditional leadership and adults. The endorsement by the local leadership was crucial to foster a collaborative process with co-researchers within their natural settings. The ward councillor volunteered to assist in building partnerships between the research team and host community. Working closely with ward councillor enabled the researcher to utilise political capital which was important to address undesirable attractions which characterised public gatherings in an election season in Zimbabwe. Part of the fieldwork coincided with election campaigns. The attendance of the ward councillor at some meetings improved the credibility of the research in relation to the status given to meetings for community development. The local headman availed himself as a patron who was critical for resolving conflicts. The Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17) empowers headmen to report to police any activities which actually disrupt or are perceived to disrupt public peace, and to mediate interpersonal disputes or disagreements.

Weaknesses

The co-researchers highlighted that a centralised venue would be a cause for concern since some were to walk long distances or use public transport. This was to negatively affect attendance and punctuality to meetings and probably a demotivation to continue to participate. It was agreed that each co-researcher would organise a venue nearer to their homesteads when the meeting was specifically for interacting with participants they were going to recruit. The centralised venue was going to be used for meetings of the research team only since they were few. The researcher assured to reimburse transport costs incurred by those who were to use public transport to attend meetings. Co-researchers were able to organise venues in their respective localities and mobilised participants who volunteered to participate.

Opportunities

The research team identified resources which can be taken advantage of in implementing PAR. Social media and digital technology such as smartphones, cellphones, and internet were identified as opportunities for maximising the participation of adolescent girls. The co-researchers highlighted the importance of social media as one of the ways for networking. The researcher provided airtime, SMS bundles and WhatsApp bundles. The use of social media and digital technology improved efficiency in communication and coordination of research activities. In a study in Nigeria, Abubakara and Dasuki (2018) noted that WhatsApp improved the participation of women in development projects through WhatsApp groups which enabled them to voice their opinions and concerns direct to public officers.

Digital technology and social media also improved efficient time management as communications were virtually done in real time, such that challenges were expeditiously solved without inconveniencing other members. Social media and digital technology also provided flexibility in arranging interviews with participants who had phones, since physical movements were not necessary. The research team also identified public holidays and school calendars as opportunities to organise research activities. Face to face meetings and interviews were done during weekends and public holidays.

Threats

It was identified that if the ward councillor continued to be actively involved in research activities, the study might be affected by a political risk. There was concern that continued presence of the ward councillor at meetings would create misimpressions which might be used to associate the research activities with political agenda. To address the concern, the research team agreed that co-researchers should take the leading role to coordinate all activities for implementing PAR in the ward. However, the ward councillor remained an important stakeholder who was to give advice on specific knowledge to address challenges experienced at the community level.

Political risk was by no means the only threat to the research process. The research was associated with a threat to stigmatisation of adolescent girls who volunteered to participate. It has been noted that adolescent girls who participate in discussions on SRH are susceptible to debasing labels and stigma (UNAIDS, 2021). The researcher resorted to using rhetorical language in drafting the contents on the flyers such that a portrayal of an immanence of a crisis was to be avoided (Whyte, 2021). The rhetorical language was used to communicate the message through flyers (Appendix C). Also, the rhetorical language was used to protect co-researchers from personal attack. The message was contextualised such that the co-researchers also had an option to adopt a positionality of being a messenger. Contact details of the researcher were inserted on flyers to ensure that those who would be interested to have further knowledge about the study could contact the researcher direct. The co-researchers were given flyers to distribute in the ward.

5.16.5 Mapping the Research Site

The PAR process also involved mapping the research site so as to identify the situational context in which adolescent girls construed representations of their lived experiences of SRH decision-making. Following Bourdieu, the social environment could be seen as a social space or field which imposes the habitus and dispositions on human relations (Bourdieu, 1998). However, this imposition is not always overt or conflictual (Fairclough, 2013a). The mapping of the research site involved the identification of administrative divisions of the ward as well as an inventory of educational, health, commercial and reactional facilities. Broadly, the ward was predominantly rural and administratively divided into thirteen (13) villages which were

used to assert the territorial claims and authority of traditional leaders. In rural Zimbabwe, villages are overseen by village heads (*masabhuku*) who perform their duties under the supervision of a headman (*sadunhu*). In the ward, there was one headman who was responsible for governing communal land tenure rights mainly informed by culture and customary norms. Thus, communal areas remained more or less ethnicised, to give what Mamdani (1996) referred to as ethnic citizenship characterised by kin ties.

In the ward, land use planning mainly concentrated on agriculture. Almost all households practised subsistence agriculture. Arid climatic conditions also influenced households to diversify into livestock production. Many households had relatively large herds of cattle and goats. Several small-scale irrigation schemes were spotted across the ward. They were developed and maintained with the support of the government agencies like the Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services. The irrigation schemes acted as one of the major sources of income, as a variety of crops and vegetables were grown throughout the year. The farmers sold their produce to through-traffic along a major highway and also at the nearest growth point located in the neighbouring district. Basket and mat weaving using baobab bark was also a major source of livelihood in the ward.

The ward was served by three service centres located strategically. The major commercial activities were grocery shops and beerhalls. They also served recreation to both the young and old. Beerhalls provided recreation especially to young men and adult men. Two of the service centres were located along the major highway which connects the eastern and western parts of the country. The service centres were connected to the national electricity grid. The ward is near the Chiadzwa diamond fields. After the discovery of the diamonds in 2006, there was a diamond rush from all over the world (Nyamunda and Mukwambo, 2012). There was a sudden increase in transactions in foreign currencies as diamond buyers bought diamonds in cash. While increased cash flow from artisanal mining caused rural economic transformation through diversification of livelihoods and improved income (Mkodzongi, 2023), it was noted that transactional sex increased in Chiadzwa diamonds fields and the surrounding areas (Nyamunda and Mukwambo, 2012).

The ward benefited from the health equity policy which decentralised healthcare services to rural areas through the PHC approach. Two clinics in the ward offered basic health care. The clinics also provided family planning methods and other SRH services to pregnant women. Also, the ward is served by three primary schools and one secondary school.

5.17 PHASE THREE – RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS AND DATA GATHERING

After strategic planning, the next phase encompassed the recruitment of participants and data gathering. It is important to clarify at the onset that adolescent girls who were identified as co-researchers also participated in interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), although they took part in recruiting their peers. Guided by the bricolage, it was possible to negotiate multiple identities and roles within a single activity.

5.18 RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

Participatory action research enabled the researcher to adopt a pragmatic and reflexive process of establishing credibility in recruiting participants in the research site. Guided by bricolage theoretical framework, the planned recruitment of participants involved using multiple strategies, namely open call, networking and snow sampling. In addition, involving co-researchers in recruitment of participants was important for strengthening collaborative relationships and was also crucial to reducing over-reliance on adults to identify prospective participants. Cheney (2023) argues that involving young people to recruit participants among themselves would counteract excessive adult gaze and gatekeeping of information which often hinder meaningful participation. Moreover, amplifying adolescent girls' voices might be a form of deconstructing patriarchal prejudices which objectify young people as not competent to articulate their interests before adults. Aldridge (2015) argues that enabling powerless adolescent girls to find their voices in debates and discussions on aspects which affect their lives promotes self-determination. In doing so, co-researchers played the principal role of recruiting other participants in this study, thereby addressing the risk of intruding in adolescent girls' private lives by the researcher and familiar adult people such as parents, guardians and community leaders.

160

It is highlighted that strategies adopted for recruiting participants sought to cultivate equity, participatory democracy and social justice. The recruitment process commenced with an open call for participation and in turn the research team used a passive recruitment strategy which involved the distribution of flyers physically in public places in the research site and also on WhatsApp. Passive recruitment is a strategy for making the study population aware about a study without direct interaction with the researcher, but prospective participants decide on their own to communicate their willingness to participate (Negrin, 2022). To augment the open call strategy, networking and partnership were also used to recruit participants. The co-researchers were encouraged to make use of public meetings and youth gatherings being held in the research site for networking with eligible adolescent girls and inviting them.

As recruitment progressed, it emerged that many adolescent girls did not have access to WhatsApp. Also, it was difficult to discern the number of adolescent girls who saw the flyers and those who were interested to participate in data gathering. As such, the researcher used multiple methods in creative ways to achieve the minimum sample size within the specified period. It was prepared prior to recruitment that if the required minimum number of participants was not met using passive recruitment strategies, then active recruitment strategies were to be employed to increase the chance of achieving set targets within the fixed timeline.

Active recruitment involved face-to-face interaction which facilitated direct engagement with eligible adolescent girls and invited them to participate in the research. As an active recruitment strategy, snowball sampling was used to identify eligible adolescent girls. The inherent referral mechanism of snowball sampling was effective in achieving the set targets as already recruited participants referred other adolescent girls who were interested to participate. Interested adolescent girls directly contact the researcher by sending SMS or WhatsApp messages or making phone calls. Also, others got in touch with the researcher through the co-researchers. It is worth mentioning that the incentive of airtime and data bundles greatly motivated adolescent girls who had access to phones to participate. Airtime and data bundles to participants was approved during ethics clearance by the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The same participants recruited were involved in all data collection methods.

The researcher observed that adolescent girls who were in the 16 – 17 years age range were more interested in the research situation under study and were more willing to participate than those in the 18 – 19 years age category. Prior to recruitment, the researcher did not imagine this level of enthusiasm to participate among adolescent girls aged 16 – 17 years. The general perception was that adolescent girls aged 18 years and above would understand better as they were now majors who could make independent decisions on accessing SRH services. This does not imply that adolescent girls under 18 years were licentious in expressing their interests to participate. They were much interested in knowing how SRHRs are relevant to the capacity to protect themselves. Some them asked the researcher how they could resist peer pressure.

5.19   DATA GATHERING METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

Data generation was undertaken in an interactive research context. The process of data gathering was immersed in a collaborative process and dialogic communication to ensure mutual respect. Costa, Burke and Murphy (2019) remind that research methods are not just mechanically important to decisions on how to gather data, but they are also shaped by subjective choices of the approach adopted. The researcher used multiple methods of gathering data. The goal was to gather data that enhance thick description of the situation under study.

Data gathering methods used in this study were selected before the fieldwork commenced. However, how the data gathering methods were utilised was shaped by emerging circumstances during the implementation of PAR. Participants were given autonomy to make choices on how to engage with the researcher during data gathering. The researcher was innovative in adapting the methods to different competencies of participants. For example, a participant stopped the interview on WhatsApp due to challenges to cope with the virtual interaction. She said:

> *You are making it difficult for me…maybe we will continue face-to-face when you come on your next visit then I might not answer the questions.*

Data gathering was done using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and participant observations.

5.19.1 In-depth Interviews

As Rutledge and Hogg (2020) describe, in-depth interviews are used to carry out detailed interviews with participants in a conversational format. In-depth interviews were used as one of the methods of gathering data. In-depth interviews were important to get insights into participants' views, beliefs and perceptions about the situation under study. Using in-depth interviews, the study facilitated inclusiveness in data gathering since all eligible adolescent girls were given the chance to make choices about participating in the study. Also, choosing in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to facilitate an open and free communicative action. Co-researchers were responsible for organising face-to-face interviews.

The researcher carried out in-depth interviews with 32 adolescent girls either virtual or face-to-face, lasting 20 – 45 minutes. Participants were allowed to choose between face-to-face and virtual interviews. The researcher conducted virtual interviews during times which convenient to participants to minimise chances of disruptions. Face-to-face interviews were carried out during weekends, after school, public holidays and school holidays in order to accommodate adolescent girls' diverse needs. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with participants in open spaces near their homesteads in the research site. The open spaces chosen were at a distance perceived to be safe from adult meddling. The researcher used a smartphone recorder to record the interviews. The audio recordings were given labels and saved in the phone. Virtual interviews were conducted using WhatsApp and SMS messaging platforms. The interviews were captured in form of text messages. Participants were encouraged to show emotional expressions, by using emojis and any symbols which were appropriate to the emotions expressed (Ibrahim, Idriss and Maitma, 2021; Rashdi, 2018).

Participants were also asked to choose the language which they were comfortable with before interviews. Shona, English or a mixture of the two were the media of communication. An interview guide which consisted of unstructured and semi-structured questions was prepared by the researcher prior to conducting the interviews and used to after approval by the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee at UNISA (Appendix D). Open-ended questions were used to elicit interactive conversations. The questions were written in English and Shona languages

to ensure the inclusiveness of interviews. The questions for interviews sought to solicit information on a range of themes consistent with the study objectives and questions. The interviews solicited information on the following: demographic data, participants' SRH knowledge, SRH decision-making, experiences of SRH decision-making and implications of SRH decision-making to enhance socio-economic and healthy lives.

5.19.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) are described as structured conversations and interactions with a group of participants who share similar characteristics (Tracy, 2013; Morgan, 2012). As a data collection method, FGDs were used to promote critical dialogue on challenges faced by adolescent girls in SRH decision-making which affect their socio-economic and healthy lives. Focus group discussions were useful for enhancing group interactions in sharing knowledge and increasing awareness about the importance of learning from group members in relation to the situation under study (Tracy, 2013). Furthermore, FGDs served as fora for sharing information about SRH and reflecting critically on how power relations shape adolescent girls' participation in SRH decision-making. This underscored the significance of situating the discussions on SRH within the human rights framework.

Three FGDs that consisted of an average of five (5) participants aged 16 – 19 years were conducted in open spaces near shopping centres in the research site. Co-researchers were responsible for mobilising participants for FGDs. Participants were drawn from adolescent girls who participated in in-depth interviews. Each FGD comprised an average of five participants and lasted between 90 and 120 minutes. Focus group discussions were conducted during the weekends. An FGD guide comprised of unstructured questions was prepared by the researcher and approved by the College Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee at UNISA (Appendix E). The FGD guide consisted of questions written in English and Shona, focusing on the following: utility of SRH knowledge to life, challenges in SRH decision-making, control of SRH decision-making, sexual violence and maltreatment. The researcher moderated the discussions and used a smartphone recorder to record the discussions. The audio recordings were given labels and saved in the phone.

5.19.3 Participant Observations

Saldaña and Omasta (2018) describe participant observation as a data gathering method that uses various genres such as watching, listening, acting and interacting in their natural social setting. Participant observations were useful to identify verbal and non-verbal expressions which shaped ways of interacting between the researcher and participants. Also, participant observations were used to reflect on how language and other semiotic aspects were connected to power relations which influenced adolescent girls' actions and responses. This was important to understand the influence of discourse on how semiosis was materialised within the social structures (Fairclough, 2018a). As such, the researcher, as an adult male, was aware about the sensitivity of making observations in research which focused on a sexuality issue and involved adolescent girls (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2018).

Additionally, The Critical Methodologies Collective (2022) stresses that social interaction in qualitative research is often characterised by moments of discomfort. Therefore, participant observations were significant in reducing suspicious reactions and in improving trust since both the researcher and participants were actively involved in data gathering (Kawulich, 2005). The ideal sites perceived appropriate for making observations on participants were meetings, interviews and FGDs. This was necessary to avoid intrusion into participants' private lives. Thus, participant observations took place in compartmentalised settings in which the relationships between researcher and participants were guided by ethical principles articulated in this chapter (full details in Section 5.20).

The researcher took field notes to document insights, thoughts, feelings and impressions about interactions during the fieldwork (Maharaj, 2016). Saldaña and Omasta (2018) indicate that field notes enhance thick description of nuances about people's actions or interactions. Field notes were written in the form of jot notes and descriptive texts. Jot notes were written by the researcher during the interactions to maintain minimum interruption of events. The jot notes were expanded to descriptive texts soon after the interactions. Field notes were important for making sense of data within the research context (Tracy, 2013).

5.20 DATA ANALYSIS

Before data analysis commenced, the researcher hired a transcriber to transcribe audio recordings of interviews and FGDs. The transcriber also translated transcripts from Shona to English. Texts saved during interviews conducted on WhatsApp and SMS messaging platforms were copied and pasted to a MS Word document. Thereafter, the transcriber translated the texts into English. Data analysis was conducted using a critical discourse analysis (CDA). Critical discourse analysis involves describing, interpreting and explaining discourse as a power resource to construct, deconstruct, and legitimise social realities (Mullet, 2018; Fairclough, 2013b). There are various types of critical discourse analysis (CDA): dialectical-relational model proposed by Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk's socio-cognitive model, Martin Reisigl's discourse-historical model and Per Ledin and David Machin's multi-modal CDA (Flowerdew and Richardson, 2018). Given the multiplicity models of CDA, Flowerdew and Richardson (2018) highlight that it is imperative to show and demonstrate the particular model of CDA one selected to use in analysing data.

The researcher adopted critical discourse analysis (CDA) model developed by Norman Fairclough to analyse data. Norman Fairclough's model of CDA was appropriate for this study as it enhanced critical analysis of the situation under study through discourse. In view of the existence of multiple realities, paying attention to language use was important to this study to understand the extent to which participants' perspectives about SRH knowledge, experiences of SRH decision-making, and implications of SRH decision-making to their socio-economic and healthy lives were shaped by power, ideologies and institutions. Moreover, Fairclough's model of CDA enabled the researcher to not only focus on the critique of texts, but also to generate knowledge that contributes to transformative change and social justice (Fairclough, 2018a). This resonated with the underlying idea of the strategy implemented in this study to increase adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making, leading to enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives.

As developed by Norman Fairclough, the dialectical-relational model suggests use of semiotic modalities to identify and conceptualise how discourse manifests in structures, practices, events, and actions (Fairclough, 2018b). In this context, data

analysis involves critical reflection on how discourse is dialectical related to other elements of social reality and also implicated in the ethics of social transformation (Fairclough and Scholz, 2020; Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018a; Fairclough, 2018a). According to Fairclough (2010), the dialectical-relational model of CDA draws on discourse to identify semiosis embedded in a particular field or in certain social practices to make sense about the social world. Data analysis was done through intertwined stages of textual analysis, interpretation and explanation. The researcher embedded reflexive thematic analysis in CDA to generate themes from participants' interview responses surrounding SRH knowledge and experiences in SRH decision-making. As Braun et al. (2019) describe, reflexive thematic analysis involves conceptualisation of themes that are contextual, situated, and also shaped by the researcher's positionality. Themes generated provided the basis for expanding the process of data analysis to interpret participants' perspectives surrounding knowledge of SRH and experiences of SRH decision-making. The researcher put participants' responses in a table in MS Word and reflexively determined codes and themes (Nowell et al., 2017). Critical discourse analysis involved textual analysis, interpretation of relationship between texts and interaction and explanation of context which shaped participants' narratives.

5.20.1 Textual Analysis

The first stage of data analysis involved textual analysis. According to Fairclough (2018a), textual analysis focuses on description of linguistic structures (written, electronic or spoken) and semiotic forms of text (visual images). Textual analysis pays attention to the ideational function of text, meanings of text and role of text in constructing social reality (Fairclough, 2018a). Textual analysis began with identifying and describing the linguistic elements of text, namely vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, coherence and text structure in order to establish participants' choices of words in conceiving the significance of SRH knowledge and SRH decision-making in their lives. However, Fairclough (2013b) cautions that properties of text do not reveal how power behind and in discourse shapes the interpretation of texts in specific contexts, given that texts might be meaningful in social interaction. In this context, texts were useful to make sense about how participants drew on social relationships and identities to reproduce and contest values and norms mediated through discourse (Fairclough, 2010).

As such, Fairclough (2018b) stresses that the power of text to either reproduce or contest discourse is reinforced by its relations with other texts. Brooks (2011) indicates that text does not have fixed meaning since it conveys different messages in different contexts. The analysis focused on the dialectical relation of intertextuality of texts to asymmetric power relations in shaping social interactions (Ciugureanu and Farhoud, 2019). In doing so, the researcher examined how participants drew from various discourses to have a new interpretation of the same phenomenon. Such analysis led to new ways of describing hegemonic social practices which shaped participants' meanings about the importance of SRH knowledge and control of SRH decision-making.

5.20.2 Interpretation

The second stage of data analysis involved interpreting the relationship between text and interaction (Fairclough, 2013a). The researcher analysed texts to identify enablers of and constraints on the truthfulness of participants' narratives. The logic and rhetoric embodied in participants' narratives were interpreted as means to assess whether the texts were truthful, sincere or just (Fairclough, 2018a). Therefore, participants' narratives were critically analysed as determined by interaction and open to different interpretations. It is underlined that the dialectical-relational model of CDA suggests the interpretation of discourse through practical reasoning or practical argumentation against existing norms and values (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018b; Fairclough, 2013a). Drawing on the capability approach, practical reasoning is important to evaluate what adolescent girls reasoned to be good to do with their lives, depending on given circumstances and values they hold (Nussbaum, 2000a; Sen, 2002a).

The researcher was also concerned with interpreting how adolescent girls make sense of various discourses which shape the knowledge about SRH and agency in SRH decision-making. As guided by the CDA, the researcher focused on interpreting semiosis used by adolescent girls to express their perceptions, beliefs and attitudes towards SRH decision-making. Fairclough (2018a) argues that the domination of vulnerable social groups is determined by power struggle over interpretation of how discourse is dialectically related to social transformation within networks of practices such as social fields, institutions and organisations. Therefore, the researcher sought

to understand how social practices either enabled or constrained participants to construe the material, social or mental world.

As such, it was necessary to interpret socio-cognitive processes underlying the acquisition and justification of knowledge among individuals as not only influenced by personal experiences and emotions, but also by being members of a social group (van Dijk, 2018). This underlined the importance of adopting creative and innovative ways of justifying the epistemic criteria of amplifying adolescent girls' voices as interlocutors. Epistemic communities have authoritative control over adolescent girls' mental representations of their own lived experiences, although the cognitive processes take place in specific communicative situations. In this context, the resources to draw on in internalising and appropriating texts as part of naturalising and reproducing texts are shaped by unequal power relations place constraints on perceiving, knowing, thinking, believing, feeling, and interpreting (van Dijk, 2018; Fairclough, 2013b).

5.20.3 Explanation

The third stage of data analysis involved bringing together theoretical perspectives to explain how power relations shaped participants' narratives within cultural, socio-economic and political context. In the dialectical-relational model of CDA, Fairclough (2013a) highlights that explanation of social reality is guided by how the researcher and participants interacted with the research context. As such, power relations are critical to explanatory understanding of reality and the ethics of social action. In this way, the dialectical-relational model of CDA suggests that the analysis of power relations could be a theoretical process in which theories and methods are selected in view of the dynamic nature of the situation under study (Fairclough, 2010). This is because how people perceive, interpret and conceptualise social reality is dialectically related to the same social reality. Therefore, theories might be epistemic resources for explaining power relations which shape discourses. In this context, the researcher viewed theories as methods to draw on in explaining the situation under study.

A theoretical framework guided by bricolage metaphor (full details in Chapter 2) was developed to allow the use of theories in locating texts within multiple paradigmatic

and theoretical perspectives. The researcher drew on multiple theoretical perspectives based on prior knowledge of relevant theories to understand what discourses say about power relations which materialise the endurance of certain values, beliefs and desires in a given social context (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018a; Kincheloe, 2005). In doing so, theories were applied as they were seen relevant to the lived experiences of adolescent girls.

5.21 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Ensuring trustworthiness is requisite to demonstrate the data quality in qualitative research. This study employed the bricolage and PAR processes to ensure trustworthiness. Korstjens and Moser (2018) highlights that trustworthiness indicates how quality and rigour are judged in qualitative research by considering credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability of research. To ensure the study was credible, Kirshner and Kamberelis (2022) underscore that a prolonged engagement in the field is important to deepen how the researcher and participants interact. Prolonged engagement was made possible through dialogue, meetings and contentious feedback in order to cultivate mutual trust and openness (Lennie, 2006). This provided the context for co-learning between the researcher and adolescent girls in novel ways which facilitated networking. In addition, by employing PAR as the research design, the researcher assumed that being a trustworthy co-learner was significant in creating collaboration with participants and addressing power relations in research. The researcher used various methods which allowed responsiveness to the relationship with participant adolescent girls. Some adolescent girls were identified and invited to become co-researchers. The co-researchers were actively involved in implementing the PAR design.

The researcher also adopted multiple methods and theories to improve the credibility of the study such that the findings would be believable to reviewers, assessors, peer researchers, policymakers, participants and community members. It was necessary to gather data which did not produce knowledge with some kind of judgemental sentiments or creating a context filled with suspicions and discomfiture. The researcher used the method of thick description to make sense of data within the context of implementing PAR (Tracy and Hinrichs, 2017). Thick description

deliberately involved using direct quotations of participants' texts to enable participants' voices in research and to authenticate their participation. In a PAR study in Belize, Kirshner and Kamberelis (2022) enhanced the credibility of data by quoting participants' verbatims. Critical discourse analysis was done to address power relations which constrain the description and representation of the situation under study.

The trustworthiness of the study was also improved by ensuring that the research findings can be transferred to other settings (Tracy, 2013). In this context, the transferability of the study meant that readers could relate the experiences of carrying out a study based on PAR to their own situation when doing similar research. The researcher viewed the methodology and presentation of findings as a theoretical practice. Storytelling was one of the genres used to describe the methodology. Using CDA, the research findings enabled the researcher to situate knowledge production in a particular context. According to Fairclough (2013a), readers as interpreters would arrive at interpretations of the context of this research based on their representations of a certain social reality. Moreover, the researcher shared knowledge about SRHRs with co-researchers and engaged them in conversations about the use of participatory practices of bringing together people in similar situations for sharing such knowledge. The researcher encouraged co-researchers to share the knowledge about SRH decision-making with other adolescent girls. During an interview, Melody (19 years), a participant, confirmed that she got some knowledge about SRH from one of the co-researchers which made her interested to participate:

> *Yes, I heard some of those things. I was taught by X[co-researcher Rockybee].*

Furthermore, the researcher had a mandate to maintain consistency when implementing PAR to ensure the dependability of findings. The recruitment of participants and data collection were done in a manner which promoted collaboration and reflexivity. The researcher used a recorder to capture participants' narratives and stories in order to maintain a certain objectivity in documenting the data. Given that the research topic drew on a multidisciplinary approach, the bricolage was used to enhance critical analysis by applying theories in creative ways which expanded the

scope of analysis. Therefore, this study contributed to the body of scholarly research on ASRH and human development.

Confirmability is another measure useful for evaluating whether findings are trustworthy (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). The researcher focused on accuracy in presenting and interpreting data as well as making conclusions that should be confirmable to institutional research committees and peer researchers (Nassaji, 2020). The data were interpreted in ways that demonstrated accuracy and impartiality through member checking. This was achieved by conducting feedback meetings with participants to clarify meanings that might emerge from data collected (Korstjens and Moser, 2018).

5.22 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee at UNISA and ethical approval was granted (NHREC Registration #: Rec-240816-052) (Appendix F). The researcher was conscious of ethical requirements of conducting research with human subjects outlined in the UNISA *Policy on Research Ethics* (UNISA, 2016). The researcher was also mindful that ethical decisions encompass the duty of respecting the legal regulation of human conduct in the host country of Zimbabwe. Permission to undertake the fieldwork in the study area was sought from Chimanimani Rural District Council.

Respect for the autonomous choice, beneficence and justice took precedence over ethical decisions on complying with ethical standards of doing research with human subjects. The researcher was also paid attention to the significance of care and virtue in addressing ethical dilemmas. As such, the researcher respected adolescent girls' autonomy in all ethical decisions made in this study. Wiles (2013) highlights that respect of autonomy encompasses informed consent, voluntariness, confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher solicited informed consent from adolescent girls who belonged to the 18 – 19 years age range and assent from adolescent girls in the 16 – 17 years age category from thirty-two recruited in this study (UNICEF, 2021c; World Health Organisation, 2018). Parental or legal guardian consent was sought on behalf

of adolescent girls below 18 years. In Zimbabwe, the Legal Age of Majority Act of 1982 states that any person could attain majority status after celebrating the 18th birthday. Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014) highlight that informed consent is crucial for judging whether participants voluntarily participated in the research and as the criterion for evaluating their autonomy.

The researcher provided relevant information which was perceived to be adequate for adolescent girls to make informed choices on whether or not to participate. The information covered study topic, purpose, design and methods of data gathering. Once the informed consent was granted, the researcher asked adolescent girls aged 18 – 19 years to sign the consent form (Appendix G). Adolescent girls aged 16 – 17 years were asked to sign the assent form (Appendix H). Caregivers were requested to sign the consent form which authenticates their permission of adolescent girls under 18 years to participate in the research. Consent and assent forms were translated to the local vernacular. Adolescent girls' decisions on declining or withdrawing from participating in this study were respectfully and sincerely accepted.

The researcher protected adolescent girls by observing their right to privacy. Adolescent girls were assured that identity details and information they provided were to be kept confidential. The researcher saved data in text format and audio recordings with pseudonyms. Verbatims quoted as illustrations were collocated pseudonyms to protect adolescent girls from being identified with their narratives. The researcher and supervisor were the only ones who had access to data collected. It was the researcher's responsibility to ensure that interviews and FGDs transcripts and field notes were kept in a secured place. Soft copies were encrypted with passwords. Given that some interviews were done online, participants were asked to delete the recordings of the conversations soon after the end of each interview. The research site was assigned a pseudonym to ensure the confidentiality of adolescent girls.

It was also imperative to ensure that research had direct benefits to relevant stakeholders, especially the participants. Given that the study employed a PAR design, it meant that participant adolescent girls were not mere targets nor respondents, but active agents in the research process. However, Lenette (2022) cautions that a PAR process must not be burdensome and exploitative in the name

of achieving meaningful participation. Drawing on grounded theory, it is essential to have checks on the risk of exploiting participants by weighing when, how and the extent of involving participants in the research process (Azulai, 2021). The research process was reflexive such that all eligible adolescent girls were given the chance to participate in this study by using virtual or face-to-face strategies. In addition, PAR created flexibility in scheduling times for data gathering. Dialogue was also used to improve communication and as a way to address power dynamics associated with doing research with vulnerable and marginalised social groups. The researcher also provided airtime, SMS bundles and mobile data bundles to co-researchers and participants to compensate monetary costs of participating in virtual interviews.

Ethical considerations also guided the researcher to avoid deceiving and harming participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2023). Therefore, mechanisms were put in place to reduce participants' susceptibility to various risks. Given the sensitivity of research on ASRH, it was necessary to categorise adolescent girls as a vulnerable social group with diminished autonomy. There was concern that some adolescent girls might suffer from psychological discomforts and even trauma when recalling memories of their experiences of SRH. The researcher looked for a female social worker (Appendix I) to provide counselling services when they were needed. In addition, participant adolescent girls were asked to open up about their personal concerns on discussing certain issues relevant to the interview and FGD questions in order to facilitate continual reflection on risks to cultural, psychosocial and emotional harms which might affect participants. The conversations were conducted in ways which respected the self, others and the diversity of the collective (Chevalier and Buckles, 2019).

Given that the proposal was developed while the country was put on COVID-19 related lockdown, the researcher proposed to follow national lockdown measures (full details in Chapter 7). However, by the time data gathering commenced, the Zimbabwean government had already relaxed all restrictive COVID-19 lockdown measures. Measures like wearing masks, social distancing and hand-washing with a sanitizer were no longer mandatory. Therefore, COVID-19 did not impose the urgency of taking measures of preventing the risks of exposing people to get infected.

Additionally, research should promote justice. It is an ethical principle of ensuring that every eligible participant should be given a chance to participate (UNICEF, 2021c). Drawing upon PAR, the researcher ensured that the recruitment process was based on equity and mutual respect in order to acknowledge participants' different capacities to participate. Also, PAR enabled the researcher to respect participants' beliefs, values and dispositions as ways to amplify their voices and create an inclusive research process. It was the goal of the study to enable the voices of the marginalised and vulnerable adolescent girls in a manner which promoted social justice.

5.23   CHAPTER SUMMARY

A discussion of the methodology was given. The design of the study based on PAR was explained. Guided by PAR, several phases implemented were highlighted. The researcher-as-bricoleur managed to create an enabling environment for active participation through building mutual relationships. Additionally, a SWOT analysis was done to improve the context of collaboration between the researcher and participants. Data gathering methods used were explained. The trustworthiness of the study and ethical considerations were also highlighted.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is on presenting and discussing findings in line with the study objectives and questions. This chapter presented and discussed findings about the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. The presentation of findings in this chapter sought to: describe knowledge about SRH among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District (Secondary Objective One), explore experiences of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District (Secondary Objective Two) and contribute to the understanding of the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District (Secondary Objective Three). The data analysed in this chapter were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations (Chapter 5, Section 5.19). This study employed the CDA model developed by Norman Fairclough (2018a) to reflect critically on connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. In this context, the study paid attention to critique and deconstruction of power dynamics which perpetrate the use of practices that constrict meaningful representations of marginalised adolescent girls' voices in the analysis and discussion of findings. Guided by the bricolage theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two, this study drew from multiple theoretical perspectives to interpret participants' narratives. Therefore, presentation and discussion of findings were done concurrently mainly to enhance context, coherence, clarity and logic.

6.2 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPANTS

A demographic and socio-economic background of adolescent girls in the 16 – 19 years age range who partake in this study is described. As discussed in Chapter 5, the purpose of the fieldwork was to give all eligible adolescent girls the chance to participate in this study. In addition, the researcher enabled participants' voices in articulating their experiences and perspectives regarding the situation under study. The researcher interviewed 32 adolescent girls aged between 16 and 19 years.

Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' privacy and confidentiality. Table 6.1 indicates demographic and socio-economic profiles of adolescent girls who took part in in-depth interviews. The data revealed that nineteen participants were aged between 16 – 17 years and thirteen were aged between 18 and 19 years. It can be construed that the high proportion of adolescent girls aged between 16 and 17 years demonstrated the effectiveness of the PAR process used in this study to address power dynamics which constrain marginalised adolescent girls to participate in research. In Uganda, Ritterbusch et al. (2020) used PAR as means of democratising the research context in which young people perceived that the study was not imposed on them. As a result, there was increased cooperation from participants. This study argues that engaging adolescent girls using methods that facilitate heuristic interaction and adapting to context enhance inclusiveness of the research process. Furthermore, Pincock and Jones (2020) argue that participatory methods not only pay attention to young people's capacities, but also enhance reflexivity on how they interpret engagement with adults in a research context which is not intimidating.

As shown in Table 6.1, twenty-four participants were never married and eight were married. The findings also indicated the level of education attained by the participants. As shown in Table 6.1, five participants had O-Level as the highest level of education. Three participants were doing Form 5. Ten participants were in Form 4 while six were doing Form 3. Seven participants mentioned that they were in Form 2 while one participant indicated Grade 7 as the highest level of education she attained.

Table 6.1: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of participants

No.	Participant pseudonyms	Age	Marital status	Number of children	Educational attainment
1	Marygold	19 years	Married	Two	O-Level
2	Hambayi	19 years	Married	One	Form 3
3	Rukudzo	19 years	Never married	None	O-Level
4	Mazvita	19 years	Married	Two	Form 2
5	Tariro	18 years	Never married	None	Form 4
6	Rutendo	17 years	Never married	None	Form 4
7	Tendai	17 years	Never married	None	Form 5
8	Rudo	17 years	Never married	None	Form 5
9	Marvelous	16 years	Never married	None	Form 2
10	Makatendeka	17 years	Never married	None	Form 4
11	Gakarisinamunyu	17 years	Never married	None	Form 4
12	Mabhiyadho	19 years	Never married	None	Form 4
13	Tebbie	16 years	Never married	None	Form 2
14	Ratidzo	16 years	Never married	None	Form 3
15	Melody	19 years	Married	Two	Grade 7
16	Melly	17 years	Never married	None	Form 3
17	Dorcas	16 years	Never married	None	Form 2
18	Ruvimbo	17 years	Never married	None	Form 3
19	Chipo	17 years	Never married	None	Form 4
20	Shamiso	17 years	Never married	None	Form 5
21	Ndewashe	17 years	Never married	None	Form 2
22	Shalom	16 years	Never married	None	Form 3
23	Silvia	18 years	Never married	None	Form 3
24	Zvinei	18 years	Never married	None	Form 4
25	Ruvarashe	18 years	Married	None	O-Level
26	Ropafadzo	16 years	Never married	None	Form 2
27	Mary	17 years	Never married	None	Form 4
28	Ratidzai	19 years	Married	One	O-Level
29	Mercy	17 years	Never married	None	Form 3
30	Maidei	18 years	Married	None	O-Level
31	Zvikomborero	16 years	Never married	None	Form 2
32	Shylet	18 years	Married	None	Form 4

Source: Research fieldwork, 2024

6.3 PARTICIPANTS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The researcher asked participants about their knowledge of SRH. To initiate conversations, the researcher posed an open-ended question to participants to describe what they knew about SRH. The analysis accounted for the kind of knowledge about SRH participants had by identifying codes and themes during thematic analysis. The themes were significant to contextualising participants' understanding about SRH knowledge. The researcher also paid attention to how participants' beliefs, views and thoughts were shaped by power, ideologies and institutions. As shown in Table 6.2, eleven out of thirty-two participants described what they understood about SRH knowledge and mentioned some SRH issues. Sexually transmitted diseases were the most mentioned SRH issue, followed by unprotected sex and unintended pregnancy. Contraceptive, HIV/AIDS and abortion were also mentioned.

Table 6.2: Themes identified from participants' responses to the question on sexual and reproductive health knowledge

No.	Participant pseudonyms	Interview responses	Codes	Themes
1.	Marygold	*"One is not healthy or would be sick most of the time."*	• Misinformed	• Misinformation
2.	Hambayi	*"I don't know…like what?"*	• Uncertainty	• Identity challenges
3.	Rukudzo	*"Sleeping around causes problems like HIV/AIDS, STDs…but it is caused by having unprotected sex. Some of the diseases are caused by bacteria and can treated if one is given medicine."*	• Informed • HIV/AIDS • STDs • Unprotected sex	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes

Table 6.2 (continued)

4.	Mazvita	*"Sleeping around causes diseases like HIV/AIDS, STDs. BP if a woman impregnated and abandoned, it causes stress and confusion leading to destitute, abortion or committing suicide. Pregnant women must be assisted by nurses when giving birth."*	• Expanding terminology • HIV/AIDS • STDs • Unintended pregnancy	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
5.	Tariro	*"I don't know anything."*	• Lacking knowledge	• Passive response
6.	Rutendo	*"If one has unprotected sex with someone who has STD, HIV/AIDS, they will get infected. Yeah…we learnt about that at school."*	• Informed • Unprotected sex • STDs • HIV/AIDS	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
7.	Tendai	*"I don't know anything."*	• Lacking knowledge	• Passive response
8.	Rudo	*"I don't know much about it but only that there are STDs that can infect someone when one has unprotected sex."*	• Informed • STDs • Unprotected sex	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
9.	Marvelous	*"Nothing."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response
10.	Makatendeka	*"I don't know anything because I have never done it before."*	• Lacking practical advice	• Passive response
11.	Gakarisinamunyu	*"I heard about that. When having sex people must use condoms to protect themselves from STDs and unintended pregnancy."*	Informed • Contraceptive • STDs • Unintended pregnancy	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes

Table 6.2 (continued)

12.	Mabhiyadho	*"Ummm I don't know anything because I have never done it before. We learnt at school but I forgot."*	• Taking the knowledge for granted	• Passive response
13.	Tebbie	*"Nothing."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response
14.	Ratidzo	*"I don't know anything."*	• Lacking knowledge	• Passive response
15.	Melody	*"One must use protection to avoid infected with STDs."*	• Informed • Contraceptive • STDs	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
16.	Melly	*"Nothing."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response
17.	Dorcas	*"I don't remember anything. We learnt about it at school."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response
18.	Ruvimbo	*"I learned about…"*	• Felt overwhelmed	• Identity challenges
19.	Chipo	*"That I should not have to sleep with boys. That's all."*	• Informed • Lacking practical advice	• SRH knowledge expressed through making a decision
20.	Ndewashe	*"I don't know much, except that having sex can result in pregnancy."*	• Informed • Unprotected sex • Unintended pregnancy	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
21.	Shalom	*"I heard about sexual and reproductive health. We learnt about it at school. I don't remember anything."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response
22.	Silvia	*"I know nothing."*	• No interested in the question	• Passive response
23.	Zvinei	*"I know a little about SRH, having sex one can contract STDs."*	• Informed • Unprotected sex • STDs	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
24.	Shamiso	*"I don't have anything to share."*	• No interest in the question	• Passive response

Table 6.2 (continued)

25.	Ruvarashe	*"Having unprotected sex can lead to get infected with STDs, unintended pregnancy."*	• Informed • Unprotected sex • STDs • Unintended pregnancy	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
26.	Ropafadzo	*"I don't know anything."*	• Lacking knowledge	• Passive response
27.	Mary	*"Nothing."*	• No interested in the question	• Passive response
28.	Ratidzai	*"Pregnant woman must go to clinic to register and given medicine."*	• Changing terminology	• Misinformation
29.	Mercy	*"I don't know anything."*	• Lacking knowledge	• Passive response
30.	Maidei	*"Sleeping around has some problems like unintended pregnancy, infected with STDs."*	• Informed • Unintended pregnancy • STDs	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes
31.	Zvikomborero	*"Nothing."*	No interest in the question	• Passive response
32.	Shylet	*"Having unprotected sex lead to get infected with STDs."*	• Informed • Unprotected sex • STDs	• SRH knowledge described through behaviours and outcomes

Source: Research fieldwork, 2024

Drawing from Table 6.2, participants' interpretation of the question about SRH knowledge emerged from several motivations. Several motivations which influenced participants' responses were: SRH knowledge described behaviours and outcomes, SRH knowledge expressed through making a decision, identity challenges, misinformation, and passive response.

Eleven participants described SRH knowledge through behaviours and outcomes. In their descriptions, SRH knowledge encompassed risk sexual behaviours as being responsible for adverse SRH outcomes. Participants indicated that unprotected sex leads one to have unintended pregnancy or get infected with STDs and HIV. In her description of SRH knowledge, Rudo (17 years) said:

"I don't know much about it [sexual and reproductive health], but only that there are STDs that can infect someone when one has unprotected sex."

Rutendo (17 years) said:

"If one has unprotected sex with someone who has STD, HIV/AIDS, they will get infected. Yeah…we learnt about that at school."

Another participant, Maidei (18 years) remarked:

"Sleeping around has some problems like unintended pregnancy, infected with STDs."

Participants highlighted the importance of using contraceptives to avoid getting infected with STDs and HIV. Gakarisinamunyu (17 years) said:

"I heard about that. When having sex people must use condoms to protect themselves from STDs and unintended pregnancy."

Melody (19 years) said:

"One must use protection to avoid infected with STDs."

It is indicative that participants described SRH knowledge by referring to SRH outcomes in manner that mostly mimetic the type of sex education commonly taught in schools in Zimbabwe which had been heavily influenced by the behavioural change model adopted to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in the mid-1990s (Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, 2003). The scope of SRH knowledge placed much emphasis on the awareness of biological and behavioural factors influencing SRH outcomes. The finding is corroborated by UNICEF Zimbabwe's (2023a) study in Zimbabwe which showed that adolescent girls mostly describe SRH knowledge in terms of biological and behavioural characteristics. In a study in western Kenya, Magadi et al. (2022) noted that adolescent girls were interested in discussing about SRH in ways which enabled them to translate the knowledge into appropriate behaviour.

Findings revealed that one participant interpreted the question by expressing SRH knowledge through making a choice. Chipo (17 years) said:

"That I should not have to sleep with boys. That's all."

The study identified that some participants had misinformation and affected by identity challenges in articulating knowledge about SRH. The scope of SRH knowledge of participants who exhibited misinformation was broad and subsumed in generalised understanding of health. Marygold (19 years) described:

"One is not healthy or would be sick most of the time."

Ratidzai (19 years) said:

"Pregnant woman must go to clinic to register and given medicine."

Participants who were affected by identity challenges showed uncertainty and felt overwhelmed by the question. For example, Hambayi (19 years) responded:

"I don't know…like what?"

Sixteen participants gave passive responses with regard to SRH knowledge. While passive responses could be a sign of lack of knowledge about SRH, most of passive responses indicated lack of motivation to engage in the conversation. Shamiso (17 years) responded:

"I don't have anything to share."

Upon asking Shalom (16 years) about SRH knowledge, she answered:

"I heard about sexual and reproductive health. We learnt about it at school. I don't remember anything."

Makatendeka (17 years) responded:

"I don't know anything because I have never done it before."

Dorcas (16 years) said:

"I don't remember anything. We learnt about it at school."

Although lack of knowledge about SRH among girls is corroborated by previous studies (Magadi et al., 2022; Deshmukh and Chaniana, 2020), this study suggested that participants' passive responses did not discern a unitary interpretation of the question. It is possible to interpret most of passive responses as sign of reluctance to

actively engage in such conversations. From analysis of passive responses, the majority of participants either acknowledged their lack of SRH knowledge or refrained from claiming conversant of knowledge about SRH. Moreover, adolescents are under-prioritised in delivery of SRH services (Finlay et al., 2020). Thus, the analysis would be enhanced by reflecting critically on the influence of norms and values which determine the context of sharing such knowledge with adolescents in Zimbabwe.

Paying attention to epistemic locutions used by adolescent girls, as language users, to describe knowledge about SRH was necessary. The term locution is described as an act of saying something verbally or non-verbally in a meaningful way (McDonald, 2022; Stawarska, 2017). This study delineated epistemic locutions which participants used to acknowledge or refrain from acknowledging what they knew about SRH and how they professed ignorance of SRH knowledge when taking up the position of an interlocutor. Epistemic locutions enabled the researcher to analyse texts based on the semiosis which shaped the communicative action. In doing so, a participatory process was employed to initiate dialogue where the researcher actively listened to stories and narratives shared by participants.

This study drew from various epistemic locutions used by participants to discern how their ways of being, knowing, doing and learning were circumscribed by oppression and stereotypes which reinforced the paternalistic agenda in SRH decision-making among adolescent girls (van Schalkwyk, 2018). Adolescent girls are not only protected from risky behaviours, but they also experience contradictory situations in accessing comprehensive SRH knowledge. Such knowledge has to be shared in appropriate contexts, most importantly in marriage. This indicates social, moral and cultural contexts which shaped their perceptions.

It was productive to conceptualise adolescent girls' voices as symbolic struggles circumscribed by power relations which determine the ways of thinking and knowing about SRH within existing social structures. According to the intersectionality theory as formulated by Crenshaw, (1991), conditions of inequality which manifest in structures through intersecting identities of gender, age, class, race, and religion. Adolescent girls are historically disempowered to participate freely in debates and discussions on ways which increase their awareness of SRH issues. Locke (2002)

explains that an appreciation of a rhetorical perspective adds value to the development of theoretical and methodological approaches which conceive knowledge production as a social practice.

As Stawarska (2017:185) argues, when interpreting text, it is necessary to consider the "inherited social conditions of power and the received histories of the said words and the situated identities of the persons saying and hearing them." In doing so, a reflexive analysis of the intersection between discourse and power relations became nuanced in understanding adolescent girls' representation of SRH knowledge. Fairclough (2010) avers that it is not always necessary to view a social wrong as inherently an obstacle to one's ability to make a choice, but the evaluation ought to focus on how a social wrong is embedded in structures which serve to facilitate human well-being. Even though the research context created conditions for participants to speak for themselves, it was significant to pay attention to the influence of the dialectical relationship between power and knowledge production.

Power relations either produce or suppress adolescent girls' ways of knowing about SRH. In situations of epistemic oppression, adolescent girls are mostly unfairly distrusted and instrumentalised in knowledge production about their lives. This implies that power can constrain ways of thinking and knowing about SRH among adolescent girls. Fricker (2007) underscores that the embodiment of power in discourse pre-empts the constraints on a person's capacity to articulate his or her views as a rational subject. This is because power can obscure how people make sense of the boundary between lived experiences and social reality.

As van Dijk (2018) points out, acquisition of knowledge and implicated meanings are determined by socio-cognitive motivations of representations about the social world. Given that the majority of participants either professed ignorance of or refrained from claiming conversant of knowledge about SRH, examining structures which determined forms of speech acts restrictive to the acquisition of SRH knowledge was theoretically significant. This study noted that socialisation had a profound influence on conditions of acquiring knowledge of SRH and the implied meanings thereof. Socialisation shaped the modes of thinking and knowing about SRH among participants. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, socialisation influences the context in which a

set of dominant dispositions determine social positions of participants within processes of producing knowledge (Shimoni, 2018; Costa and Murphy, 2015). The notion of habitus enabled the researcher to construe patterns of conduct embodied in dispositions, values and social practices from which participants unconsciously derive meanings of conformity to relationships idealised as appropriate (Butler, 2001).

The understanding of socialisation, in this study, was not merely based on deterministic perspectives of imparting knowledge, but it also encompassed nuanced perspectives about the role of symbolic capital in sustaining norms of educating girls about sexualities. As such, this study drew from the notion of social capital formulated by Bourdieu to identify epistemic sources from which participant adolescent girls derived authenticity of their choices of texts to reinforce descriptions of SRH knowledge as situated in a particular social and historical context (Larsen, 2010). This is significant because adolescent girls, as members of the community, not only gained knowledge from socialisation, but they also acquired moral capacities to attribute desires, thoughts and emotions to their SRH choices. In addition, gender was understood as a mode of discourse used to relate adolescent girls' desires and responsibilities in SRH decision-making to sexual or biological differences vis-à-vis adolescent boys (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

This study found that socially shared knowledge about SRH was sustained by social networks which were highly gendered and intergenerational. As shown in Table 6.3, most participants got to know about SRH issues from older women who were actively involved in their social lives. Also, participants appeared to trust the holistic learning style about SRH which was compatible with cognitive, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions of well-being embedded in the self, family and community. Although Ruvimbo (17 years) elaborated that she mostly got such knowledge from the girl-talk moments with classmates, but she would seek another opinion from older women when she had doubts about the knowledge which they shared as peers. She said:

> *Yes, I understand, because if someone among them [her classmates] tells me something which I see is not right, I go and ask older women about it.*

When reflecting critically on the social capital which participants tapped to learn about SRH, there is a possibility to understand social networks as an embodiment of discourse rather than a reality. In this context, the influence of social networks on sharing SRH knowledge is shaped by power relations rather than the depiction of the actual state of affairs. Participants were able to delineate their own social networks in representations of SRH knowledge. As shown in Table 6.3, grandmothers and mothers were mentioned as the most trusted ones in sharing knowledge about SRH issues. It is interesting that aunts were not playing a big role in the socialisation of adolescent girls in matters related to SRH. This imposed limitations on the researcher as a male to discern how participants construed cultural construction of the family and kinship in African indigenous context. In Shona culture, paternal aunt has power over girls in the clan to the extent that she can contest decisions of men in ceremonies for ensuring that girls are married in culturally appropriate ways (Maguraushe and Mukuhlani, 2014). Although modernity weakened the extended family arrangement (Gwenzi, 2023), it is still a cultural requisite that an aunt should have a greater role of uniting two families during a marriage ceremony.

Table 6.3: Sources of knowledge about sexual and reproductive health

Category	Frequency
Health club	2
Mother	3
Grandmother	4
Aunt	2
Friends	1
Clinic	1
Relatives	1
Sister	1
Classmates	1
None	16

Source: Research fieldwork, 2024

Given that participants mostly learned about SRH from adults and the elderly, such knowledge was infused with moral capacities concomitant with the dominant feminine

discourse of girlhood requisite to transitioning to adulthood as a woman in indigenous African cultures. It was evident that participants' representations of SRH knowledge revealed an understanding of the legitimacy of SRH choices in relation to appropriate expression of sexualities within the local culture. Despite making sense about SRH knowledge in an individualising context, participants were aware that such knowledge interweaves with cultural expectations of looking forward to getting married. Ndewashe (17 years) said:

> *Yes, I know it [SRH knowledge] will help me in future. I am not doing anything of that sort [making SRH choices] right now, but I know it [SRH knowledge] will help me in the future.*

Bourdieu (2001) argues that, in a sexually differentiated social order, the transmission of information to adolescent girls mostly occurs below the level of consciousness such that their descriptions correspond to dominant discourse instead of transformation. This study argues that suppressed consciousness among participants was compounded by a lack of an enabling environment. As the study area was typically rural, most participants lacked access to diverse epistemic resources for developing an imagination of their social worlds. Although the internet revolutionised the spread of information in the 21st century, accessing the digital technology by adolescent girls in rural areas of Zimbabwe remains marginal due to high costs of internet and smartphones.

Semiotic and discursive structures enabled the researcher to interpret participants' expressions of SRH knowledge within specific socio-cultural, historical and institutional contexts. The researcher observed that there were several billboards erected strategically along major roads and in some selected wards. The billboards had logos of the Government of Zimbabwe, Chimanimani Rural District Council and World Vision Zimbabwe. From field observations, billboards provided valuable insights about the dominant ideology enacted by the authority in raising awareness of SRH issues among adolescent girls in the study area. As shown in Figure 6.1, underpinning the content on the billboards was a proposition that children and young people in Chimanimani District must be free from all forms of abuse and sexual violence.

Figure 6.1: Messages against young people and child abuse and violence
Research fieldwork, 2024

Drawing on semiotic and discursive structures, billboard A shows the strategic use of capital letters in written text at the top in setting the agenda:

REPORT ALL FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE TO YOUR NEAREST POLICE STATION

This was reinforced by other imperative statements as commands to people in the community to co-operate with the law enforcement agency:

It takes you & me to end sexual violence against children
LET US WORK TOGETHER TO #ENDCHILDMARRIAGES.

The Government of Zimbabwe (2020) set a target to reduce all forms of abuse from 35% to 10% by 2025 among the vulnerable population and increase the percentage of reported cases of violence to responsible authorities from 5% to 30% during the same period. On the left, the image of a girl gazes at viewers. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) assert, such a gaze symbolises the demand from the viewers to enter into some form of imaginary relation with them. In this case, the image of a girl symbolically expresses the situations of girls in the community of being at risk of abuse and sexual violence.

Notably, although sexual violence was the major topic on the billboards, it was not mentioned by participants among the types of SRH knowledge listed in Table 6.1. This knowledge gap is a major concern because lack of knowledge about sexual violence is a barrier, in itself, to seeking help. In addition, the major objective of the authority to erect billboards was to rein in sexual violence in the study area.

It was noted that perceived threats of sexual violence in the study area varied between adolescent girls and government agencies or NGOs. Upon asking for their views about the reason why sexual violence was the major topic on the billboard in their area, one of the participants in the FGD responded:

We don't know the reason why they put it there, but I think they saw something.

In the communicative theory, Jürgen Habermas argues that the construction of the subjective world among young people follows from the process of socialisation to identify the meaning of institutions in an objective attitude, such that actions may be interpreted symbolically (Habermas, 1987). Given that the messages on the billboards were more interested in adults, it is construed that the authorities did not perceive it important to frame the content on the billboards such that the message would increase

191

awareness about SRHRs among children and young people. Cheney (2023) observes that adult gaze often obscures the need to consider young people to participate in aspects which shape their lives. The written texts on the billboards drew symbolic boundaries between authority and young people in discussions on SRH. Steinberg and Kincheloe (2010) argue that procedures, techniques and methods used to engage the community are imbued with power. In this case, young people were categorised as victims who should be mere recipients of help.

The interviews revealed that the education curriculum was one of the important sources of knowledge about SRH among adolescent girls. The majority of participants mentioned that they received some lessons about SRH at school. Shalom (16 years) remarked that:

I heard about sexual and reproductive health. We learnt about it at school.

Shalom acknowledged that indeed SRH was taught in school, although she was not interested in discussing what she knew about SRH. Her reason was that she was not doing anything related to SRH decision-making. It is of concern that there was insignificant contribution by the school system to social transformation among adolescents in SRH matters.

Despite a long history of formal education on sexuality in schools in Zimbabwe, the incorporation of SRH into the curriculum is a recent phenomenon in conformity to international standards. The researcher noted that sexuality education was a topic in the Guidance and Counselling syllabus. Guidance and Counselling was not an examinable subject. This partly explains the reluctance of participants to open up on discussing SRH. The Education Amendment Act (No. 15) of 2020 provides hope for society to legally recognise SRHRs of young people. Fairclough (2010) argues that the ways teachers and students perceive the curriculum is determined by the social interaction between the state and schools. The illocutionary force of the education system manifested in curriculum development might give insights into how schools were prepared to teach adolescents about SRH in ways which would conscientise them to claim their dignity and integrity in SRH decision-making.

6.4 EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

This section explored experiences of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Participants variously responded to the questions about experiences of SRH decision-making. Given that the majority of participants mentioned that they did not know about SRH, it had been permissible to categorise them as a social group which is being-at-risk and at-greater-risk (Masquelier, 2020). As highlighted in section 6.3, interviews confirmed gaps about SRH knowledge among participants. This suggests that participants were susceptible to misconceptions about SRH, thereby increasing their vulnerability. However, the analysis focused on understanding how adolescent girls positioned themselves in telling stories about experiences in SRH decision-making in different contexts. Participants weighed their decisions on SRH against the opportunities available to them.

Marygold, who was 19 years at the time of fieldwork, got married at the age of 17 years as soon as she finished O-Level. The partner was also 17 years old. From her story, she did not face challenges to articulate her interests to her boyfriend before they stayed together as husband and wife. Marygold's major concern was on getting tested for HIV first. She convinced her boyfriend to accompany her to the clinic:

> Interviewer: How did you encourage your boyfriend to get tested for HIV?
> Marygold: I spoke to him very nicely and softly.
> Interviewer: But main issue is about trust. How did you convince him without creating conflict?
> Marygold: Of course, one can disagree. The reason why one cannot agree is that maybe he is aware of what he is or is afraid of his past experiences. That's the cause of conflict. We were together for many years. We became more familiar with each other's character. It was not hard to talk to him.
> Interviewer: OK, how did you actually convince him?
> Marygold: I said if you want to marry me, let's go to the clinic, that's the first thing. If you don't want, we cannot continue with the relationship.

Hambayi, who was 19 years at the time of fieldwork, got married at the age of 16 years to a partner aged 26 years. She was not yet ready to get married. However, Hambayi

had already decided to discontinue school. Marriage provided her with a convenient reason to withdraw from school.

> *When I got married, I found the reason (marriage) which aligned to my desire to drop out.*

Hambayi's situation got complicated because her relatives disapproved the marriage. She was struggling by herself on matters which she perceived to receive support from relatives. There was also conflict with her partner. Hambayi mentioned that her partner had changed his attitude towards her. In a study in Tanzania, Schaffnit et al. (2021) noted that marriage was one of the alternatives considered by adolescent girls in life plans.

Peer pressure had been truncated with experiences of SRH decision-making. Drawing from an interview with Gakarisinamunyu (17 years), peer pressure negatively affects adolescent girls' abilities to make informed SRH choices:

> *He was 20 years…I was 16. At that time, I was young and overwhelmed by peer pressure to have that boyfriend.*

Previous studies noted that peer pressure is one of the major factors which influence girls' SRH choices (Chikoko, 2023; Wamoyi et al., 2019). It can be construed that peer pressure acts as a form of domination which tacitly undermine the autonomy of adolescent girls on making decisions about SRH. The influence of peer pressure on SRH choices among adolescent girls is more explained by non-epistemic values. In studies carried by Kyegombe et al. (2020) in Uganda and by Wamoyi et al. (2019) in Tanzania, participants mentioned that girls succumbed to peer pressure partly to express a fashionable lifestyle and to uphold modern lifestyles. Within this reasoning, girls are impulsive in the face of material rewards in relationships. Kaler (2006) highlighted that elders in Malawi believed that increased penetration of money in social life contributed to unrestrained desires and envious comparisons among girls. In this context, decisions on SRH could be only monitored on the basis of a gender discourse which perpetuates inequality and domination. This would increase the risk of abuse and exploitation of girls in sexual relations. Society should support adolescent girls through promoting social justice and human development.

Additionally, despite being 17 years, Gakarisinamunyu's reminiscence of the experience of SRH decision-making increased her awareness of power imbalances embedded in patriarchy. Ebrahim (2019) argues that the hetero-patriarchal ideology limits the bargaining power that girls have in intimate relationships and even in situations which cause violation of their SRHRs. In recalling her past intimate relationship, Gakarisinamunyu stated that she felt deceived because the young man appeared to be serious for a long-term relationship. The following conversation illustrates Gakarisinamunyu's experience in SRH decision-making:

> Interviewer: Can you share your experiences of SRH decisions you made?
> Gakarisinamunyu: Yeah, I can say I met a boy who acted as if he loved me so much to make me sleep with him. I learned a lot from that relationship. If it happens that another boy will propose love to me in future, I will not give in as I did before.
> Interviewer: What are your regrets?
> Gakarisinamunyu: What I regret is that he left me when I was no longer a virgin and I am happy that he did not impregnate me…I would be destitute with a baby alone.

This study highlights that Gakarisinamunyu (17 years) realised her choice was manipulated in the decision-making process. Gakarisinamunyu developed a sense of betrayal and feelings of being violated her integrity and was also happy that she did not become pregnant. This finding corroborates Ebrahim's (2019) observations that women and girls who reported that they were deceived in sexual relations expressed a sense of violation as well as feelings of betrayal and disrespect. This suggests that adolescent girls' experiences of SRH decision-making do not only incite legal questions, but they also have socio-economic and political implications.

The study results suggest that age is inextricably related to the capacity to make choices. From the capability approach perspective, choice denotes the freedom to choose (Basu and López-Calva, 2011). Adolescence is categorised as a developmental phase in which adolescents are still maturing for socio-emotional and cognitive capacities (Sawyer et al., 2018). Drawing from an evolutionary perspective, Stanley G. Hall is credited for conceiving the age-based category of adolescence which is characterised by experimentation, consciousness about individual freedom

and also as a period to discipline adolescents into healthy adulthood (Linders, 2017). This underscores that adolescent girls' decisions on SRH are frequently viewed with scepticism. As discussed in section 6.3, most of the participants mentioned that they were advised by elderly women to make SRH choices when they are mature, especially when seeking marriageable partners. The notion of maturity is often used to evaluate young people's decisions on SRH.

The study results indicated maturity featured as a counter-demarcation of young age. In an interview with Melody (19 years), who was married, she described maturity as the competence to make SRH choice on the basis of attaining 18 years. The idea of maturity is further illustrated in the following conversation with Melody:

> Interviewer: From your opinion, can you tell me what makes girls more vulnerable to SRH problems?
>
> Melody: What causes girls to be vulnerable these days is misbehaving while still young. What I mean by misbehaving is to have boyfriends before they reach the appropriate age.
>
> Interviewer: But how can they know that they are not yet at the appropriate age?
>
> Melody: [Laughs] To be regarded as mature, she must attain 18 years and above. She would personally feel that ummm right now I am mature. It's now appropriate to have a boyfriend.

From the above conversation, it is interesting to note that the description of maturity did not only defy an essentialist explanation of adolescent girls' SRH choices, but also have moral and legal connotations. The words 'misbehaving' and 'appropriate' are important to understand how adolescent girls construe competence in SRH decision-making. Legally, girls are legally empowered to consent to sex and marriage after reaching 18 years in Zimbabwe. Eighteen years is also the age for attaining full rights as an adult in Zimbabwe. Therefore, an individual has freedom to make SRH choices. In addition, initiating sexual life at a young age implied misbehaving. This finding is corroborated by Matswetu and Bhana (2023) who noted that adolescents, in Shamva District in Zimbabwe, described premarital sex as *misikanzwa* (immoral behaviour). As highlighted by Abdurahman, Assefa, and Berhane (2023), patriarchal societies groom young people to consider marriage as the socially acceptable institution to initiate sexual life. In doing so, adolescents are often viewed through the discourse which

prioritises protectionism over empowerment (Cheney, 2019; Cobbett, 2014). While protecting adolescents in SRH decision-making is fundamental, it is necessary to create enabling conditions for developing capacities to have control of SRH decision-making in a meaningful way. By creating enabling conditions, the capacity to have control of SRH decision-making should be responsive to adopt an action-oriented perspective of social transformation.

This study observed that participants' capabilities to interpret experiences of SRH decision-making were not only shaped by age. Interestingly, education was another variable which determined adolescent girls' interpretation of experiences of SRH decision-making. Level of education had a strong bearing on differences in capabilities to reflect critically on experiences of SRH decision-making among participants. There were some participants of the same age who were at different levels of education. For example, there were participants who were in Form 2, 3, 4 and 5, but all aged 17 years. Taking into account differences in levels of education, certain variations in intellectual capacities were observed among adolescent girls in terms of defining their values, preferences and ambitions in life. It had been noted that participants who had reached upper high school were more likely to assert their choices in terms of personal preferences and those with lower levels of education interpret their choices within the dominant hetero-patriarchal discourse.

> *No sex before marriage. I was taught by my mother and aunt to have self-respect* (Shamiso,17 years, Form 5).

> *I look down upon having sexual relations before getting married and I have a high standard of choice of who I want to be my marriage partner* (Zvinei, 18 years, Form 4).

> *Some friends can pressure you to date someone, but if you also use your mind, you can sift through the discussions and pick what is only beneficial. Premarital sex is not beneficial. So, I don't take advice that is not beneficial. I know I want to succeed at school, so I also use my mind to differentiate what's good from what's bad* (Silvia, 18 years, Form 3).

It is customary for girls to plan for the future with marriage in mind. In Shona culture, girls are socialised to acquire beliefs about marriage which have symbolic and ritual significance (Matswetu and Bhana, 2023; Muyambo, 2022). It is also important to argue that emphasising abstinence and marriage by girls indicated an expression of the internalised value system. As such, the internalised value system is not adequate to establish how participants perceived and framed their experiences of SRH decision-making. According to ZIMSTAT and UNICEF Zimbabwe (2019), based on data from women aged 20 – 24 years, 34% of girls were married under 18 years in Zimbabwe. UNICEF Zimbabwe (2023a) estimated adolescent pregnancy prevalence at 24%. This evidence shows the harsh realities and circumstances experienced by adolescent girls. Following the capability approach, empowerment of adolescent girls must prioritise the contingency of the processes and factors which enable and constrain their abilities to pursue their goals which are valuable (Frediani, Clark and Biggeri, 2019).

From interviews, the study found that economic challenges were also influencing adolescent girls' experiences of SRH decision-making. It is argued that poverty has negatively impacted on the social fabric of society and adolescents' goals in Zimbabwe. As such, some adolescent girls lacked motivation and self-regulation as they engaged in risk behaviours. For example, despite justifying that having a boyfriend was necessary, Ruvimbo (17 years) engaged in a relationship which was exploitative. She remarked:

> *Okay, I realised it was okay for me to have a boyfriend because sometimes he helps me with money for my needs. I wouldn't get help if I was just alone, but there is nothing good that I am experiencing.*

Despite developing negative attitudes towards the relationship, it can be construed that Ruvimbo (17 years) wanted to continue with the relationship for financial support. This indicates that experiences of some adolescent girls in SRH decision-making did not always suggest lack of knowledge, but they revealed a complex situation. Ruvimbo entered in a transactional sexual relation knowingly for monetary gain. In a study in Malawi, Nash et al. (2019) found that some girls engaged in unprotected sex with men and boys knowingly in exchange of money. In a study in western Kenya, Thiaw et al (2024) found evidence disputing the claim that girls were mainly motivated to engage

in transactional sexual relations for financial support. They found that there was general consensus among all participants that transactional sex was merely a customary behaviour.

An interview with Tariro (17 years) also revealed financially motivated sexual relations:

There are some of my former classmates who had early marriages. They are saying you are wasting your time to go to school, it's no longer paying these days. Look at us, we already have kids while you are still going to school. But I know a number of them who did not stay long in their marriages. They returned to their parents.

Based on the study in seven countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, World Vision International (2019) noted that some adolescent girls took risks sexual relations in exchange of money with men or boys. SRH choices of adolescent girls are troubled by inequalities embodied in notions of masculinity and femininity which reinforce gender-based double standard performances (Tolman, Davis and Bowman, 2015).

During interviews, some participants revealed that some girls were living in family settings which exposed them to succumb to unintended pregnancy and sexual violence. During one of the interviews, Rukudzo (19 years) remarked that:

Some girls stay with step-mothers…in situations like that, some step-mothers find men for girls to have sex with and they are the ones who get paid.

In a national study in Zimbabwe, UNICEF Zimbabwe (2023a) revealed that adolescent girls who were pregnant or already mothers were mostly from households headed by a single parent or were in the care of non-biological parents. In addition, the same study noted that many adolescent girls lacked parental guidance and supervision which, in turn, increased their vulnerability to sexual abuse because the parents or caregivers were spending most of the time away from home, either they migrated or working in informal sector.

6.5   CONTROL OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE DECISION-MAKING

This study argues that control of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls is more about the expression of power relations than manifestation of social identities. As such, understanding adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making may require consideration of the social and historical context which either enables or constrains the availability of alternatives. This section draws on participants' narratives to understand how discourse shapes meanings about control of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls. Enabling voices of adolescent girls was central to view them as individuals with particular capabilities in SRH decision-making which could be realised in multiple contexts. The intersectionality theory articulates that marginalised social groups face obstacles when choosing from alternatives due to multi-layered forms of domination (Crenshaw, 1991).

The representation of SRH decision-making in this study was mostly based on the concepts of functionings and capabilities advanced in the capability approach (Robeyns, 2017; Nussbaum, 2000). The analysis of texts showed that some participants lacked epistemic capacities necessary for developing self-regulation and control of SRH decision-making. This could be attributed to lack of access to shared epistemic resources due to power imbalances. Pohlhaus (2017) argues that power imbalances shape circumstances which determine the rules of influence on shared epistemic resources such as information, education, legislation and health care. Following the Foucauldian genealogical perspective, power is persuasive such that it does not only suppress, but also produces individuals. In this context, participants sometimes produced testimonies which were subordinating (Pohlhaus, 2017). The case of Mazvita (19 years) demonstrated the influence of power imbalances on adolescent girls' capacities to have control in SRH decision-making. Mazvita got married at the age 16 years after she was convinced by her partner that she was pregnant. Her partner was 28 years old. Mazvita abruptly stopped going to school while in Form 2. The conversation below elaborates how Mazvita lacked the capacity to choose whether to get married or not:

> Interviewer: Was marriage the reason for your withdrawal from school?
> Mazvita: Yes, I was in Form 2, that is when I got married.
> Interviewer: Why did you choose to get married?

> Mazvita: I was pregnant.
>
> Interviewer: Was it planned?
>
> Mazvita: No, it wasn't.
>
> Interviewer: Did you seek advice from anyone you trusted to understand your situation?
>
> Mazvita: From the time we started dating, my partner had already shown that he wanted to marry me. I did not get the chance to talk to anyone about my situation.

Butler (1997:351) argues that speech or utterance does not merely serve as a medium for communicating abstract ideas, but it also enacts the message it communicates, such that "the communication itself is at once a form of conduct." Following a feminist theory, male power in SRH decision-making is exercised and reinforced through patriarchal structures and heterosexual practices (Molyneux et al., 2020). It is indicative that Mazvita might gleaned her perception of control of SRH decision-making in the constellation of socialisation, patriarchy, gender roles and lack of comprehensive sexuality education. In addition, Mazvita's reaction to her partner's attitudes corroborated the indigenous African patriarchal norm that a pregnant woman must obey her sex partner's claim of paternal responsibility. Patriarchy portrays men as the principal instigators of SRH decision-making and the subordination of women (Motschenbacher, 2018). Mazvita's compliance to her partner's acceptance of the pregnancy and acquiescence to her boyfriend's proposal to marriage also served as a marker of the cultural value embedded in marital decisions in rural Zimbabwe. In Shona traditional culture, it is said *gomba harina mwana*. This means that the male partner must take responsibility of all children born by his female partner either in a marriage or in a union. Mazvita indicated that she was determined to work hard for the success of the marriage. When asked whether she was proud of her husband and marriage, she remarked:

> *Yeah! you can say that.*

As shall be discussed further in Section 6.6, Mazvita eloped to her partner against her father's willingness to support her to go back to school. Although she mentioned that she was experiencing some conflicts in the marriage, Mazvita believed that getting married was a good choice. In a study in Bali, Horii (2021) noted that girls were getting

married as children in order to manage backlashes associated with early sexual relationships and unintended pregnancies.

This study argues that ASRH and its etymologies can be understood by looking at the influence of multifaceted dimensions of power on decision-making. The emphasis on the multifaceted dimensions of power was important to interpret not only who prevails in SRH decision-making, but also on how power either enabled or constrained adolescent girls' abilities to make choices (Bacchi and Bonham, 2014). Schubert (2021) asserts that power in decision-making influences formation of subjectivities in struggles against domination. Adolescent girls like Mazvita lack the illocutionary force of problematising their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making through language. For example, it appeared that Mazvita did not have the capacity to make her choice known by her partner that she was not yet ready to get pregnant, given that she acquiesced to getting married based on what her partner told her.

Findings also revealed that participants interpreted control of SRH decision-making as determined by the dialectical relationship between context and social action. As highlighted in Section 6.3, some participants argued that SRH knowledge is relevant only if one is engaging in reproductive activities. Thus, knowledge about SRH was interpreted as necessary in the appropriate context. Put simply, some participants believed that one can have control of decision on SRH when done in appropriate context even without much knowledge about sexuality. Such reasoning placed more importance to the role of social relationships in determining one's capacity to exercise control of SRH decision-making.

Additionally, interpreted control of SRH decision-making as a practice which enables girls' capabilities to communicate their choices and ensures that they are respected in any situation. In this context, adolescent girls are able to participate in SRH decision-making when their choices are respected. For example, despite refraining from acknowledging knowing about SRH, Mabhiyadho (19 years) was confident that she had the ability to have control of decision on SRH.

     Interviewer: What do you know about SRH issues?

Mabhiyadho: Ummmm I don't know anything about those things. I did not do anything. I learned about SRH issues at school but I forgot [laughed].

Interviewer: You don't have to forget.

Mabhiyadho: [Laughed] No I will not get to the point of being deceived.

Interviewer: Isn't that you forgot?

Mabhiyadho: That's why I joined the research so that I know about these issues.

Although Mabhiyadho showed self-determination to have control of decision on SRH, it is difficult to discern whether her perceptions were based on being legally an adult or a reflection on lived experiences. This is crucial in getting insights into whether Mabhiyadho foregrounded her understanding of control of SRH decision-making through language or power constraints. As an adolescent girl, Mabhiyadho had her own mental representations of the capacity to have control of SRH decision-making. The texts confirmed Mabhiyadho's voice which symbolised a moment of resistance to hegemonic heterosexual relations and a rendition of passivity frequently associated with girls in discussions on SRH. Moreover, the discursive construction of control of SRH decision-making had been partially mediated by the context in which the researcher engaged participants.

Drawing from Fairclough's CDA, the texts uttered by Mabhiyadho could be represented as propositions, but they also had an expressive dimension on how she made sense of the motive of the conversation. The point of text implicitly conveyed the meaning that Mabhiyadho ought to be seen as an adult by articulating a sense of autonomy in decision-making appropriate for her age. Furthermore, Mabhiyadho's acknowledgement of the importance of SRH knowledge might also be interweaved with her reflection on gender as performative which creates a divided subjectivity in response to regulatory norms for the kind of image perceived appropriate for girls in social interactions, in general (Akurugu, 2021; Butler, 2009). As Fairclough and Fairclough (2018a) point out, people have duties, commitments and obligations to adhere to norms and rules within social structures.

Focus group discussions revealed that participants wished that their rights, as girls, must be respected in increasing their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. The move from individual agency to structural factors demonstrated by

participants suggests that control of SRH decision-making is not merely a reference to appropriate behaviour. Also, it shows how adolescent girls perceived hegemonic social practices affecting their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. Following Fairclough's CDA, paying attention to the interconnectedness of experiences with broader social, economic and historical realities is significant in expanding our understanding of how social actions are both conditioned and affected by structures (Fairclough, 2010). In FGDs, participants highlighted the influence of family dynamics in shaping their capacities to make decisions on SRH. One of the participants explained:

> *It's like being forced to marry because of pressure from parents. Some families go to those churches where girls are married off to men who are well older than them while still young…that's their culture.*

6.6 CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Much has been written about adverse SRH outcomes which undermine girls' functionings and capabilities to pursue the lives they want (Woollett et al., 2021; Warria, 2018). Although SRH problems are a public health concern in Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe, 2016), this study suggests that understanding adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making is also useful for getting insights into how adverse SRH outcomes impact on their well-being. As highlighted by UNFPA (2022), supporting adolescent girls through education, livelihoods and employment, society creates alternatives which enable them to avoid early marriage and teenage pregnancy. Nussbaum (2000) asserts that human well-being constitutes a range of capabilities and functionings which justify the moral claim that individuals must lead innovative, creative and healthy lives. In addition, lack of control of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls is a violation of human rights and SRHRs, in particular. This section focuses on examining the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls. Specific attention had been paid to the following dimensions of human development: standard of living, education, health and human security.

6.1.1 Standard of Living

Participants mentioned economic challenges and poverty in the family as creating certain deprivations hindering them from making decisions on SRH freely. The study results also revealed that lack of sustainable livelihoods was one of the major challenges affecting capacities of households to provide conducive environments for girls to have the freedom to pursue the lives they wish. During FGDs, participants highlighted that lack of options to meet economic needs could cause adolescent girls to take risky SRH choices. In one of the FGDs, an unmarried participant portrayed material resources as a requisite for developing the kind of confidence necessary for making a decision which is meaningful to one's life. She remarked:

> *I think sometimes you need resources when making decisions on SRH, of which you or your family can't afford them.*

It is indicative that participants viewed unavailability of goods or resources as one of the major challenges affecting their capacities to make decisions on SRH that are fundamental to the lives they want. Woollett et al. (2021) also noted that lacking of enabling resources had impacted on adolescent girls' capabilities to cope with circumstances which increase their vulnerabilities to unintended pregnancies and child marriage in rural Zimbabwe. World Vision International (2019) noted that girls were engaging in sex for money in order to meet their needs and even to contribute household resources.

In the human development context, standard of living stresses the importance of functionings and capabilities for improved human well-being. Standard of living is not merely based on the distribution of income or wealth, but also on how income enhances individuals' freedom to choose the lives they want. This implies that functionings are achievements in standard of living and they are more connected to addressing inequalities between individuals or groups in improving well-being (UNDP, 2019). Addressing inequalities in capabilities and functionings among individuals or groups is fundamental to promoting social justice in human development (Anderson, 2010). This study suggests that focusing on adolescent girls' decisions on SRH as solely determined by the desire for money is controversial. In addition, it would be a generalisation which obscures the correlation between capacity to earn an income and freedom to make decisions on the lives they want.

During adolescence, adolescents develop autonomy, but still require protection and oversight (Woollett et al., 2021). The historical sequence of policy and legislative reforms in post-colonial Zimbabwe indicates the construction of childhood categorises any person under 18 years who still depends on adults and the State to have a decent life. As such, laws and policies which regulate the accumulation of household income and wealth do not allow children to be active economically. This had been explicitly stated in the Zimbabwe's Child Amendment Act (No. 8) of 2023. The Child Amendment Act (No. 8) of 2023 represents the modern economic order and civilisation which remove children from the pool of labour-force responsible for household income and wealth accumulation.

The concern at stake, in this study, was to understand the living standards of participants through the lens of the capability approach and have a multifaceted understanding. A narrow focus on income may lead to a distorted understanding of the contribution of SRH decision-making to adolescent girls' well-being. Krisch et al. (2019) points that the assertion that girls engage in sexual relations for the need of money relegated adolescent girls to a level of desperation such that it is difficult to understand the circumstances which influence their decisions. Other studies have noted that girls interpreted their SRH choices within dominant discourses of gender relations (Matswetu and Bhana, 2023; Wamoyi et al., 2021).

Although poverty restricted girls' options for achieving the lives they want, the findings revealed that participants' decisions on SRH were more influenced by certain patriarchal gender norms. Drawing on data gathered through interviews, many participants believed that a proper decision on SRH must prelude to marriage. This corroborates the finding by ZIMTAT and UNICEF (2019) that Zimbabwean society still holds strong belief in marriage since it is nearly universal. High levels of child marriage had been noted in Southern Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa and Western and Central Africa, estimated at 30%, 35% and 41%, respectively (Sully et al., 2020). As such, getting married was viewed by participants as an ultimate which might not necessarily appear as an outcome of the decision-making process. In contexts in which girls are seen as a liability to the family, marriage might well be seen as natural a role and as one of the key strategies for dissipating challenges to social and economic reproduction (Chan et al., 2023). As a result, child marriage reinforces

obstacles to adolescent girls' capabilities to participate in the formal labour force thereby reproducing the intergenerational poverty cycle.

Interviews with participants who were married are important to elaborate on the connection between SRH decision-making and living standard. This study noted that married participants were experiencing the SRH challenges with no oversight from adults. In addition, child marriage negatively affects the ability to accumulate wealth and assets. It is important to mention that married participants revered the marriage institution and were determined to support their households in order to improve their economic situations. Although these participants prioritised marriage over education given their young age, this study suggests that there is need to interpret such decisions within the context in which they were socialised gender roles. In rural Zimbabwe, markets are dysfunctional and money does not circulate in a capitalist fashion to enable wealth accumulation. To reproduce income, people mainly concentrate on relationships which sustain livelihoods such as labour migration.

Mazvita (19 years) got married while she was 16 years old and the partner was 28 years old by then. She mentioned that she did not go beyond Form 2. Mazvita had two kids during the time of the fieldwork. Mazvita got married upon discovering that she was pregnant. When she eloped to her partner's homestead, her father tried to persuade her to go back to school without success. According to her, the father was very disappointed by her choice and gave up on his idea to encourage her to go back to school. She mentioned that the fact that she was pregnant complicated her situation, such that she was supposed to make a decision which would disappoint either her father or partner. Mazvita chose to stay with her partner against her father's advice to prioritise education over marriage at that time. She said that it was a tough decision because she had been above average at school. If given another chance to go back to school, Mazvita was confident that she would pass at least five Ordinary Level subjects required to do a diploma or to proceed to Advanced Level.

It is intriguing that Mazvita still harboured the idea of continuing with education. Several challenges were hindering her from going back to school. The major challenge was the family's lack of financial resources for supporting her education. She said:

The money we earn from piece jobs is not enough to cater for family needs and my school fees. I once joined adult school for seven months, but I dropped out as I struggled to pay school fees.

However, her father had already given up on sending her to school. Also, she now had increased responsibilities as a mother and wife. She said:

I once did a vocational course and my partner was very supportive. He was the one who took care of the kid [by that time they had one kid] in my absence. We persevered, but people were mocking him saying you spend the whole day with a kid at home while other men are out working for their families.

Melody was another participant who got married at a young age. She wished to improve her life while in marriage. After finishing Grade 7, Melody (19 years) was told by her parents that they no longer afford to send her to secondary school. She stayed at home and later married at the age of 16 years. She declined to disclose the age of her partner when she got married. Given another chance, Melody was planning to do a vocational course. The major constraint was lack of financial resources. When asked about how supportive her partner was to the idea of doing a vocational course, she said:

No, I did not talk to him about it, but I am motivated to do a vocational course. I thought that I would be stressing him because he does not have the money. I once joined a women's group where we were taught sewing lessons. I can sew clothes and other things, but right now I don't have the material and the sewing machine.

Melody's interpretation of her family's economic situation was that marriage was not an obstacle to pursue the life she wanted. Instead, she perceived that marriage hugely changed her social life. Melody mentioned that her social status and relationship with her biological parents improved as they were now consulting her on family matters. She remarked:

Life has changed for me from the time I got married. My parents did not have money back then even for food, but now it's better. We are now helping

each other with money for food when my partner got his earnings from piece jobs.

UNFPA (2023) asserts that the fixation with families as formed around predictable nuclear family structures obscures the fact that they are by nature cooperative. Despite economic challenges and child marriage, it is indicative that Mazvita conceived the idea of family through the ability to sustain social relationships with people in her circle. Her understanding of marriage created conditions of cooperation with parents. Ironically, marriage enabled Melody's capacity to sustain the support system. This finding resonates with Adeagbo's (2019) observation that most adolescent mothers in Johannesburg in South Africa got support from immediate family members. In the process, marriage somehow improved Melody's ability to influence the dynamics of her life in interactions with immediate family members. Based on the intersectionality theory, Yuvas-Davis (2006) asserts that social categories are naturalised in the processes of determining entitlement to certain resources and social relationships.

Although Mazvita's portrayal of her marriage gives a positive image, the challenges of improving her family's standard of living showed the harsh consequences of child marriage she endured during the transition to adulthood. The World Bank (2017) highlights that teenage marriage constrains girls' agency and limits the bargaining power in decisions on distribution of household resources. Studies have shown that adolescent pregnancy and child marriage deprive girls with opportunities to have flourishing lives (World Bank, 2017; UNFPA Zimbabwe, Ministry of Health and Child Care & Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council, 2016). According the UNICEF (2021d), the fact that the marriage of a child is in itself forced, it is a reality that the adult responsibilities performed by married girls denote child labour. Furthermore, adolescent girls lack parental skills. In a study in rural Zimbabwe, Woollett et al. (2021) observed that whereas adolescent girls perceived that they were aware of parenting skills, they mentioned feeding and bathing only as the characteristics of a good mother. This indicates that community-based support of adolescent mothers is essential for enhancing capabilities to cope with parental responsibilities.

6.1.2 Education

The findings revealed that most of the participants were aware about the importance of education in their lives and also the role it plays to improve their well-being. From the interviews, this study established that all participants who were still in-school wished to pass their studies and then pursued professional courses. For example, Shamiso (17 years) who was doing Form 5 mentioned that her ambition was to study for a degree in Crop Science. Given the support she was being provided by her parents and siblings, Mazvita was determined to pass her Advanced Level examinations. Some participants who were out-of-school were keen to supplement the subjects they failed at O-Level and others wanted to pursue vocational courses.

During FGDs, there was agreement among participants about the importance of education in one's life and they highlighted that many reasons for dropping out were generally beyond adolescent girls' control. In FGDs, participants revealed that many girls were not willingly dropping out of school or failing to proceed to post-secondary education. In addition, participants mentioned that lack of school fees *per se* was not the major reason for dropping out of school. Instead, unfavourable environments placed too much pressure on girls and strained their capacities to develop the mental state ideal for concentrating on school work. In one of the FGDs, a participant explained:

> *Staying in school is not only about affording school fees, but also having material resources [zvikwanisiro] to compete with other students in learning. Lack of educational resources would create distractions and cause one to have low self-esteem. This, in turn, might lead to harbouring thoughts of dropping out. So, obtaining material resources in time boosts the confidence of girls to make their choices freely.*

In the domain of SRH, participants highlighted that comprehensive sexuality education is significant to develop healthy relationships. During FGDs, participants argued that sexuality education should prioritise girls' rights in increasing their control of SRH decision-making. Participants believed that rights are important to foster respect between partners and also to avoid misunderstandings of girls' decisions by parents and the community. As indicated in Section 6.4, the curriculum is currently limited to

influence adolescent girls' socio-cognitive processes of making informed decisions on SRH knowledge which reflect their preferences. However, there is hope that education on adolescents' SRHRs will be strengthened and supported through the Education Amendment Act No. 15 of 2020. As such, adolescents would develop epistemic capacities to participate in deliberations on issues which have a bearing on their lives. Globally, education featured prominently in strategies for empowering girls (Chan et al., 2023; Cobbett, 2014). There is dialectical relationship between education and SRH. Violation of SRHRs has detrimental impacts on educational outcomes among adolescents. In Zimbabwe, it had been noted that pregnancy and marriage are the major reasons of girl dropouts in both primary and secondary schools (MoPSE, 2022). It had been estimated that sexual violence contributes threefold to the risk of being absent from school among girls, globally (World Health Organisation, 2020b). Investing in girls' education has a huge potential to increase the ability to make informed decisions on SRH, enhance alternatives and is also important for social transformation.

Adolescence is associated with the transition from childhood to formal workforce which is enhanced through investments in education (Malhotra, Amin and Nada, 2019). Abuya et al. (2023) argue that the vision of girls' education is to address gender-related obstacles to enhancing skills and opportunities. Official statistics showed that Zimbabwe made significant progress in addressing gender-related obstacles to accessing education. Based on data from the MoPSE (2022), there were 553 233 males and 568 358 females in secondary schools in 2022; which indicates that there are more female students than male students.

6.1.3 Health

This study noted that some participants experienced SRH issues such as teenage pregnancy, childbearing and early marriage. All married participants got pregnant before attaining 18 years. Hambayi (19 years) reported that she got pregnant by the age of 16 years. According to her, she had not planned to get pregnant. The unintended pregnancy caused a lot of stress as her social life abruptly changed to adjust to new roles as a wife and a mother. Hambayi mentioned that her relatives scolded her to the extent that she felt shameful and chose to stay with her partner before she prepared for her new life. Given the challenges she encountered in

marriage, she acknowledged that her life would be much better had she stayed with her parents. It is apparent that Hambayi felt rejected by her parents and experienced social isolation. Studies had shown that pregnant adolescents mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa lost support and opportunities to improve their lives because they are quickly forced to get married (World Vision International, 2020; UNICEF, 2015). Lack support and social isolation increase obstacles to access SRH services which impacts on the attainment of universal healthcare.

Teenage pregnancy and early childbearing have been identified as one of the major SRH problems among adolescent girls, globally (UNFPA, 2022). In Zimbabwe, UNICEF Zimbabwe (2023a) notes that 70% of interviewed adolescent girls generally agreed that pregnancy is a problem, yet the majority professed ignorance about specific health problems associated with adolescent pregnancy. This is a cause for concern, given that more than a third of maternal deaths in Zimbabwe occur among adolescent girls aged 10 – 19 years (UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2023b). In a study in Türkiye, Sezgin and Punamaki (2020) found that early childbearing posed severe risks to mental health problems among adolescent girls like anxiety, depression and social dysfunction. Masquelier (2020) highlighted that evidence from Niger show that many maternal deaths among adolescent girls are more attributed to lack of access to modern health care than young age.

Participants highlighted that STDs constituted one of the major SRH issue affecting adolescent girls in the study area. Sexually transmitted diseases are a global public health problem (Zheng et al., 2022). According to participants, lack of comprehensive education on SRH exacerbated the risk of having unprotected sex. The lack of comprehensive education on SRH was illustrated by Rukudzo (19 years):

I can say fear or being shy is what can put one at risk in sexual relations.

Additionally, participants mentioned that girls as young as 16 years were lured by older men to have unprotected sex in exchange for money. The ward is located near the Chiadzwa diamond fields. Nyamunda and Mukwambo (2012) noted that transactional sex increased phenomenally after the discovery of diamonds which increased cases of STDs and unintended pregnancies in Chiadzwa in Mutare Rural District and also in the neighbouring districts.

The fear of STDs among participants indicates the operation of dominant power relations in restricting adolescent girls to access economic and social resources for creating healthy lives. Investing in health services effectively reduces human suffering from diseases. It is important to support adolescent girls' agency within the communities in which they live to influence strategies which enhance capabilities for improved healthy lives. While lack of comprehensive education on SRH negatively impacts on adolescent girls' freedom to make choices, this study noted that participants were not taking SRH information seriously. From one of the interviews, Rudo (17 years) said:

> I don't know much about it (SRH issues), but I only know that there are sexually transmitted diseases which can infect someone when he or she has unprotected sex.

This also study observed that dominant ideologies influenced adolescent girls' beliefs which were central to how they made representations of SRH information in social interactions. Participants upheld moral judgements which deprive them from critical reflection on vulnerability in SRH decision-making. For example, Tebbie (16 years) remarked:

> If you are immoral (misikanzwa) you can get an STD.

The finding about the relationship between STD infection and immorality corroborates the evidence by Dadzie's et al. (2022). Drawing from DHS data in Sub-Saharan Africa, Dadzie et al. (2022) observed that more adolescent girls and young women who were not married were likely to report that they had once infected by STD than those married. Many participants had deep respect of marriage and regarded premarital sex as *misikanzwa* (detailed discussion in Section 6.4). Marino (2022) highlights that sexual objectification in everyday life raises questions about identity, well-being and capacity to consent because it influences how the treatment of others is viewed whether it is morally wrong or problematic. Adolescent sexuality is generally characterised by lack of freedom to critique norms and misconceptions around decisions on SRH. As such, it is problematic to attribute cases of STD infections among adolescent girls to mere immorality. While studies had shown that levels of knowledge about STDs among adolescents significantly increased in recent years

213

(Koray et al., 2022), youth aged 15 – 24 years account for highest rates of STD infection, developing countries (Yuh et al., 2020).

In the Zimbabwean context, the connection between the spreading of STDs and immorality has an historical antecedence. Mawadza (2004) points out that having an STD has been historically treated as a consequence of an immoral act. In addition, gender discriminatory discourses often conceive girls and women as the major carriers of STDs in Zimbabwe, giving gender-based views about stigmatisation. In Zimbabwe, the women's movement interpreted the risk of STDs infection within the broader context of violence against women (Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association, 2018). The connection between human rights and morality in SRH matters also got the attention of policy and law makers (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 2021). The question of associating STDs and immoral acts became doubly enmeshed in legal determination of behaviour in sexual relationships. At the time of writing this thesis, Criminal Laws Amendment Act (Protection of Children and Young Persons) No. 1 of 2024 criminalised sexual relationship between an adult and person under 18 years and deliberate infecting a child with an STD, including HIV. However, Ferguson, Emoto and Gruskin (2024) observed that Zimbabwe does not have specific laws which explicitly state the government position on accessing social services for SRH. Instead, SRH services are recognised as a segment of a general medical care with very limited scope.

A plethora of studies reported that the dynamics of adolescent girls' decision-making on SRH do not always suggest lack of knowledge about risky sexual practices (Bhakuni, 2021; World Vision International, 2019; Plourde et al., 2016). For example, Nash et al. (2019) found that, in Malawi, girls engaged in unprotected sex with men or boys knowingly, in exchange for money. Tolman, Davis and Bowman (2015) highlight that adolescent girls' decisions on SRH are troubled by inequalities embodied in notions of masculinity and femininity which reinforce gender-based double standard performances. The performances are interwoven with material demands and they are also power constructs of ideals which are based on preferred gender roles. In a patriarchal system, the discourse of boys to be tough and expected to prepare for the future role of the provider as heads of households creates dominant relations which put adolescent girls at risk of unintended pregnancy and early childbearing (Aroussi,

2020). As such, the patriarchal system reinforces inequalities and domination such that girls remain socially excluded from accessing SRH services and information which is significant to improve their well-being. Girls who get pregnant are deprived of opportunities to develop capabilities to pursue their valuable life goals.

6.1.4 Human Security

Notwithstanding that SRH decision-making presents special challenges to adolescent girls and increased vulnerability to adverse SRH outcomes, participants highlighted priorities which were important to SRH decision-making and well-being such as dignity, safety, opportunity and agency. Participants mentioned that girls expected equality in SRH decision-making. As such, girls must not be pressured or forced to have sex and get married. In FGDs, participants highlighted that one must choose to get married without being forced. A participant in one of the FGD said:

> *Ok, it helps that you can choose what you want in life without being forced.*

In doing so, participants emphasised that partners must be open to each other about health status. The reasoning was that inequalities placed girls at increased risk to STDs, including HIV. In an FGD, a participant explained:

> *If I have my boyfriend, I must not sleep with him before marriage. And, we should first go to the clinic to get tested.*

Participants interpreted marriage as an institution which can give girls protection from undesired sexual advances from men in diverse social interactions. Also, participants pointed out that marriage must not be pre-eminently a men's decision. Rather, they suggested that decision-making should be viewed as a process which serves to reinforce solidarity, support and care in marriage.

From the FGDs, it was noted that adolescent girls made meaning about control of SRH decision-making as embodied in building harmonious relationships (*kuwirirana*). It appeared that adolescent girls also interpreted control of SRH decision-making as the ability to communicate one's preferences and interests. This was seen as important to forming consensual relationships and avoiding conflicts. In one of the FGDs, a participant explained:

It will be good [building harmonious relationship] because you will not blame anyone. Each has to make an informed choice.

Certainly, the fact that romantic relationships and marriage must be consensual shaped girls' beliefs, perceptions and attitudes towards abuse and sexual violence. In addition, as shown in Figure 6.1, the messages on billboards showed that the Chimanimani Rural District Council and NGOs raised awareness about abuse and sexual violence and prioritised the safety and protection of young people in SRH decision-making. However, as highlighted in Section 6.3, participants professed ignorance about the rural district council's reasons for erecting the billboard in the research site. This finding supports Apatinga and Tenkoranga's (2022) observation that victims of sexual and domestic violence in Lower Manya Krobo District in Ghana expressed concerns about seeking help from the government authority because they were facing numerous challenges which were not adequately within the judiciary system. The intersectionality theory suggests that protection from violence is not adequate; it is also necessary to address multi-layered forms of domination which intersect with vulnerable people's lives to create obstacles to choose from alternatives (Bond, 2021; Crenshaw, 1991).

Given this paradox, it was necessary to discuss sexual violence with adolescent girls in FGDs. Such discussion was important to understand how adolescent girls conceived sexual violence. The FGDs revealed that sexual violence was understood as coercion, manipulation and deceit akin to denial of bodily integrity. Also, it was noted that participants construed sexual violence as an act which happen in a relationship, especially when there is lack of respect of each other. Thus, participants suggested that they wanted education on sexual violence which enhances the reverence of Ubuntu/Hunhu. From an Ubuntu/Hunhu perspective, harming others indicates that a person lacks proper upbringing (*kurerwa*) and socialisation or grooming (*kurairwa*) of acceptable and expected social conduct (Makuvaza, 2017). Children are expected to demonstrate cultured manners (*hunhu, tsika*) in their interactions among themselves and in their conduct with adults. As shall be further discussed in succeeding sections, narratives about teenage marriage and unprotected sex revealed deep-seated problems of abuse and violence against adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

Congruent with previous studies (Kataya, Nyamhanga and Mosha, 2023; Lyn, 2022; Olamijuwon and Odimegwu, 2022), this study suggests that adolescent girls face challenges in protecting themselves from predatory sexual advances and forced marriages largely due to young age. The interpretation of sexual violence, among participants, was not much a concern about physical force, but more attributed to fear of being infected with STDs in the wake of domination in SRH decision-making. This indicates that participants lacked comprehensive information around the violation of their SRHRs. From a feminist theoretical perspective, participants demonstrated the normalisation of male power and aggression embedded in heterosexual discourses about gender and sexuality (Hlavka, 2014). Furthermore, lack of knowledge about sexual violence had far reaching implications to enjoying healthy lives and achieving gender equality as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the absence of improved gender equality in SRH decision-making, adolescent girls are not able to transform capabilities for enhanced agency in their lives.

Additionally, participants' positive perception about safety within the community obscured their consciousness about the need to prioritise personal dignity and integrity. During FGDs, participants indicated that the local community provided a safe environment for adolescent girls such that threats or incidences of rape were not frequently encountered. There was agreement among participants adolescent girls were in many ways safe when going to school or playing around with friends. This indicates that government interventions to ensure safe communities were positively impacting on curtailing cases of rape and sexual abuse. The Government of Zimbabwe adopted a heavy punitive approach to deal with rape. The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Amendment (No. 10) of 2023 repealed Section 65(1) to set out a mandatory 15 years in jail for crime of rape committed in aggravated circumstances and 5 years for cases which do not show evidence of aggravating circumstances.

Human security is vital for understanding the interdependence of agency and human well-being within the development agenda (UNDP, 2022; Gasper, 2021). This considers the importance of collective decision-making to determine priorities that are fundamental to leading creative and innovative lives. Understanding the context in which risks and threats deprive people of the ability to lead dignified lives and participate in decision-making is important. In doing so, people should have freedom

from fear and want in order to build trustful relationships. In addition, human security enables us to situate the analysis of the notion of crisis in ways which place human priorities at the centre of development.

6.7   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the research findings on the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Although participants mentioned diverse sources of SRH knowledge, this study noted gaps in knowledge about SRH issues among adolescent girls. It is a cause for concern that participants identified SRH issues only relevant to biological and behavioural characteristics. Notably, teenage marriage and sexual violence did not feature in participants' recalling of SRH knowledge. This indicates the limitations of SRH knowledge provided to adolescents. The knowledge gap shows that participants lacked an understanding of SRH decision-making. Regarding experiences of SRH decision-making, participants mentioned numerous factors which constraint their capabilities to exercise agency. Poverty and young age were the major factors which increased the susceptibility of adolescent girls to exploitation in SRH decision-making. Paying attention to connections between SRH decision-making and human development, it had been noted that lack of access to resources or services at family, community and national levels negatively affected adolescent girls' capabilities to pursue valuable lives they want. Providing adolescent girls with opportunities in education, health and income-earning sectors has far reaching impacts on their well-being.

CHAPTER 7: A STRATEGY TO INCREASE ADOLESCENT GIRLS' CAPACITIES TO HAVE CONTROL OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING FOR ENHANCED SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HEALTHY LIVES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Guided by Secondary Objective Four, this chapter presents the strategy developed in this study to increase capacities of adolescent girls on SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives.

7.2 INCREASING CAPACITIES OF HAVING CONTROL OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISION-MAKING

The researcher developed a strategy that utilised theories and methods whose application aimed at a reflexive process of increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making is vital, given high levels of adverse SRH outcomes among adolescent girls had been documented in Zimbabwe (UNICEF Zimbabwe, 2023a). The promotion of SRHRs is frequently done against the background of enhancing the social, physical, emotional and mental well-being of individuals through safer sexual practices, having pleasurable sex and freedom to make choices (UNFPA, 2021). The implementation of the strategy was undertaken with adolescent girls aged 16 – 19 years in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe.

Whereas many controversies associated with ASRH generated divided opinions in Zimbabwe (Sipeyiye and Mpofu, 2022), McCleland (2019) highlights that social science researchers are increasingly adopting critical perspectives to understand the intersection between power and agency when conducting research with vulnerable social groups, like adolescents. In this study, the strategy utilised multiple knowledges, ideas and perspectives as requisite to creating democratic discussions on ways of increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives.

Figure 7.1 shows the strategy used to increase participant adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. The strategy involved various pathways through which adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making could be increased. The researcher adopted PAR, communicative action and the capability approach as methods to engage adolescent girls. The bricolage provided the broader context of utilising the intersectional approach to empower participants in a manner which enhanced their agency and addressed power relations in this study. The research value was to enhance critical dialogue about identities, agency, preferences and self-reflection which are important to the capacity to have control of decision on SRH.
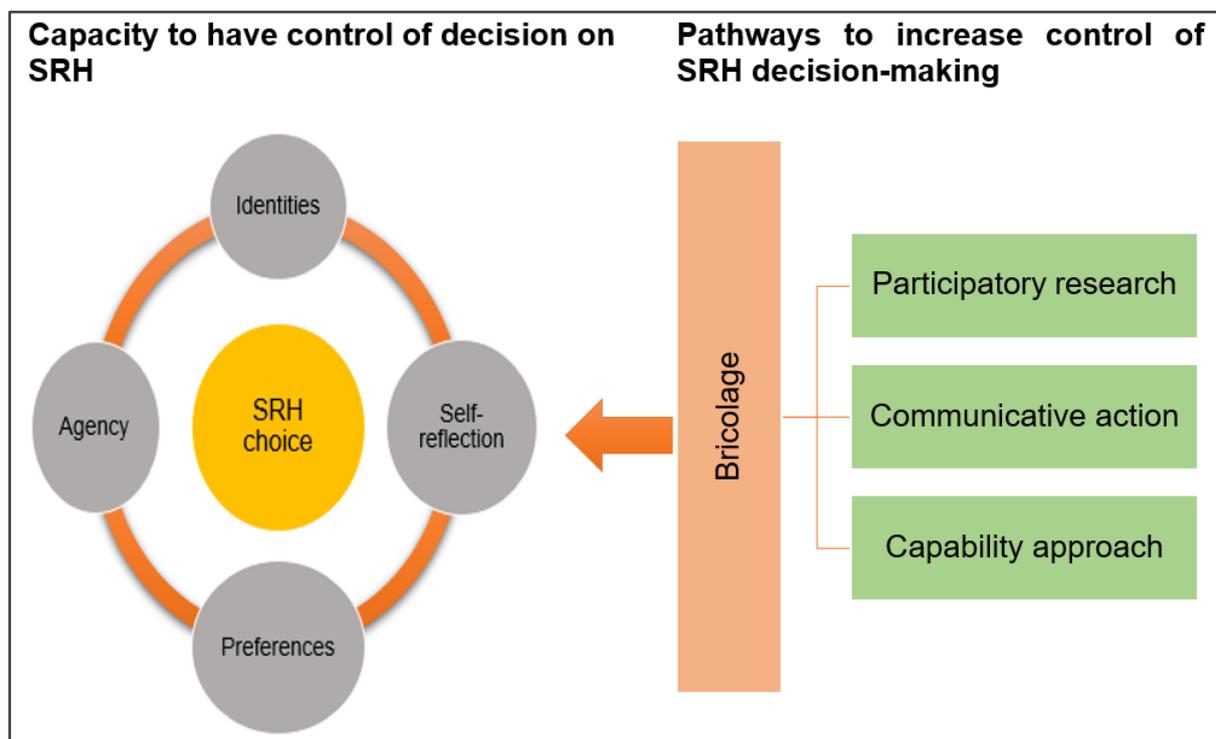
Figure 7.1: Strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making
Research fieldwork, 2024

7.2.1 Bricolage

A theoretical framework was formulated with the aim of using multiple paradigms, theories and methods to develop a strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives (full details in Chapter 2). Adopting the bricolage brought to the fore the fact that

the existing paradigms, theories and methods are influenced by historical moments in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2018). These moments were useful to situate the interpretation of participants' lived experiences and realities in SRH decision-making within a particular social and historical context. As such, the researcher was conscious of how debates on paradigms and theories could have an impact on the construction of knowledge and interpretation of social realities of participants.

The bricolage was necessary so as to have a broader framework for understanding participants' thoughts, beliefs and values in SRH decision-making. In doing so, the focus was to go beyond the public health goal of universal access to comprehensive SRH knowledge to encompass discursive practices of sharing such knowledge with adolescent girls. As Russell (2019) highlights, decisions on methods for researching on sexualities with adolescents might be based on designing a study which is centred on voices of participants such that these voices are usable for social transformation. This was significant to the strategy because of multiple barriers encountered by adolescent girls to accessing comprehensive SRH knowledge in Zimbabwe (Maziwisa, 2021), despite the political rhetoric of equity and universal healthcare.

With regard to bricolage, the research process involved tinkering theories and methods available to make participants' agency visible in the construction of knowledge about the phenomenon under study. In doing so, participants not only feature in gathering data, but they are also actively involved in generating data (Mudau, 2018). It was imperative to consider multiple theoretical perspectives in having a critical analysis of the struggles of adolescent girls to choose the sexual and reproductive lives they want. Given that vulnerable populations are often construed as hard-to-reach groups in research, the use of a single paradigm, theory or method was viewed as inadequate to provide theoretical and methodological tools for understanding SRH choices of participants. For example, while feminist theory is particularly concerned with female oppression, its theorising of SRH decision-making is more interested in adult-centric perspectives of female agency (Kangaude and Skelton, 2018). Notwithstanding its limitations, the bricolage had much to offer in developing creative ways of piecing together participants' beliefs and perspectives about SRH decision-making. In this context, Habermas' communicative theory aided

in creating a public sphere for critical reflection on the research practice (Kemmis, MacTaggart and Nixon, 2014).

Additionally, a reflexive research process was vital for making decisions on how to address the relationship between theory and social action, as determined by the purpose, to achieve the tasks at hand (Fayard, 2018; Mudau, 2018). As the research team worked towards achieving the purpose of the research, the emphasis was on understanding the importance of collaboration and networking. Specifically, methods were used in innovative and creative ways to draw on various epistemic resources and social networks in response to changing circumstances. The researcher-as-bricoleur took advantage of the symbolic capital to facilitate networking with participants and relevant stakeholders in the study area. For example, the ward councillor provided assistance in organising the research team. As such, the bricolage provided philosophical perspectives for engaging in social transformation. In this way, the research was designed in ways which enhanced the researcher to produce contextual knowledge about participants' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making and improved well-being.

7.2.2 Participatory Action Research

As shown in Figure 7.1, the PAR process was integral to the implementation of the strategy in this study. This study considered PAR as the appropriate research design to enhance transformative participation of adolescent girls in producing knowledge that is pertinent for understanding their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. The idea of transformative participation involved empowering adolescent girls in a holistic manner which transcends the binary description of how the researcher interacted with participants. This study suggests that understanding the authenticity of participation could be derived from the dispositional sense of building trustful relationships. Lenette (2022) cautions that participation which leads to participants' full participation is not always achievable in all contexts and the researcher must be wary of actions which might create exploitative relationships. Given the centrality of collaboration in PAR, a research team consisted of the researcher and five co-researchers acted as a decision-making body which deliberated on modalities for interaction in the research. In addition, it was necessary to be transparent on how

power dynamics which affect the relationship between the researcher and participants were addressed.

Gaventa (2021) argues that strategies which address the influence of power should focus on actions which both bring marginalised voices into the public domain and create mechanisms for protecting participants from backlash. The researcher was guided by PAR's epistemological perspective of enabling the process of building mutually beneficial relationship between the researcher and participants. To acknowledge the indispensability of relationships, the interaction between the researcher and participants took place within the social structures which provided the social and historical context for discussing adolescent sexualities in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Thus, the researcher first established a relationship with gatekeepers partly to bring the phenomenon under study to the attention of the local community. In doing so, the researcher held meetings with the ward councillor and headman.

The researcher had initially planned to use the legal definition of a child in Zimbabwe when organising discussions with participants. According to the Children's Act (Chapter 5.06), a child refers to any person below the age of 18 years. The researcher began with the assumption that the law could set the precedence and used for the same purpose to put participants into distinct categories of childhood and adulthood based on the 18 years old cut-off point to discuss SRH issues. Co-researchers co-ordinated interviews composed of participants aged 16 – 19 years. Participants preferred to be identified by the co-researcher. The fieldnotes below illustrates one of the researcher's observations during the face-to-face interviews.

> As I reflected on the ability and effort of adolescent girls, especially those under 18 years, to participate in research, I was concerned about alternative ways of empowering them to influence the process of gathering data. During one of my visits to the research site to carry out face-to-face interviews, it became clear to me that the presence of co-researchers was fundamental to other participants' willingness to be interviewed. As I arrived in the research site to carry out interviews with adolescent girls recruited by the co-researcher Marygold, I spent at least an hour waiting to meet the co-researcher at the place she had directed me. The participants later came as a group to where I was waiting for them. The co-researcher addressed

everyone present and introduced me to other participants. I briefed the participants about the purpose of the research. I interviewed each participant at a distance from where others were seated (Fieldnotes of interviews with participants, 20 October 2022).

Again, participants were not comfortable to be divided into distinct groups based on age during FGDs. Participants liked the logistics of organising FGDs to follow the same coordination used during the stage for inviting participants for interviews. Again, co-researchers were responsible for mobilising participants for FGDs. Thus, FGDs were characterised by a mixture of participants, regardless of whether one was above or below 18 years. In this way, participants challenged the researcher's assumption in a way which improved democracy and increased their capacities to assert the kind of relationships they want within the research context. Section 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child articulates that children and young people must be given the opportunity to speak for themselves freely in line with their age and maturity.

Respecting participants' interests set the researcher against the ideological dilemma of protecting young people in the public domain. By considering the best interests of participants in a group situation, the emerging dilemma was not addressed by focusing on personalities, character or adherence to the detachment of the researcher from the interacting with participants as accentuated by the positivist paradigm. Instead, the democratic practice adopted empowered participants to act as interlocutors. Cheney (2023) indicates that establishing respectful relationships with young people in research is important so as to facilitate participative democracy and an enabling environment which is beneficial to meaningful participation. As a bricoleur, the researcher utilised PAR to address the epistemological contradiction of getting fixation with a single identity while interacting with participants in research. As highlighted in Chapter 2, the fractured moment provided methodological perspectives of considering multiple identities in order to promote inclusiveness, participative democracy and also to avoid imposing an objective thought when establishing relationships with participants.

While the bricolage enabled both the researcher and participants to navigate multiple positionalities (Gary and Holmes, 2020; Wamba, 2017), it is construed that the way

participants organised themselves resembled the idea of African feminist construction of identities which seeks to provide alternatives to western conceptions of masculinities and femininities (Dery, 2020). Participants viewed themselves as culturally obligated to give each other solidarity, support and advice when engaging in discussions on SRH with an adult male researcher. Chilisa, Major and Khudu-Petersen (2017) highlighted that through African ontologies of relatedness and connectedness, participants can develop consciousness about oneself, belongingness and responsibilities to one another. Furthermore, it is indicative that this decision took the form of the representation of African indigenous systems of gender relations in sharing SRH knowledge (detailed discussion in Section 6.3 in Chapter 6). In the same breath, by the researcher's own admission, it had been noted that participant adolescent girls were genuinely friendly and cooperative during the recruitment, data gathering and data analysis.

7.2.3 Communicative Action

According to Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2014), communicative action describes the conscious and deliberate effort to forge collaboration and consensus on the language which might be appropriate to mutually understand one another's perspectives in a particular situation. Engagement in communicative action was generally important to sharing stories of lived experiences and realities about the phenomenon under study. The local vernacular was used as the medium of communication when engaging participants, key stakeholders and members of the community. Along with using CDA, a communicative action was important to create a democratic space for addressing power relations in research.

As Jürgen Habermas articulated, communicative action represents consciousness about the influence of hermeneutical structures such as tradition, culture, language and power. These hermeneutic structures influenced discursive construction of knowledge and formation of interpersonal relations (Urquhart et al., 2020; Long, 2017). Pattman (2015) argues that engaging young people in research should be thought of as a social encounter. In this way, interviews and FGDs were liminal spaces on which discursive practices of participants were displayed. The idea was to foster self-reflection, transformation and freedom among participants in discussions on aspects which affect their lives. This implies that the research process not only served to

225

emphasise the ethics of participation, but it also encompassed the social action of increasing the capacity to participate. The process of deconstructing power relations which frequently shape discussions with young people about SRH pertinent to achieve their life goals was crucial for enabling participants to open up.

Additionally, communicative action was used to conscientise participants about the role of discourse to the enactment of norms, laws and policies which have direct bearing on adolescent girls' control of SRH decision-making (full details in Section 4.8 in Chapter 4). As noted in Chapter 6, most participants became aware of SRH through socialisation. In many cultures across the world, socialisation of adolescent girls about SRH takes place within structures which ascribe gender roles between men and women. For example, regulation of adolescent sexuality in Zimbabwe often seeks to portray the agency of adolescent girls as an embodiment of sexual innocence (Matswetu and Bhana, 2023). Therefore, emphasis on discourse was important to demonstrate the fractured nature of understanding the influence of intergenerational relations in SRH decision-making. By bringing together participants in a collaborative process, the research established a dialogical and respectful process which was centred on participants' voices.

Furthermore, the significance of adolescent girls' agency has been generally critiqued outside the purview of discursive practices which shape their capacities to participate in research. By taking discursive practices into account not only improved participants' capabilities to engage in critical dialogue and self-reflection on their lived experiences, but it also aided in making sense on the challenges to utilisation of epistemic resources within local social structures (Horii, 2021). It is argued that epistemic resources are crucial to enhance girls' capacities to participate in deliberations on aspects which affect their lives. For example, increasing knowledge about SRH can be useful to delay early pregnancy, early childbearing and child marriage (UNFPA, 2022a). This attests to the significance of promoting education on SRH based on the empirical evidence of the inverse relationship between SRH knowledge and fertility (Bora, et al., 2023; UNFPA, 2023).

While the study acknowledged the fundamental role of knowledge to adolescent girl's well-being, it was important to understand how power determined adolescent girls'

capabilities to participate in SRH decision-making when choosing the lives they valued. The researcher created a pedagogical context for going beyond the deterministic perspective of knowledge to consider the intersection of multiple views about adolescent sexualities. In view of the postmodern period, grand narratives reinforce the influence of dominant ideologies on marginalising voices of vulnerable social groups. Storytelling produced situated knowledge which facilitated the interpretation of participants' capacities in multiple contexts of political economy, ideology, sexuality, culture, gender and race (Susen, 2015). As noted in Chapter 6, some participants prioritised marriages over education. This study argues that a single theory is not adequate to understanding such a decision.

This study argues that power relations shape thought patterns and discursive practices in SRH decision-making. Using Fairclough's model of CDA, stories and narratives of participants were interpreted in relation to social structures which enforced customary norms and gender roles. The researcher also drew on semiosis to understand hidden power which puts constraints on utterances in discussions on the phenomenon under study (Fairclough, 2018b). The historical moment of the modernist phase, discussed in Chapter 2, informed the understanding of adolescent girls' social realities using an interpretivist paradigm. The notion of *verstehen* introduced during the modernist phase enabled the researcher to use interpretive theories to make sense about participants' social realities in a social and historical context (Walia, 2015).

Additionally, critical theories offered analytical tools for interpreting participants' narratives, with the intention to contribute to social transformation. Following Paulo Freire's notion of conscientisation, critical pedagogy was crucial to conscientising marginalised adolescent girls about agency in SRH decision-making. The strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making required some critical analysis, given that its primary focus was about finding ways of solving adverse SRH outcomes for social justice. This study used critical dialogue as a genre of empowering participants to engage in a praxis which brought their experiences of SRH decision-making to the public realm. The purpose of critical dialogue was not just to share knowledge for the sake of accumulation, but also to create the context for raising critical consciousness about struggles of young people to participate in decision-making.

It would be detrimental to empowering adolescent girls in SRH decision-making by adopting a paternalistic attitude towards their capacities to participate. This does not imply that adolescent girls should not have respect for adult guidance in SRH decision-making. Underlying this argument is the evidence that the high prevalence of SRH problems among adolescent girls is mainly attributed to lack of capacity to make choices freely and have control of those choices (UNFPA, 2021; UNAIDS, 2019). Hence, as indicated in Figure 7.1, the researcher used the bricolage to tinker methods and instruments which enhanced critical dialogue. Considering multiple dimensions of well-being, it was necessary to ensure that participants developed critical consciousness about the need to go beyond single-minded focus on gender roles in SRH decision-making. Critical consciousness represented a key process of facilitating transformation by empowering marginalised adolescent girls through awareness of historical origins of injustices and oppressions in SRH decision-making involving them.

Fairclough's CDA was used to reflect critically on how the behavioural change model was instrumental in the interpretation about expectations of adolescent girls' participation in SRH decision-making in Zimbabwe. While the logic of the behavioural change model was premised on facilitating to change attitudes among adolescents, its implementation drew heavily from the dominant dependency model of childhood in Zimbabwe. As such, adolescents' decisions on SRH were seen as external to social relationships which were understood to be facilitating the spread of HIV. It placed much emphasis on behavioural change with limited focus on empowerment. Yet adolescent girls' SRH choices metaphorically mimicking dominant sexualities in Zimbabwe, thereby increasing their exposure to sexual exploitation. As highlighted in Chapter 6, all never married participants mentioned marriage as indispensable to SRH decision-making and they were looking forward to getting married at a certain stage. While it is understandable that the AIDS education was specific to a particular epidemiological situation, the findings revealed that SRH knowledge among adolescent girls remained too narrow in scope to enable them to understand multiple layers of domination in SRH decision-making. In this context, the researcher engaged participants to reflect critically on the conditions which affect their realities within the current context.

Furthermore, if the local government and NGOs strictly use adult-centric language to address SRH issues, it would be diminishing to understand the manifestation of sexual violence in intimate relationships. Given the marginalised position of girls, the exploitation of inequalities by those in positions of dominance imposes multiple obstacles to adolescent girls' capacities to reflect on how their rights were violated in SRH decision-making. As such, girls are further exposed to abuse and violence. While participants showed deep respect for the marriage institution, they were against getting married without being given the opportunity to make choices freely. Thus, they did not want to get into marriages which would condemn them to a low status and expose them to sexual exploitation. The freedom to choose when to get married increases adolescent girls' capacities to stand for themselves in decision-making processes. However, the findings revealed that poverty and economic challenges were restricting options available to adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

7.2.4 Capability Approach

The capability approach aided in critical analysis of how adolescent girls conceptualised the concept of freedom when making SRH choice. As highlighted in Chapter 4, previous studies have shown that adolescent girls faced multiple barriers in SRH decision-making. It was important to explore how adolescent girls made sense of their capabilities to choose the lives they valued. This entails having values which shape one's choice and life goals given the opportunities available. In doing so, the capability approach was useful to identify adolescent girls' agency in SRH decision-making within the context of empowerment.

Bearing that this study embraced multidimensional views about well-being, the capability approach enhanced a holistic understanding of freedom to choose and also the social networks which they count on for support (Robyens, 2021). It had been revealed, in Chapter 5, that adolescent girls were mostly counting on mothers, grandmothers and aunts as the important members of their social networks which provided support in SRH decision-making. This study considered voice, knowledge, capital, and control as important capabilities fundamental to participate in SRH decision-making. Figure 7.1 shows a set of *a priori* characteristics identified which have direct bearing on adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. The findings presented in Chapter 6 showed that participants had already

assigned identities, had preferences, were able to engage in self-reflection and perceived to have agency on participating in SRH decision-making. The strategy enabled participants to draw from multiple identities when self-reflecting on their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. Therefore, the capability approach set the context for considering the intersection between empowerment and social justice in research (Nussbaum, 2002).

7.3 CONDITIONS WHICH SHAPED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

Discussions on SRH decision-making with adolescent girls in this study faced a series of cultural, legal, professional and social challenges. Whereas inviting children and young people to participate in research is a delicate ethical issue, their right to be heard on aspects which have direct bearing on their lives is enshrined in human rights standards articulated at international, regional and national levels. This section examines the conditions, and their intersections, which shaped the implementation of the strategy in this study. The following conditions shaped the context in which the strategy was implemented: supportive host community, cultural representation of relationships, innovation and creativity and adolescence.

7.3.1 Supportive Host Community

A supportive host community was indispensable to the implementation of the strategy implemented in this study. The undertaking of the fieldwork began with approaching the local leadership as a courteous gesture of acknowledging their jurisdiction over the study area. Adult support was also important both to guide social conduct and to enhance protection of participants in line with the local community's value systems and decision-making bodies. Protection in the form of gatekeeping had a bearing on accessing the research site and participants, in particular. The researcher paid respect to the traditional leadership and held consultative meetings with the ward councillor in the elementary phases of the fieldwork. The traditional leadership acted as cultural capital that was pertinent to address perceived hidden agendas, unequal power and conflicting interests in the process of forming social networks and establishing collaboration. Underpinned by the methodological assumptions of the fractured moment, there was the need to concentrate on multiple perspectives in dissipating misunderstandings often associated with the fixation of single identity.

Additionally, gaining permission not only required the cooperation, but also the commitment of gatekeepers to provide support when needed. It was a paradoxical fact that being an insider greatly increased the researcher's ability to reach mutual understanding with gatekeepers. The implementation of PAR was anchored in facilitating active engagement of key stakeholders to determine the conditions of collaboration. The ward councillor supported the strategic planning by organising the venue for meeting and coordinating adolescent girls who became co-researchers. As such, the way the research process was designed placed the researcher in close contact with the host community and participants.

The fact that the researcher had to seek permission from gatekeepers implied the respect of the host community's worldviews, values systems and beliefs. This also ensured that the research process was not detached from the structures which gave meaning to social relationships. Thus, the support provided by the councillor, headman and adults partly influenced participants' perceptions about interactions with the researcher. This is because adults exercised some control over narratives about the kind of SRH knowledge deemed appropriate to share with young people in Zimbabwe. It can be construed that various stakeholders found it relatively easy to support the study because the government tolerates discussions on SRH with adolescents in schools. In addition, the rural district council was actively involved in raising awareness about SRH issues the study area.

7.3.2 Cultural Representation of Relationships

Apart from determining the objectives of the study, it was clear that the researcher had to set a precedent over the conduct of participants during the implementation of the strategy. At the initial stages, the researcher encountered some challenges in eliciting engagement which was desirable for meaningful participation of adolescent girls. It was challenging to solicit comments and cooperation from co-researchers in the initial phases of the PAR process. Initially, co-researchers assumed that they were only to take instructions from the researcher. The researcher sought to diverge from the assumption of using neutral language about adolescent girls' ability to participate in research as a way to develop critical insights into the role of social justice in knowledge production. It was essential to foster a sense of responsibility and reciprocity in ways

which acknowledged adolescent girls' agency and capabilities through delegating leadership roles.

In addition, the researcher's actions of establishing relationships with participants were partly implicated in general perceptions alive in the public domain about personal motivations and interests of men who hold discussions on SRH decision-making with adolescent girls. Thus, the researcher was entangled into power relations the study sought to understand. Having adopted PAR, the researcher facilitated critical reflection on how the researcher and participants could draw on multiple identities in response to emerging circumstances. It was also plausible to integrate indigenous ways of building relationships between adults and young people. In this context, any eligible adolescent girl was embraced as competent and part of the group despite differences in interests in the research. As such, earning the confidence and commitment of adolescent girls was fundamental to sustain relationships in this study. This was enhanced through enabling voices of participants in research. enabling voices of participants illustrated the significance of paying more attention to adolescent girls' ways of being, doing and knowing about social interactions with adults. Also, involving co-researchers in strategic planning provided the opportunity to address awkward situations where the researcher had to turn to co-researchers for solutions to specific challenges.

7.3.3 Innovation and Creativity

The researcher adopted innovative and creative approaches to facilitate an enabling environment for interactive engagement with participants. Using multiple data collection methods and tools was vital to enhancing the social interaction between the researcher and participants. As explained in detail in Chapter 5, data gathering took place in an interactive research context. Participants were given the opportunity to choose to participate either face-to-face or virtual.

The use of digital tools for enhanced recruitment process and data gathering originally emerged from thinking of having a diverse range of research techniques appropriate to this study in order to overcome challenges of accessing people during COVID-19. The country was put under lockdown in line with World Health Organisation guidelines soon after the detection of first cases of COVID-19 in early 2020 (Mashe et al., 2021).

After becoming aware of the implications of lockdowns, the researcher proposed to rely more on digital tools to recruit participants and to gather data. Also, the utilisation of digital tools in research to ameliorate the challenges created by COVID-19 gained increased institutional support (Higher Health and Universities South Africa, 2021; Meyiwa, 2020). The researcher gained knowledge from webinars conducted by UNISA on training students about guidelines to carry out research within the situation created by COVID-19. Students were recommended to use digital tools to collect data. While the researcher gained theoretical perspectives of using digital tools, it was the first time to plan for virtual data collection. The researcher was also concerned about the use of digital tools in discussing SRH decision-making with adolescent girls. There was the risk that the use of digital tools was going to be overshadowed by dominant narratives which frequently paint such interactions as controversial or even immoral (Sipeyiye and Mpofu, 2022; Scott et al., 2020; Marume, Maradzika and January, 2018).

From the review of the literature, the researcher noted that some studies used digital tools to recruit participants and to collect data (Bueddefeld et al., 2021). Using digital technology significantly contributed to the transformation of the participation landscape in research. Drawing on the post-experimental historical moment discussed in Chapter 2, context and intuition were fundamental to adopting innovative approaches to the use of digital tools in data collection in response to the prevailing reality created by COVID-19 pandemic. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlight that the researcher-as-bricoleur engages in intensive self-reflection on the past in order to understand the present situation when making decisions on achieving tasks at hand in an unpredictable future. In doing so, the plans for recruiting participants and data gathering were mainly determined by the digital tools available. The proposed digital tools to recruit participants and to collect data were WhatsApp and Short Message Service (SMS).

By the time the researcher began the fieldwork in July 2022, the situation had dramatically changed. COVID-19 restrictions were already relaxed in Zimbabwe. People were relatively free to travel outside their homes and to physically participate in social gatherings. As a result, the research context abruptly changed to permit the researcher to interact face-to-face with participants. It was necessary to reflect

critically on the initial plan crafted around the dominance of digital tools in data gathering. The researcher became conscious of the significance of reflexivity in qualitative research in relation to context. Drawing on the postmodern moment, it was necessary to experiment with tools for gathering data in a manner which was adaptive to emerging circumstances. The researcher adapted the research process to suit the changing circumstances. Therefore, the recruitment of participants and data gathering were done using virtual and face-to-face.

7.3.4 Adolescence

Doing research with adolescent girls which involved a component of SRH decision-making had manifold meanings in Zimbabwe. First, adolescent sexuality is highly sensitive and a taboo subject. Adolescents are expected to learn about SRH decision-making in highly compartmentalised settings such as marriage, families, health institutions and churches (Mpofu and Salawu, 2021). The embodiment of moral utterances in discussions on SRH with adolescents can reinforce the assumption that increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH choice for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives is generally unnecessary. Second, policies categorise adolescent girls' participation in discussions on SRH decision-making in vulnerable terms which reinforce the misrepresentation of decisions on SRH as maladaptive social actions. Therefore, adolescent girls' interests in discussions on SRH decision-making may not be trusted.

It is important to highlight that participants displayed different attitudes towards the phenomenon under study. During the interviews with participants, the researcher observed that there were expressions among participants that their views were neither important nor be taken seriously. On many occasions, participants preferred to respond to some questions in ways which did not permit the researcher to continue with the conversations. Some participants were not comfortable talking about certain SRH issues and were not willing to continue with the conversations. The following response from Rufaro (19 years) illustrates how dominant discourses impact on adolescent girls' perceptions about engaging in dialogue with a male researcher on SRH decision-making. When asked to share any SRH decisions she made freely, Rufaro remarked:

To be honest, I can't imagine what you want to know.

In some cases, participants appeared suspicious of the researcher's motives for discussing a topic about SRH decision-making. As both an adult male and an insider, the researcher had expected that the phenomenon under study would trigger scrutiny and suspicion among the participants. The researcher gave participants the autonomy to determine the course of interaction during interviews without deviating from the interview questions. During virtual interviews, some participants asked to discontinue the interaction and preferred to continue face-to-face. The researcher organised to continue the interview face-to-face through the respective co-researchers. The co-researchers were responsible for coordinating the interaction between the researcher and participants. Viewing the importance of practical considerations, the researcher even shared his biographical background with participants, including disclosing his marital status.

In addition, some participants were reluctant to answer some questions about their personal lives. This study drew from the moment of crisis of representation to adopt reflective approaches in order to interpret participants' attitudes and expressions as situated within multiple contexts. Using Fairclough's CDA model, an interdiscursive textual analysis was done to interpret participants' attitudes and actions in interactions.

Some participants were indecisive and concealed their discomfiture. For example, there was an adolescent girl who consented to become a co-researcher, but did not attend the first meeting. After the researcher made a follow-up, the girl asked for more time because of personal reasons. She later excluded herself without giving a reason. In addition, some married participants either withdrew without giving reasons or just gave excuses until the interaction naturally went quiet. It was beyond the scope of this study, to engage the husbands or partners of married participants. Drawing on CDA, participants' texts and social interactions were seen as articulations of different semiotic elements which could be associated with particular social practices and structures (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018a). In such situations, the researcher-as-bricoleur interpreted texts and social interactions as participants' representations of engagement in conversations with adult males.

Furthermore, mindful of the methodologically contested present moment discussed in Chapter 2, it was also important to use an objective approach to interpret the subjectivities of participants during recruitment and data gathering. The researcher was informed by hypothetical assumptions and empirical evidence to make deductive reasoning about the rationale of protecting adolescent girls in research involving discussions on SRH decision-making. It is argued that multiple disciplinary perspectives are used to construct a generic adolescent identity (Shah and Thomas, 2022). Adolescents are constructed as a vulnerable group still developing mentally, psychologically, physically and emotionally (Sawyer et al., 2018). Cognisant to the conceptualisation of adolescence, decisions made by the researcher were responsive to different capabilities and functionings. The researcher assessed participants' attitudes towards questions about the phenomenon under study. This was crucial partly to have an objective standpoint amenable to observations of their emotional and psychosocial state and whether professional counselling services might be required.

7.4   IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy was implemented through a PAR process. It had been envisaged that increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making had socio-cultural and historical significance not only to participants, but also to the whole community. In this way, knowledge produced in this study could be interpreted as having implications to socio-cultural and historical realities of the host community. The implementation of the strategy was discursively accomplished through some activities or processes which actually facilitated interactions within the research context. Figure 7.2 shows specific activities or processes which were undertaken to implement the strategy.

Activities/Processes	Description	How it was achieved
• Consultation process with gatekeepers	• Engaged the district council officials and local community leadership	• Sought permission from district council, conducted consultative meetings with councillor and headman
• Assembling co-researchers	• Established a research team	• Open call through distributing flyers, referral, networking
• Collaboration	• Mutual beneficial relationship between the researcher and participants	• Researcher and co-researchers engaged in strategic planning
• SWOT analysis	• Situation analysis of the research process	• Documentation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the research
• Recruitment of participants and data gathering	• Used innovative and creative approaches to recruit participants and utilisation of data gathering methods	• Formally invited participants through flyers, networking, snowball sampling. Data gathered virtual and face-to-face

Figure 7.2: Evidence of implementation of the strategy

Research Fieldwork, 2024

7.4.1   Consultation Process with Gatekeepers

The ontology and epistemology of PAR informed the researchers in understanding the ways of knowing, doing and being of the indigenous people in the study area. As Chilisa (2020) asserts, drawing on the notion of *Ubuntu* in research with African communities enhances the understanding of participants in their otherness which is never fixed, but open to negotiation. A consultation process with gatekeepers was essential to improve the researcher's responsive to cultural and political dynamics which governed the access to rural communities in Zimbabwe. It also encompassed the familiarisation with the protocol for engaging the hierarchy and obtaining permission to carry out the fieldwork in the study area. Communal areas in Zimbabwe derive their existence from traditional leaders and find political capital through elected councillors.

Acknowledging the ways of doing and being of the host community implies that the researcher was accountable to a range of obligations which were integral to getting

permission from gatekeepers. The researcher showed willingness to be a listener and a learner. The researcher first sought guidance from the ward councillor on how to navigate the process of obtaining permission to carry out the fieldwork in the chosen ward. Following the methodologically contested present moment, the consultation was part of finding solutions to ethical challenges associated with adapting universals within the research context. As highlighted in Chapter 5, the initial plan was to seek permission from the ward councillor. Theoretically, it was possible to get permission from the ward councillor given that councillors hold political power over wards. Such reasoning missed the interface of political power, administrative authority of district councils and custodianship of traditional leaders within the hierarchy of governance of rural communities.

On further reflection, the researcher noted that the headman and ward councillor were key stakeholders in decision-making bodies which had powers over processes of making meaning about identities in social relationships and also in differentiation of social groups in the study area. As such, engaging the community leaders in a manner which authenticated the meanings about the existing protocols for guiding conduct contributed to the success of gaining permission to access adolescent girls aged 16 – 19 years. The involvement of the headman and ward councillor in this study implied that the interpretation of the protocol was not apolitical. Moreover, respecting the hierarchy in the study area strengthened the capacity to work collaboratively with the community and participants, in particular. The gatekeepers were crucial for providing guidance pertaining to the implementation of the strategy. Ensuring safety for vulnerable social groups was accomplished with the involvement of the community.

7.4.2 Assembling Co-researchers

Assembling co-researchers radically raised consciousness about participation of adolescent girls in the research as key stakeholders. By inviting adolescent girls as co-researchers, the research process embraced teamwork and enabled the researcher to adopt a transformative research process. It was a process of learning and inquiry about the extent to which adolescent girls were empowered to be conscious of their capacities to participate in debates on aspects which affect their lives within the local community. One of co-researchers, Marygold (19 years) put it thus:

Yes, I benefited from sharing knowledge because you know some issues you did not know

Cheney (2023) points out that adults often have reservations about capacities and competencies of young people and children taking responsibilities in research due to preconceptions which emphasise vulnerabilities over capabilities. In addition, the positivist paradigm created the idea of universals characterised by dichotomies which separate the researcher from the researched. In doing so, Castro (2021) reminds that scientific knowledge which lacks interest in the meaningful contribution of young people and children to research might be an obstacle to get insights about symbolic resources associated with childhood as a social construct.

Meaningful participation of adolescent girls could be overshadowed by power relations entangled with prejudices which emanate from identities of race, class, age, disability, gender and sexuality. As such, prejudices regarding capabilities of young people in participating in research somewhat reflect symbolic violence. By establishing a research team, the researcher acknowledged the competencies and potentials of participant adolescent girls to actively participate in research. In line with the postmodern period, inviting co-researchers improved critique of dominant universal claims about adolescent girls' capabilities to participate as manifested in multiple contexts of ideology, history and culture.

7.4.3 Collaboration

Collaboration was crucial for creating the context in which the researcher and participants reflected on the impact of positionality and power on achieving intended goals in interactions. Challenges to collaboration in research not only emanated from adult-centric condescending views about adolescents, but also from how adolescents internalised power relations in their interactions with adults. As highlighted in Section 7.3.2 in this chapter, adolescent girls who were co-opted as co-researchers initially expected just to take instructions from the researcher with limited influence on the research process. Stawarska (2017) argues that the scarcity of linguistic resources to gain voice for self-determination is a symbolic manifestation of power imbalances. Although the local language was used in all interactions, co-researchers often encountered the dilemma of taking initiatives due to lack of linguistic resources to

express themselves autonomously before an adult. Using CDA to deconstruct power relations, co-researchers were empowered to take the leading role to invite other adolescent girls to participate in the research.

7.4.4 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis was done to enable the contextualisation of the implementation of PAR in order to sustain the research process. In a participatory study with youth in India, Mathiyazhagan (2020) used SWOT analysis to sensitise and mobilise views for advocacy. SWOT analysis facilitated transparency and democracy in implementing the research process. In addition, SWOT analysis provided the space for making meaning about the social construction of relationships in research. As one of the co-researchers, Shamiso (17 years) remarked:

> *Discussions of these issues help one to develop capacities to make choices without forced*

It is important to highlight that SWOT analysis was not a solution to challenge power relations embedded within structures which influenced discursive construction of adolescent girls' capacities to participate in research. Pincock and Jones (2020) argue that a participatory approach increases awareness about the risk of imposing categories and expectations on adolescents by emphasising on positives and opportunities identified from how they define themselves and see the situation.

7.4.5 Data Generation

Data generation was a process which involved the assemblage of beliefs, perceptions, narratives and memories within a particular context (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2018a). Fairclough (2010) argues that interacting semiotically or communicatively in certain ways in research entails that the social world could be constructed from perspectives of different social actors. This study placed much emphasis on the centrality of participants' voices in data generation. The researcher took into account views about power relations to understand challenges faced by marginalised adolescent girls to participate in research (Pincock and Jones, 2020). In gathering data through PAR, Mudau (2018) highlights that the process mostly stops when the cycle

becomes obsolete, rather than being determined by saturation, which means that no new information could be obtained.

Although adolescent girls' choices to participate in this study were influenced by predetermined identities, the utilisation of PAR was decisive in taking interest in the multifaceted nature of power relations. Adolescent girls' involvement in research was an objectified fact, but much determined by dynamics of the research process. Using PAR, data collection was not a process whereby the researcher retained an identity of an external observer or remained distant from participants. In this context, participants' representations about the phenomenon under study were understood to be influenced by their interactions with the researcher, among themselves, with community members and also with key stakeholders.

7.5   IMPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

One of the major insights which emerged from the implementation of the strategy was its importance to SDGs. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development set the roadmap to transform the world for sustainable peace and human flourishing through partnerships (United Nations General Assembly, 2015). Through SDG Goal 3, the international community seeks to accomplish a world where all people will enjoy healthy lives and improved well-being by 2030. This study developed a strategy for engaging adolescent girls in the study area on increasing their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. The strategy enabled the researcher to develop partnerships with the local community in raising awareness about the significance of empowering adolescents in SRH decision-making. In addition, the strategy created critical dialogue about challenges faced by adolescent girls in the study area. Involving girls in discussions on the connections between SRH decision-making and human development provided an opportunity to question, reflect, and learn about aspects which negatively affect their lives.

Using PAR, the researcher acknowledged the local community's knowledge systems, values, beliefs and worldviews in pursuit of a research which is responsive to the realities of participants. The SDG Goal 16 affirms the obligation to promote societies which are peaceful and inclusive as well as building accountable institutions which

deliver justice for all at all levels. Fostering mutually beneficial relationships with participants in the study area was indispensable to the implementation of the strategy and it also promoted inclusiveness advocated by SDGs. Broadly, engagement in discussions on connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls was also a form of solidarity and care.

Guided by PAR, the strategy implemented in this study ensured an equitable, democratic and inclusive research process. The engagement of adolescent girls was initiated through an open call which encompassed the distribution of flyers. It is argued that the commitment to an equitable and inclusive research process was necessary to embrace indigenous ways of doing and being in enhancing human flourishing. In the African context, Ubuntu is anchored in the responsibility to create inclusive societies which are adaptable to the changing needs of diverse groups. This was congruent with promoting gender equality and empowerment of girls as highlighted in SDG Goal 5. In line with Targets 5.2 and 5.3, empowering of girls to have control of SRH decision-making also contributed to awareness about violence and harmful practices such as forced marriage and child marriage. From the Ubuntu philosophical perspective, communities have the responsibility to cultivate solidarity and complementarity in participation (Mohlabane and Tshoaedi, 2022; Molefe, 2022). By increasing participants' agency, this study cultivated a sense of solidarity, care and complementarity in inviting adolescent girls to participate in discussions on aspects which affect their lives.

7.6   REFLECTION ON THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTED

The strategy allowed the researcher to reflect on the influence of adult-adolescent dyad on making meaning about participants' capacities to participate in the research which had a direct bearing on their lives. It had been interpreted that meaningful participation of adolescent girls could not be accounted for by a single paradigm, theory or method. The strategy was conceived through developing a bricolage theoretical framework which enabled the researcher to tinker theories, methods and paradigms to understand the phenomenon under study. The researcher learned that a research design anchored in PAR brought the researcher closer to participants'

realities. In doing so, the implementation of PAR placed participants' interests and voices at the centre of interpreting their lived experiences.

The researcher also learned that sharing SRH knowledge with adolescent girls became meaningful when the discussions were placed in the context of understanding how power impacted on the strategy to increase their capacities to have control of SRH decision-making. In this way, power relations remained in a dialectic state throughout the implementation of PAR. As the implementation of cycles of PAR gathered momentum, the researcher observed that participants were gaining the confidence to contribute to how they wanted to participate in the research. It was a moment of learning to challenge an objective perspective about identity construction in research. For example, participants challenged the use of age as the single identity to acknowledge their capacities to participate in FGDs. Of course, age was an important identity to determine the authenticity of consent to participate in research and SRH decision-making, in general. It was apparent that critical reflection on power relations enabled the researcher to extrapolate this paradoxical situation to the ethics of recognising adolescent girls' capabilities appropriate to their age and maturity.

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that age must not be a barrier to involve children in aspects which affect their lives, though adults are obligated to retain the responsibility to make actual decisions. Whereas responsibility is often interpreted as an ahistorical character trait which binds children to adults and communities, learning to become responsible is integral to awareness about one's history, culture and systems of socialisation (Balagapolan, 2019). In this context, adults are required to inform children and allow them to express themselves freely, such that decisions are based on their realities (Pincock and Jones, 2020).

Additionally, the situation of involving adolescent girls in discussions on SRH decision-making was endorsed at the 1994 ICPD and affirmed in the General Comment (No. 22) on the right to SRH (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016). Therefore, it was important to develop a strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced healthy and socio-economic lives. However, adolescent girls still face multiple SRH challenges. This indicated that adolescent girls must be actively involved in research. The researcher

made it possible through strategic planning to adapt the research process to the capacities of adolescent girls. Methods were used in innovative and creative ways.

The strategy implemented in this study provided space to challenge hegemonic social practices which shape adolescent girls' struggles to participate in discussions on SRH decision-making connected to their socio-economic and healthy lives in a meaningful way. It was evident that the success of the strategy was to be reflected on participants' trust of the whole research process and on their capacities to actively engage in discussions. By engaging in critical dialogue, participants were able to develop some new ways of thinking about SRH decision-making to one's life. During one of the FGDs, a participant said:

> *The discussions were useful in that you should make an informed choice, like to get married when you are mentally mature.*

While the partaking of adolescent girls in SRH decision-making in Zimbabwe had been a legal concern with the inception of colonial rule since the early 20th century, until recently the discussions on adolescent girls' participation in policy deliberations had been virtually ignored. The researcher learned that adolescent girls can actively participate when the research forged a collaborative process of producing knowledge. At first, the researcher thought that theoretical assumptions would provide ready solutions to engage adolescent girls. Instead, collaboration positively influenced adolescent girls' participation. Thus, collaboration created an enabling context for learning, unlearning and relearning during the research.

Regardless of uncertainty which may characterise any research, the researcher appreciated that the reflexivity of PAR sustained the research process. Participants were willing to be identified as a social group in discussions rather than as individuals. In this context, the scope of agency was derived from belonging to the group. The researcher learned that adolescent girls can meaningfully co-operate in research when they are given the chance to decide on how they want to interact with the researcher and among themselves.

7.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The strategy developed to provide a framework for increasing capacities of adolescent girls on SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives was presented in this chapter. Guided by the bricolage, the study used communicative action, PAR and capability approach to facilitate critical dialogue. This enabled the researcher to deconstruct power relations and hegemonic social practices which hindered the participation of vulnerable and marginalised adolescent girls.

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This study focused on understanding the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Presentation and discussion of findings were done in Chapters 6. The strategy to increase adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe was presented in Chapter 7. A summary of findings is given in this chapter. Suggestions for further research, conclusions and recommendations are highlighted.

8.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This study achieved to address the objectives of the study. The primary objective was to understand the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe. The summary of findings is presented in line with secondary objectives as follows:

To describe knowledge about SRH among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.

- Many participants professed ignorance about SRH health. Some participants acknowledged or refrained from claiming knowledge about SRH. Among those who knew about SRH, STD was the most known SRH issue, followed by unprotected sex and unintended pregnancy.

- The use of rhetoric language in narratives of participants about SRH knowledge was pervasive. Also, some participants avoided to answer some questions in ways which sustained interactive conversations. This showed the sensitivity of opening up in discussions on SRH among adolescent girls, hence concurred to the manifestation of the culture of silence which characterises adolescent sexuality. While many participants reported that they formally learned about SRH in schools, they did not take sexuality education seriously.

- Findings also revealed that older women who were very close to participants' social lives were playing huge roles in socialising adolescent girls about ways of being,

doing and thinking about SRH. The information received from older women appeared to have a strong impact on adolescent girls' knowledge about SRH.

To explore experiences of SRH decision-making among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.

- This study noted that poverty, gender and age featured prominently in participants' representations of their experiences in SRH decision-making. Participants' beliefs about gender norms revealed that power relations subtly shaped their experiences of SRH decision-making. Some participants got married before they were not ready for marriage.

- Almost all participants who once had sexual intercourse or got married earlier than they desired mentioned that young age placed them in a vulnerable position. These participants got pregnant at the age of 16 years and the majority got married at that age. Circumstances pushed them to get married against their preferences.

- Of crucial importance was the conception of maturity when interpreting experiences of SRH decision-making among participants. The notion of maturity was used as a counter-demarcation of young age in relation to attitudes towards SRH decision-making among adolescent girls. Participants above 18 years believed that decisions on SRH need to be made at an appropriate age for it not to be seen as misbehaving. The perceived appropriate age for one to be regarded as mature was 18 years.

- Although there was the belief that age is central to authenticate appropriate behaviour, it was clear that moral values overrode the interpretation of experiences of SRH decision-making. Participants interpreted experiences of SRH decision-making in a broader context which conflated gender expectations with moral competence in regulating sexual desires and female sexuality, in general. In this context, participants' narratives revealed that experiences of SRH decision-making were supposed to be legitimated by moral values.

To examine the connections between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District.

- Participants mentioned that poverty and economic challenges created multiple obstacles to the ability to make SRH choices. Drawing from the findings, married participants were deprived of education, sustainable livelihoods income, adequate food, employment and personal growth. Deprivations were not only affecting their personal well-being, but also the standards of living of their households. Much of the income to sustain household needs was mainly derived from piece jobs which were erratic.

- Lack of sustainable livelihoods created challenges which negatively impacted on capacities of households to support girls' life goals. As such, participants highlighted that lack of opportunities and economic deprivations were the major conditions which contributed to engage in risky sexual behaviour among adolescent girls.

- Participants portrayed material resources as a requisite to decision-making pertinent to achieving a decent standard of living. In FGDs, participants emphasised that material resources are a requisite to develop the confidence necessary for making a decision which is meaningful to one's life. As such, participants viewed unavailability of material resources as a major challenge affecting the capacities to make decisions on SRH in a meaningful way. This interpretation of standard of living resonates with the definition suggested in the capability approach. Standard of living is characterised as having the freedom to influence one's life goals.

- Participants believed that a proper decision on SRH ought to be made with one goal in sight, that is, to get married. While married participants were conscious of the fact that there was more to decisions on SRH in reality, they showed deep respect for the marriage institution. These participants were determined to work hard to improve the standards of living of their households.

- Interestingly, all participants concurred the importance of education for social mobility. Some married participants who had dropped out of school were still harbouring thoughts of going back to school or to do a vocational course if given the chance. In FGDs, participants highlighted that they also took healthy relationships seriously as integral to achieving educational goals. As such, lack of

248

educational resources led to distractions and low self-esteem as one would not be able to compete with other students.

- The findings revealed that adolescent girls were vulnerable to several SRH problems. Risky sexual relations, unintended pregnancy and early childbearing were the major SRH problems identified from narratives of participants.

- Some participants had given birth and were married before the age of 18 years. These participants mentioned that the parental role was a heavy burden to them as they did not have social support. In addition, some had conflicts with their paternal parents who were not happy about getting married at a young age.

- This study noted that participants were concerned about threats to capacity to make decisions on SRH and to well-being. They indicated that partners must be open to each other about health status through testing for STDs, including HIV. Participants highlighted priorities which were important to SRH decision-making and well-being such as dignity, safety, opportunity and agency. As such, participants argued that respecting girls' priorities ensured that they must not be pressured or forced to have sex and get married.

To develop a strategy that provides a framework for increasing capacities of adolescent girls to have control of SRH decision-making in Chimanimani District for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives.

- A strategy was developed for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. This study utilised PAR, communicative action and the capability approach through the bricolage to conscientise participants about the significance of SRH decision-making to their socio-economic and healthy lives. In doing so, interviews and FGDs were spaces on which participants' discursive practices were displayed. This was enhanced through collaboration and networking. The capability approach provided the conceptual tools for analysing participants' narratives of SRH decision-making and well-being.

- The implementation of the strategy was shaped by several conditions, namely, supportive host community, cultural representation of relationships, innovation and creativity and adolescence.

- Gender norms partly played a role in shaping how the researcher interacted with participants. In some contexts, participants expressed feelings of discomfort when participating in interviews and FGDs. It was because they perceived that their views could not be taken seriously. In some occasions, participants preferred to respond to questions in ways which did not allow both the researcher and participants to freely express themselves. Some participants were not comfortable to sharing views about SRH decision-making.

8.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- This study was carried out with adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe to understand the connections between SRH decision-making and human development from their perspectives. The connection between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls is implicated in the contestations of hegemonic social practices.

- Future researches would broaden the scope by facilitating critical dialogue with both boys and girls in a single study. In addition, it will be necessary to involve husbands or partners in researches which explore perceptions and aspirations for human development among married adolescent girls. This would enhance effective partnership with the local community to find sustainable solutions to addressing violations of adolescents' rights in SRH decision-making.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Crucial to this study was to understand the connections between SRH decision-making and human development from adolescent girls' perspectives. To strengthen the effectiveness of further engagement on the phenomenon under study, some recommendations were made:

- Policymakers, researchers, development practitioners and other relevant stakeholders should increase emphasis on the rights-based approach to promote SRH among adolescents. Advocacy for adolescent girls' SRHRs must focus on expanding the scope of engagement to actively involve them to influence the nature of partnerships with government agencies, NGOs and law enforcement agencies.

- Approaches to increase adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making must be innovative and creative in strengthening the integration

of technical knowledge and indigenous knowledge to foster inclusiveness and sustainability. This would enable indigenous communities to appreciate the technical knowledge in promoting SRHRs of children and young people. As revealed by findings, grandmothers were actively advising girls to delay sexual activities and focus on school, but they were averse to the idea of sharing technical SRH knowledge.

- There is the need for structured thinking when adopting a multi-stakeholder approach to forge partnerships with local communities in supporting girls' education. It is important to appreciate the strength of bringing together various stakeholders within the context of learning from each other rather merely focus on enforcing administrative authority.

- It is also recommended that adolescents must be actively supported to participate in discussions on SRH regardless of age. In the current context, the role of the Zimbabwean government in enhancing the participation of young people in SRH decision-making is largely in the abstract and it bears imprints of organisational bureaucracy which perpetuates hegemonic practices of excluding adolescents under 18 years in discussions on SRH.

- This study recommends that the Government of Zimbabwe should strengthen measures for accessing comprehensive education on SRH among adolescents through disseminating information of appropriate concerns and sensibilities. It had been noted adolescent girls were not taking SRH knowledge seriously.

- Given high levels of SRH challenges in Zimbabwe, the government and relevant stakeholders must strengthen strategies for addressing human development needs of adolescents in order to operationalise an inclusive society.

- Several lessons emerged from undertaking this study which would benefit other researchers to carry out the researches with the same study population or young people, in general. There is need to further investigate how SRH decision-making among adolescents influence personal, relational, and collective well-being.

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

This study suggests that the gap in knowledge about SRH among participants is a major socio-economic and health concern. Most of the participants indicated that they did not know about SRH or simply said they had forgotten. Moreover, the knowledge

about SRH issues was limited in scope such that it did extend beyond behavioural interpretation of risks. The findings revealed that STD was the most known SRH issue, followed by unprotected sex and unintended pregnancy. Notably, child marriage and sexual violence were conspicuously absent in participants' recalling of knowledge about SRH issues. Ironically, there were some billboards in the study area which were used by the Chimanimani Rural District Council to raise awareness about sexual violence and child marriage among children and young people. This indicates the need for more emphasis on a rights-based approach to sharing SRH knowledge with adolescents. Adolescents must be aware of power dynamics which increase their vulnerability to SRH issues.

As shown in Chapter 6, participants did not envisage lack of opportunities to choose as something which could be a trigger to demand human rights and SRHRs, in particular. Rather, they saw it as a genuine cause for seeking protection in the community they live in. Although FGDs revealed participants' awareness of rights pertinent to SRH decision-making, they just expected respect for their rights, as girls. However, it was incomprehensible to understand which people and stakeholders were supposed to respect their rights and under what circumstances those rights should be respected. This merits further research in order to get more insights into ways of empowering adolescent girls in SRH decision-making.

Additionally, the findings revealed that adolescent girls had access to diverse epistemic resources which shaped their capacities to acquaint knowledge about SRH. Whereas power relations influence the participation of adolescents in discussions on SRH, PAR enhanced a collaborative learning about SRH. It is highlighted that adolescent girls must not be seen as simply recipients of SRH knowledge, but much as human beings who can engage in agentic actions for expressing their own priorities and preferences. Through a communicative action, this study created a public sphere for sharing SRH knowledge with participants in order to get in-depth insights into how they made meaning about their social realities. From the FGDs, it was noted that participants were able to articulate their priorities and preferences in SRH decision-making.

Participants' narratives of experiences of SRH decision-making revealed multiple challenges faced by adolescent girls. This underscores the significance of supporting and protecting adolescent girls in SRH decision-making. Regardless of the fact that SRH decision-making among adolescent girls remains a sensitive subject, the findings suggest that SRH challenges increased the deprivation of some participants with opportunities to education, asset accumulation and wealth creation. Therefore, it was necessary to develop a strategy for increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced socio-economic and healthy lives. This study employed a bricolage theoretical framework to understand the nexus between SRH decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District in Zimbabwe. Undertaking this study led to the realisation of the fragility of the phenomenon under study based on a single theory. It was believed that relying on a single theory could not promote social justice in understanding of the phenomenon under study which is shrouded by historical controversies in Zimbabwe. Guided by the bricolage, the study used multiple theories to enhance critical reflection on the significance of increasing adolescent girls' capacities to have control of SRH decision-making for enhanced healthy and socio-economic lives.

Furthermore, this study used Fairclough's CDA model to unravel the conundrum of power relations to participants' ability to participate in discussions on aspects which affect their lives. Fairclough's CDA enhanced understanding of the dialectical relationship between hegemonic social practices and adolescent girls' abilities to interpret their social realities in SRH decision-making. From a capability approach, the researcher created equality of opportunities by acknowledging the diversity of participants' capabilities. Participants were given the chance to express themselves in a meaningful way which increased their active participation. In doing so, participants became aware about finding voices as a form of agency in SRH decision-making.

REFERENCES

Abdurahman, D, Assefa, N & Berhane, Y. 2023. Adolescent girls' early marriage intention and its determinants in Eastern Ethiopia: a social norms perspective. *Sage Open*, 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231182352 (Accessed on 11 January 2024).

Abraham, JC. 2016. Extending Gaventa: a Foucauldian reading of power and powerlessness. Paper presented at the ASA Conference Available at: https://mds.marshall.edu/asa_conference/2016/accepted_proposals/106/ (Accessed on 11 April 2022).

Abubakara, NH & Dasuki, SI. 2018. Empowerment in their hands: use of WhatsApp by women in Nigeria. *Gender, Technology and Development* 22(2): 164 – 183. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/09718524.2018.1509490 (Accessed 20 March 2023).

Abuya, B et al. 2023. Advancing the agenda in girls' education research. Available at: https://www.cgdev.org/publication/advancing-agenda-girls-education-research (Accessed on 14 September 2023).

Addadzi-Koom, ME. 2021. Revenge pornography as a form of sexual and gender-based violence in Ghana: emerging judicial issues. In *Gender, judging and the courts in Africa*, edited by JJ Dawuni. London: Routledge, pp. 123 – 141.

Adeagbo MJ. 2019. "Motherhood is hard": exploring the complexities of unplanned motherhood among HIV-positive adolescents in South Africa. *Sage Open*, 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/215824401984880 (Accessed on 12 October 2022).

African Union. 2006. Sexual and reproductive health and rights: continental policy framework. Addis Ababa: African Union. Available at: https://au.int/en/documents/20120327/continental-policy-framework-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights (Accessed on 21 March 2021).

African Union. 2007. *Maputo plan of action for the operationalisation of the continental policy framework for sexual and reproductive health and rights 2007 – 2010*. Addis Ababa: African Union.

African Union. 2015. *Campaign to end child marriage in Africa: the effects of traditional and religious practices of child marriage on Africa's socio-economic development*. Addis Ababa: African Union.

African Union. 2016. *Maputo plan of action 2016-2030 for the operationalisation of the continental policy framework for sexual and reproductive health and rights*. Addis Ababa: African Union.

Agarwal, B. & Panda, P. 2007. Toward freedom from domestic violence: the neglected obvious. *Journal of Human Development* 8(3): 359 – 388. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880701462171 (Accessed on 23 May 2022).

Ahinkorah, BO et al. 2020. Female adolescents' reproductive health decision making capacity and contraceptive use in Sub-Saharan Africa: what does the future hold? *PLoS ONE* 15(7): 1 – 20. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0235601 (Accessed on 16 February 2022).

Akurugu, CA, Domapielle, MK & Jatoe, MM. 2021. Bridewealth, women's subordination and agency in marriage: an ethnographic critique of gender activism in rural northwestern Ghana. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 56(8): 1819 – 1833. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/002190962199278 (Accessed 19 August 2021).

Akurugu, CA. 2020. Performing power in a mystical context: implications for theorizing women's agency. *Hypatia* 35(4): 549 – 566. Available at: https://10.1017/hyp.2020.30 (Accessed on 21 October 2021).

Akurugu, CA. 2021. Gender performativity in rural northern Ghana: implications for transnational feminist theorising. *Feminist Theory* 22(1): 43 – 62. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700119881308 (Accessed on 4 April 2022).

Alam, M & Wood, EI. 2022. Ideology and the implicit authorization of violence as policy: the Myanmar military's conflict-related sexual violence against the Rohingya. *Journal of Global Security Studies* 7(2): 1 – 18. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/jogss/ogac010 (Accessed on 9 August 2022)

Aldridge, J. 2015. *Participatory research: working with vulnerable groups in research and practice*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Alexander, J. 2006. *The unsettled land: state-making & the politics of land in Zimbabwe 1893 – 2003*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Alexander, JM. 2010. Ending the liberal hegemony: republican freedom and Amartya Sen's theory of capabilities. *Contemporary Political Theory* 9(1): 5 – 24. Available at: www.palgrave-journals.com/cpt/ (Accessed on 29 June 2022).

Alkire, S. 2015. The capability approach and well-being measurement for public policy. *Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative Working Papers 98*, University of Oxford. Available at: https://ophi.org.uk/the-capability-approach-and-well-being-measuremen-for-public-policy (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

Altglas, V. 2014. 'Bricolage': reclaiming a conceptual tool. *Culture and Religion* 15(4): 474 – 493. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14755610.2014.984235 (Accessed on 04 March 2022).

Alwang, J, Mills, BF and Taruvinga, N. 2002. *Why has poverty increased in Zimbabwe?* Washington DC: World Bank.

Anand, G, Larson, EC & Mahoney, JT. 2020. Thomas Khun on paradigms. *Production and Operations Management* 29(7): 1650 – 1657. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.13188 (Accessed on 19 August 2024).

Anderson, E. 2010. Justifying the capabilities approach to justice. In *Measuring justice: primary goods and capabilities*, edited by H Brighouse & I Robeyns. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, pp. 81 – 100.

Anguera, MT, Blanco-Villaseñor, A, Losada, JL, Sánchez-Algarra, P & Onwuegbuzie, AJ. 2018. Revisiting the difference between mixed methods and multimethods: is it all in the name? *Quality & Quantity* 52(6): 2757 – 2770. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-018-0700-2 (21 November 2021).

Aroussi, S. 2020. Researching wartime rape in Eastern Congo: why we should continue to talk to survivors? *Qualitative Research* 20(5): 582 – 597. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794119884880 (Accessed on 21 March 2021).

Assefa, AG. 2021. Monitoring implementation of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescent children: the role of the African Committee of Experts on the rights and welfare of the child. In *Advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa: constraints and opportunities*, edited by E Durojaye, G Mirugi-Mukundi & C Ngwena. London: Routledge, pp. 225 – 241.

Auret D. 1990. *A decade of development in Zimbabwe, 1980 – 1990*. Gweru: Mambo Press.

Austveg, B. 2011. Perpetuating power: some reasons why reproductive health has stalled. *Reproductive Health Matters* 19(38): 26 – 34. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0968-8080(11)38583-7 (Accessed on 15 April 2021).

Azulai, A. 2021. Are grounded theory and action research compatible? Considerations for methodological triangulation. *Canadian Journal of Action Research* 21(2): 4 – 24. Available at: https://doi.org/10.33524/cjar.v21i2.485 (Accessed on 13 September 2024).

Bacchi, C & Bonham, J. 2014. Reclaiming discursive practices as an analytic focus: political implications. *Foucault Studies* 17(Special issue): 173-192. Available at: https://rauli.cbs.dk/index.php/foucault-studies/article/view/4298 (Accessed on 16 May 2022).

Backhouse, R, Baujard, A. & Nishizawa, T. 2021. Introduction: revisiting the history of welfare economics. In *Welfare theory, public action and ethical values: revisiting the history of welfare economics*, edited by R Backhouse, A Baujard & T Nishizawa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1 – 18.

Bankole A et al. 2020. *From unsafe to safe abortion in Sub-Saharan Africa: slow but steady progress*. New York: Guttmacher Institute. Available at: https://www.guttmacher.org/report/from-unsafe-to-safe-abortion-in-subsaharan-africa (Accessed on 22 February 2022).

Barnes, HM & McCreanor, T. 2022. Decolonising qualitative research design. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research design*, edited by JA Maxwell. London: Sage Publications. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781529770278 (Accessed on 08 January 2023).

Barreiro-Gen, M. 2019. Discussing approaches to standard of living. In *Decent work and economic growth. Encylopedia of the UN sustainable development goals*, edited by WL Filho, W Azul, A Brandli, L Ozuyar & T Wall. Cham: Springer, pp. 1 – 15.

Bartky, SL. 2020. Foucault, femininity, and the modernization of patriarchal power. In *Feminist theory reader: local and global perspectives*, 5th ed., edited by CR McCann, S Kim & E Ergun. New York: Routledge, pp. 93 - 111. Available at: https://phil220.umwblogs.org/files/2012/06/Bartku-MF-and-Patriarchal-Power.pdf (Accessed on 12 February 2022).

Basu, K & López-Calva, LF. 2011. Functionings and capabilities. In *Handbook of social choice and welfare Vol. 2*, edited by KJ Arrow, A Sen & K Suzumura. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 153 – 187.

Bates SR. 2010. Re-structuring power. *Polity* 42(3): 352-376. Available at: http://www.jstor.com/stable/40865336 (Accessed on 26 April 2022).

Beckman, L & Rosenberg, JH. 2017. Freedom as non-domination and democratic inclusion. *Res Publica: A Journal of Moral, Legal and Political Philosophy* 24: 181 – 198. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11158-016-9348-8 (Accessed on 27 April 2022).

Belgrave, LL & Seide, K. 2019. Grounded theory methodology: principles and practices. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P. Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd, pp. 299 – 316.

Benson, K & Chadya, JM. 2005. Ukubhinya: gender and sexual violence in Bulawayo, Colonial Zimbabwe, 1946-1956. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 31(3), 587-610. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/03055707050202907 (Accessed on 21 January 2022).

Berry KS. 2004. Structures of bricolage and complexity. In *Rigour and complexity in educational research: conceptualising the bricolage*, edited by JL Kincheloe & KS Berry. Berkshire (England): Open University Press, pp. 103 – 127

Bhakuni, H. 2021. Reproductive justice: non-interference or non-domination. *Developing World Bioethics* 23(2): 93 – 98. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/dewb.12317 (Accessed on 30 May 2022).

Bijlmakers, L. 2003. Structural adjustment: source of structural adversity: socio-economic stress, health and child nutritional status in Zimbabwe. PhD Thesis, University of Amsterdam.

Binder, C. & Binder, C. 2016. A capability perspective on indigenous autonomy. *Oxford Development Studies* 44(3): 297 – 314. https://doi.org/10.1080/13600818.2016.1167178 (Accessed on 12 September 2022).

Blum, RW, Mmari, K, Alfonso, YN & Posner, E. 2015. ASRH strategic plan review Zimbabwe report. *Commissioned by UNFPA*.

Bond, JE. 2021. Intersectionality, women's rights in Africa and the Maputo Protocol. In *Patriarchy and gender in Africa*, edited by VF Bruey. Lanham (Maryland): Lexington Books, pp. 47 – 62.

Boone, K, Roets, G & Roose, R. 2019. Raising critical consciousness in the struggle against poverty: Breaking a culture of silence. *Critical Social Policy* 39(3), 434 – 454. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018318820233 (Accessed on 17 January 2023).

Bora, JK, Saikia, N, Kebede, EB & Lutz, W. 2023. Revisiting the causes of fertility decline in Bangladesh: the relative importance of female education and family planning programs. *Asian Population Studies* 19(1): 81 – 104. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17441730.2022.2028253 (Accessed 12 September 2023).

Bourdieu, P. 1998. *Practical reason: on the theory of action*. California: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 2001. *Masculine domination*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Braun, V, Clarke, V, Hayfield, N & Terry, G. 2019. Thematic analysis. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P. Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer, pp. 843 – 860.

Brooks, P. 2011. Semiotics and thick description (Barthes and Geertz). In *Interpreting Clifford Geertz: cultural investigation in the social sciences*, edited by JC Alexander, P Smith & M Norton. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 9 – 16.

Brown, JT. 2017. Freedom as capability: how the capability approach can improve our understanding of freedom in established democracies. PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne

Brown, N. 2022. Scope and continuum of participatory research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* 45(2): 200 – 2011. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2021.1902980 (Accessed on 20 March 2023).

Bryan, A. 2021. Freedom as non-domination, robustness and distant threats. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 24: 889 – 900. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10677-021-10222-3 (Accessed on 21 May 2022).

Buckler, A, Chamberlain, L, Mkwananzi, F, Dean, C & Chigodora, O. 2021. Out-of-school girls' lives in Zimbabwe: what can we learn from a storytelling research approach? *Cambridge Journal of Education* 52(2): 195 – 215. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2021.1970718 (Accessed on 13 February 2022).

Bueddefeld, J, Murphy, M, Ostrem, J & Halpenny, E. 2021. Methodological bricolage and COVID-19: an illustration from innovative, novel and adaptive environmental behaviour change research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 15(3): 437 – 461. Available at: https://www.doi.10.1177/15586898211019496 (Accessed on 21 January 2022).

Butler, J. 1997. Sovereign performatives in the contemporary scene of utterance. *Critical Inquiry* 23(2): 350 - 377. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1343987 (Accessed on 9 July 2023)

Butler, J. 1999. Bodies that matter. In *Feminist theory and the body: a reader*, edited by J Price & M Shildrick. New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. 2001. What is critique? An essay on Foucault's virtue. Available at: https://transversal.at/transversal/0806/butler/en (Accessed on 10 June 2022).

Butler, J. 2009. Performativity, precarity and sexual politics. *Lecture given at Universidad Complutense de Madrid, June 8, 2009*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.11156/aibr.040303e (Accessed on 29 April 2022).

Butler, J. 2011. *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limits of sex*. New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. 2016. Rethinking vulnerability and resistance. In *Vulnerability in resistance*, edited by J Butler, Z Gambetti & L Sabsay. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 12 – 27.

Byrne, D. 2020. Decolonial African feminism for white allies. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 21(7): 37 – 46. Available at: https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol21/iss7/4 (Accessed on 12 November 2022).

Caillaud, S, Doumergue, M, Préau, M, Haas, V & Kalampalikis, N. 2019. The past and present of triangulation and social representations theory: a crossed history. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 16(3): 375-391. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2019.1605272 (Accessed on 13 June 2022).

Cammarota, J. 2010. The cultural organizing of formal praxis-based pedagogies: a socio-historical approach to participatory action research. *Social Justice* 36(4): 6 – 13. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/29768558 (Accessed on 12 June 2022).

Carter, J & Duncan, S. 2018. *Reinventing couples. tradition, agency and bricolage*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Carter, MJ & Alvarado, AM. 2019. Symbolic interactionism as a methodological framework. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, pp. 169 – 187.

Castro, LR. 2021. Decolonising child studies: development and globalism as orientalist perspectives. *Third World Quarterly* 42(11): 2487 – 2504. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1788934 (Accessed 13 June 2022).

Central Statistical Office (CSO) [Zimbabwe] and Macro International Inc. 2007. *Zimbabwe demographic and health survey 2005-06*. Calverton, Maryland: CSO and Macro International Inc.

Chadwick, R. 2018. *Bodies that birth: vitalising birth politics*. London and New York: Routledge.

Chakraborty, A. 2020. Methodological or epistemological issues in social research. In *Research methodology for social sciences*, edited by R. Acharyya and N. Bhattacharya. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 9 - 23.

Chan, K, Miedema, SS, Naved, RT & Yount KM. 2023. Beyond girls' education: pathways to women's post-marital education in Matlab, Bangladesh. *Feminist Economics* 29(1): 38 – 69. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2022.2082510 (Accessed on 23 September 2022).

Chandler, D. 2013. Where is the human-centred approaches to development? A critique of Amartya Sen's 'development as freedom'. In *The biopolitics of development: reading Michel Foucault in the postcolonial present*, edited by S Mezzadra, J Reid & R Samaddar. New Delhi: Springer, pp. 67 – 86.

Charmaz, K & Belgrave, LL. 2019. Thinking about data with grounded theory. *Qualitative Inquiry* 25(8): 743 – 753. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418809455 (Accessed on 25 November 2021).

Charmaz, K & Thornberg, R. 2021. The pursuit of quality in grounded theory. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 18(3): 305 – 327. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1780357 (Accessed on 25 November 2021).

Charmaz, K. 2020. "With constructivist grounded theory you can't hide": social research and critical inquiry in the public sphere. Qualitative Inquiry 26(2): 165 – 176. Available at: https://doi.org/10/1177/1077800419879081 (Accessed on 12 October 2021).

Cheney, K. 2019. Decolonizing childhood studies: overcoming patriarchy and prejudice in child-related research and practice. In *Reimagining childhood studies*, edited by S Spyrou, R Rosen & DT Cook. London: Bloomsbury Academic, pp. 91 – 105.

Cheney, K. 2023. Overcoming the adult gaze in participatory research with young people. In *A handbook of children and young people's participation: conversations for transformational change, 2nd Ed.*, edited by B Percy-Smith, NP Thomas, C O'Kane & AT Imoh. London: Routledge, pp. 44 – 52.

Chereni, A. 2014. Positionality and collaboration during fieldwork: insights from research with co-nationals living abroad. Forum: *Qualitative Social Research* 15(3). Available at: https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-15-3.2058 (Accessed on 14 October 2021).

Chevalier, JM & Buckles, DJ. 2019. *Participatory action research: theory and methods for engaged inquiry, second edition*. London: Routledge.

Chikoko, W. 2023. Exiting commercial sex work: a case of adolescent street girls of the Harare Central Business District in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* 8: 389 – 397. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-023-00267 (Accessed on January 2024).

Chikovore, J, Nystrom, L, Lindmark, G & Maina, B. 2010. Struggling with growing bodies within silence and denial: perspectives of HIV and AIDS among youth in rural Zimbabwe. *African Journal of AIDS Research* 8(4): 503 – 513. Available at: https://doi:10.2989/AJAR.2009.8.4.14.1051 (Accessed on 12 March 2021).

Chilisa, B. 2020. *Indigenous research methodologies, 2nd Ed.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Chilisa, B & Phatshwane, K. 2022. Qualitative research within a postcolonial indigenous paradigm. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research design*, edited by U Flick. London: Sage, pp. 225 – 235.

Chilisa, B, Major, TE & Khudu-Petersen, K. 2017. Community engagement with a postcolonial, African-based relational paradigm. *Qualitative Research* 17(3): 326 – 339. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794117696176 (Accessed on 20 March 2021).

Chimanimani Rural District Council, nd. *District profile*. Available at: http://www.chimanimanirdc.org.zw/index.php/16-about-us/2-district-profile (Accessed on 14 June 2021).

Christman, J. 2021. Introduction: the multiple dimensions of positive freedom. In *Positive freedom: past, present and future*, edited by J Christman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1 - 7.

Cilesiz, S and Greckhamer, T. 2020. Methodological socialization and identity: a bricolage study of pathways toward qualitative research in doctoral education. *Organizational Research Methods* 25(2): 337 – 370. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428120980047 (Accessed on 17 June 2021).

Ciugureanu, A & Farhoud, F. 2019. Between semiosis and social practice: Fairclough's version of critical discourse analysis. *International Journal of Cross-cultural Studies and Environmental Communication* 8(2): 31 – 38. Available at: https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=914134 (Accessed on 21 June 2022).

Clark, DA. 2005. Sen's capability approach and the many spaces of human well-being. *The Journal of Development Studies* 41(8): 1339 – 1368. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00220380500186853 (Accessed on 3 October 2022).

Clark, T. 2010. Gaining and maintaining access: exploring the mechanisms that support and challenge the relationship between gatekeepers and researchers.

Qualitative Social Work 10(4): 485 – 502. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325009358228 (Accessed on 23 March 2023).

Clarke, AE, Friese, C & Washburn, R. 2015. Introducing situational analysis. In *Situational analysis in practice: mapping research with grounded theory*, edited by AE Clarke, C Friese & R Washburn. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, pp. 11 – 13.

Cobbett, M. 2014. Beyond 'victims' and 'heroines': constructing 'girlhood' in international development. *Progress in Development Studies* 14(4): 309 – 320. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993414521523 (Accessed on 6 December 2021).

Colclough, C, Löfstedt, JI, Manduvi-Moyo, J, Maravanyika, OE & Ngwata, WS. 1990. Education in Zimbabwe: issues of quantity and quality. *Education Division Documents* 50. Stockholm: SIDA.

Collins, PH. 2019. *Intersectionality as a critical social theory*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Collins, SS & Stockhom, CM. 2018. The central role of theory in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 17(1): 1 – 10. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918797475 (Accessed on 13 March 2021).

Comim, F, Ballet, J, Biggeri, M & Lervese, V. 2011. Introduction – theoretical foundations and the book's roadmap. In *Children and the capability approach*, edited by M Biggeri, J Ballet & F Comim. New York: Palgrave, pp. 3 – 21.

Comim, F. 2014. Building capabilities: a new paradigm for human development. In *Capabilities, gender, equality: towards fundamental entitlements*, edited by F Comim & M Nussbaum. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 131 – 154.

Conroy, AA, Ruark, A & Tan, JY. 2020. Re-conceptualising gender and power relations for sexual and reproductive health: contrasting narratives of tradition, unity, and rights. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 22(sup1): 48 – 64. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1666428 (Accessed on 16 February 2022).

Corman, MK. 2021. Using composites to craft institutional ethnographic accounts. In *The Palgrave handbook of institutional ethnography*, edited by PC Luken & S Vaughan. Cham: Palgrave, pp. 465 – 482.

Cornish, F et al. 2023. Participatory action research. *Nature Reviews Methods Primers* 3(34): 1 – 14. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1038/s43586-023-00214-1 (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

Cornwall, A. 2014. Sexuality and development. In *The companion to development studies*. 3rd edition, edited by V Desai & RB Potter. New York: Routledge, pp. 610 – 617.

Costa, C, Burke, C & Murphy, M. 2019. Capturing habitus: theory, method and reflexivity. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 42(1): 19 – 32.

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2017.1420771 (Accessed on 27 November 2021).

Costa, C & Murphy, M. 2015. Bourdieu and the application of habitus across the social sciences. In *Bourdieu, habitus and social research*, edited by C Costa & M Murphy. New York: Palgrave, pp. 3 – 17.

Crawford, G. & Andreassen, BA. 2015. Human rights and development: putting power and politics at the center. *Human Rights Quarterly* 37(3): 662 – 690. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/24518343 (Accessed on 12 April 2022).

Crenshaw, K. 1991. Mapping the margins: intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241 – 1299. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1229039 (Accessed on 12 July 2022).

Creswell, JW & Clark, VLP. 2018. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Creswell, JW and Creswell, JD. 2023. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. 6th edition. Washington DC: Sage Publications.

Creswell, JW & Poth, CN. 2018. *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. 4th edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Currie-Alder, B. 2016. The state of development studies: origins, evolution and prospects. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 37(1): 5 – 26. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2016.1135788 (Accessed on 28 May 2021).

D'Souza, S. 2019. Hermeneutics: a boon for cross-disciplinary research. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P. Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer Nature, pp. 189 – 204.

Dadzie, LK et al. 2022. Self-reported sexually transmitted infections among adolescent girls and young women in Sub-Saharan Africa. *International Health* 14: 545 – 553. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/inthealth/ihab088 (Accessed on 23 June 2022).

de Loma-Osorio, GFY & Zepeda, CS. 2014. Rethinking development management methodology: towards a "process freedoms approach". *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 15(1): 28 – 46. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2013.877425 (Accessed on 31 July 2022).

Denzin, NK. 2002. Confronting ethnography's crisis of representation. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 31(4): 478 – 516. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/089124160203100400 4 (Accessed on 5 November 2021).

Denzin, NK. 2009. *Qualitative inquiry under fire: toward a new paradigm dialogue*. California: Left Coast Press, Inc.

Denzin, NK. 2010. Moments, mixed methods, and paradigm dialogs. *Qualitative Inquiry* 16(6): 419 – 427. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410364608 (Accessed on 15 September 2022).

Denzin, NK. 2012. Triangulation 2.0. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 6(2): 80 – 88. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812437186 (Accessed on 19 January 2022).

Denzin, NK. 2017. Critical qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry* 23(1): 8 – 16. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800416681864 (Accessed on 28 September 2021).

Denzin NK & Giardina, MD. 2009. Qualitative inquiry and social justice: toward a politics of hope. In *Qualitative inquiry and social justice: toward a politics of hope*, edited by NK Denzin & MD Giardina. New York: Routledge, pp. 11 – 50.

Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS. 2011. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 4th edition, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. London: Sage Publications, pp. 1 – 20.

Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS. 2013. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. 4th edition, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Denzin, NK & Lincoln, YS. 2018. The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 5th edition, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Denzin, NK et al. 2017. Critical qualitative methodologies: reconceptualizations and emergent construction. *International Review of Qualitative Research* 10(4): 482 – 498. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2017.10.4.482 (Accessed on 23 June 2023).

Dery, I. 2020. A situated, African understanding of African feminism for men: a Ghanaian narrative. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 27(12): 1745 – 1765. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2020.1724896 (Accessed on 12 September 2023).

Desai, V & Potter, RB. 2006. The raison d'être of doing development research. In *Doing development research*, edited by V Desai & RB Potter. London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 3 – 10.

Deshmukh, DD & Chaniana, SS. 2020. Knowledge about sexual and reproductive health in adolescent school-going children of 8th, 9th, and 10th standards. *Journal of Psychosexual Health* 2(1): 56 – 62. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/263183181988916 (Accessed on 12 May 2023).

Dewalt, KM & Dewalt, BR. 2011. *Participant observation: a guide for fieldworkers, 2nd edition*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Diouf, M. 2003. Engaging postcolonial cultures: African youth and public space. *African Studies Review* 46(2): 1 – 12. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1514823 (Accessed on 7 August 2022).

Doss, C. 2021. Intrahousehold decision-making and resource allocation. In *The Routledge handbook of feminist economics*, edited by G Berik & E Kongar. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 303 – 311.

Doyle, ST. 2020. A defense against attacks on negative liberty. *The Journal of Libertarian Studies* 24(2): 317 – 322. Available at: https://mises.org/library/defense-against-attacks-negative-liberty (Accessed on 10 June 2022).

Duncan, S. 2011. Personal life, pragmatism and bricolage. *Sociological Research Online* 16(4): 1 – 12. Available at: http://www.socresonline.org.uk/16/4/13.html (Accessed on 7 April 2021).

Durojaye, E, Mirugi-Mukundi, G & Ngwena, C. 2021. Introduction. In *Advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa: constraints and opportunities*, edited by E Durojaye, G Mirugi-Mukundi & C Ngwena. London: Routledge: pp. 1 – 15.

Eaton, AAE & Stephens, DP. 2020. Reproductive justice: moving the margins to the center in social issues research. *Journal of Social Issues* 76(2): 208 – 218. Accessed at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341762847 (Accessed on 17 October 2022).

Ebrahim, S. 2019. I'm not sure this is rape, but: an exposition of the stealthing trend. *Sage Open*, 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019842201 (Accessed on 12 September 2023).

Ellis, C, Adams, TE & Bochner, AP. 2011. Autoethnography: an overview. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Sozialforschung* 12(1). Available at: https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589 (Accessed on 19 January 2022).

Essof, S. 2013. *Shemurenga: the Zimbabwean women's movement 1995 – 2000*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Fairclough, N. 2010. *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language, 2nd Ed*. London: Routledge.

Fairclough, N. 2013a. *Language and power.* 2nd edition. New York: Routledge.

Fairclough, N. 2013b. Critical discourse analysis and critical policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies* 7(2): 177 – 197. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19460171.2013.798239 (Accessed on 29 April 2023).

Fairclough, N. 2018a. CDA as dialectical reasoning. In *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies*, edited by J Flowerdew & JE Richardson. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 13 – 25.

Fairclough, N. 2018b. Critical discourse analysis in transdisciplinary research. In *A new agenda in (critical) discourse analysis*, edited by R Wodak & P Chilton. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, pp. 53 – 70.

Fairclough, I & Fairclough, N. 2018a. *Political discourse analysis: a method for advanced students*. London: Routledge.

Fairclough, N. & Fairclough, I. 2018b. A procedural approach to ethical critique in CDA. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 15(2): 169 – 185. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2018.1427121 (Accessed on 08 May 2023).

Fairclough, N & Scholz, R. 2020. Critical discourse analysis 'dialectical reasoning': from normative critique towards action, by explanation. *Mets. Les Langages du Politique* 122: 113 – 123. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4000/mots.26320 (Accessed on 22 April 2023).

Fayard, A. 2018. Bricolage in the field: experimenting in ethnography. In *The Routledge companion to qualitative research in organization studies*, edited by R Mir & S Jain. New York: Routledge, pp. 141 – 153.

Ferguson, L, Emoto, S & Gruskin, S. 2024. Laws governing access to sexual health services and information: contents, protections and restrictions. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters* 32(1): 1 – 18. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2024.2336770 (Accessed on 01 May 2024).

Fillafer, FL. 2022. Positivism. In *The Routledge companion to historical theory*. London: Routledge, pp. 68 – 82.

Fineman, MA. 2019. Vulnerability and social justice. *Valparaiso University Law Review* 53(2): 341 – 369. Available at: https://scholar.valpo.edu/vulr/vol53/iss2/2 (Accessed on 09 June 2023).

Finlay, JE et al. 2020. Sexual and reproductive health knowledge among adolescents in eight sites across sub-Saharan Africa. *Tropical Medicine and International Health* 25(1): 44 – 53. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/tmi.13332 (Accessed on 12 September 2024).

Flick, U. 2005. Qualitative research in sociology in Germany and the US – state of the art, differences and development. *Forum: Qualitative Research* 6(3). Available at: https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-6.3.17 (Accessed on 21 April 2023).

Flick, U. 2018. Triangulation. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 5th edition, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications

Flowerdew, J & Richardson, JE. 2018. Introduction. In *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies*, edited by J Flowerdew & JE Richardson. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1 – 10.

Folayan, MO, Haire, B, Harrison, A, Odetoyingbo, M, Fatusi, O & Brown B. 2015. Ethical issues in adolescents' SRH research in Nigeria. *Developing World Bioethics*

15(3): 191 – 198. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4600029 (Accessed on 21 March 2021).

Folbre, N. 2021. Conceptualizing patriarchal systems. In *The Routledge handbook of feminist economics*, edited by G Berik and E Kongar. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 53 – 61.

Foster, JE. 2011. Freedom, opportunity and well-being. In *Handbook of social choice and welfare, vol. II*, edited by KJ Arrow, A Sen & K Suzumura, pp. 688 – 725.

Frediani, AA, Clark, DA & Biggeri, M. 2019. Human development and the capability approach: the role of empowerment and participation. In *The capability approach, empowerment and participation: concepts, methods and applications*, edited by DA Clark, M Biggeri & AA Frediani. London: Springer Nature Limited, pp. 3 – 36.

Frediani, AA, Peris, J & Boni, A. 2019. Notions of empowerment and participation: contributions from and to the capability approach. In *The capability approach, empowerment and participation: concepts, methods and applications*, edited by DA Clark, M Biggeri & AA Frediani. London: Springer Nature Limited, pp. 101 – 124.

Fricker, M. 2007. *Epistemic injustice: power & the ethics of knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fricker, M. 2017. Evolving concepts of epistemic injustice. In *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice*, edited by IJ Kidd, J Medina & G Pohlhaus. London: Routledge, pp. 53 – 60.

GAGE Consortium. 2019. *Gender and adolescence: why understanding adolescent capabilities, change strategies and contexts matters*. 2nd edition. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence.

Gaidzanwa, R. 2012. Beyond income: an analysis of gendered wellbeing and poverty in Zimbabwe. In *Understanding poverty, promoting wellbeing and sustainable development: a sample survey of 16 districts of Zimbabwe*, edited by J Manjengwa, S Feresu & A Chimhowu. Harare: Sable Press, pp. 67 – 77.

Galvez, SM, Heiberger, R & McFarland, D. 2020. Paradigm wars revisited: a cartography of graduate research in the field of education (1980 – 2010). *American Educational Research Journal* 57(2): 612 – 652. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219860511 (Accessed on 12 October 2021).

Gary, A & Holmes, D. 2020. Researcher positionality: a consideration of its influence and place in qualitative research: a new researcher guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education* 8(4): 1 – 10. Available at: https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v8i4.3232 (Accessed on 12 January 2022).

Garza-Vázquez, O. 2021. Why expanding capabilities does not necessarily imply reducing injustice: an assessment of Amartya Sen's idea of justice in the context of Mexico's oportunidades/prospera. *Review of Social Economy* 81(3): 442 – 468.

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00346764.2021.1881150 (Accessed on 9 August 2023).

Gasper, D. 2006. What is the capability approach? Its core, rationale, partners and dangers. *Institute of Social Studies Working Paper Series No. 428*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socec.2006.12.001 (Accessed on 5 August 2022).

Gasper, D. 2021. Human security. In *The Cambridge handbook of the capability approach*, edited by E Chiappero-Martinetti, S Osmani & M Qizilbash. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 576 – 600.

Gaventa, J & Cornwall, A. 2008. Power and knowledge. In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*. 2nd edition, edited by P Reason & H Bradbury. London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp. 172 – 189.

Gaventa, J. 2021. Linking the prepositions: using power analysis to inform strategies for social action. *Journal of Political Power* 14(1): 109 – 130. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.1878409 (Accessed on 12 April 2022).

Giuseppe A, Lim, J & Miller, R. 2014. More than meets the eye: the contribution of qualitative research to evidence-based policy-making. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 27(1): 1 – 4. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2013.806211 (Accessed on 14 October 2021).

Glaser BG. 2012. Constructivist grounded theory? *The Grounded Theory Review* 11(1): 28 – 38. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.3126/jer.v8i1.25480 (Accessed on 19 January 2022).

Goessling, KP. 2020. Participatory action research: re-imaging the study and transformation social problems. In *Researching social problems*, edited by A Marvasti & AJ Trevino. London: Routledge, pp. 102 – 121.

Government of Zimbabwe. 1998. *Zimbabwe programme for economic and social transformation 1996 – 2000*. Harare: Government Printers.

Government of Zimbabwe. 2016. *National adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) strategy II: 2016 -2020*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Government of Zimbabwe. 2020. *National development strategy I, 2021 – 2025*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Graham, L & Mphaphuli, M. 2018. "A guy 'does' and you don't, they do you instead": young people's narratives of gender and sexuality in a low-income context of South Africa. *Sage Open* 8(4): 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018819041 (Accessed on 15 February 2021).

Green, DO. 2008. Respondent. In *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, edited by LM Given. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 790 – 791.

Greenhalgh, T & Russell, J. 2006. Reframing evidence synthesis as rhetorical action in the policy making drama. *Healthcare Policy* 1(2): 34 – 42. Available at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2585323 (Accessed on 3 February 2022).

Gwenzi, GD. 2023. *Rethinking the meaning of family for adolescents and youth in Zimbabwe's child welfare institutions*. Cham: Springer Nature.

H-Metro. 2016. *The child prostitutes of Epworth*. H-Metro, 03 April 2016. Available at: https://www.hmetro.co.zw/the-child-prostitutes-of-epworth (Accessed on 16 July 2022).

Habermas, J. 1987. *The theory of communicative action: lifeworld and system: a critique of functionalist reason, Vol. 2*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Hall, BL. & Tandon, R. 2017. 'Decolonization of knowledge, epistemicide, participatory research and higher education'. *Research for All* 1(1): 6 – 19. Available at: https://doi.org/10.18546/RFA.01.1.02 (Accessed on 10 November 2021).

Hamilton, P. 2020. 'Now that I know what you're about': black feminist reflections on power in the research relationship. *Qualitative Research* 20(5): 519 – 533. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794119891583 (Accessed on 21 March 2021).

Hammock, J. 2019. The practice of participation and the capability approach. In *The capability approach, empowerment and participation: concepts, methods and applications*, edited by DA Clark, M Biggeri & AA Frediani. London: Springer Nature Limited, pp. 39 – 54.

Hardy, H. 2002, editor. *Isaiah Berlin: liberty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haugaard, M. 2021. The four dimensions of power: conflict and democracy. *Journal of Political Power* 14(1): Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.1878411 (Accessed on 07 April 2022).

Hawkins, K. 2008. Participatory action research, sacred existential epistemology, the eight moment of qualitative research and beyond. *Proceedings of the AARE Conference 2007: Research Impacts-Proving or Improving?* Available at: http://www.aare.edu.au/confpap.htm (Accessed on 13 January 2023).

Hayward, C & Lukes, S. 2008. Nobody to shoot? Power, structure, and agency: a dialogue. *Journal of Power* 1(1): 5 – 20. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17540290801943364 (Accessed on 12 April 2022).

Here, B & Arriagada, P. 2023. *The human development index and related indices: what they are and what we can learn from them*. Available at: https://ourworldindata.org/human-development-index (Accessed 17 May 2023).

Hickel, J. 2014. The 'girl effect': liberalism, empowerment and the contradictions of development. *Third World Quarterly* 35(8): 1355 – 1373. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2014.946250 (Accessed on 21 November 2021).

High Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up. 2021. *No exceptions, no exclusions: realizing sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice for all.* Available at: https://www.nairobisummiticpd.org/content/second-anniversary-nairobi-summit-icpd25 (Accessed on 11 May 2022).

Higher Health and Universities South Africa. 2021. *A guide to planning, preparing for, and conducting fieldwork in the context of COVID–19.* Pretoria: Universities South Africa.

Hirai, T. 2021. Measuring capabilities: taking people's values seriously. *World Development* 148: 1 – 13. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2021.105657 (Accessed on 9 November 2022).

Hirschmann, N. 2021. Feminism and freedom. In *What is freedom? Conversations with historians, philosophers and activists*, edited by T Buckle. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 73 – 88. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197572214.003.0005 (Accessed on 11 July 2022).

Hlavka, HR. 2014. Normalizing sexual violence: young women account for harassment and abuse. *Gender & Society* 28(3): 337 – 358. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243214526468 (Accessed on 21 September 2022).

Holma, K & Huhtala, H. 2016. Non-idealizing the theory of autonomy: Theodor W. Adorno's psychological and political critique of Immanuel Kant. In *Philosophy of Education*, edited by MS Moses. Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, pp. 373 – 381.

Horii, H. 2019. A blind spot in international human rights framework: a space between tradition and modernity within the child marriage discourse. *The International Journal of Human Rights* 24(8): 1057 – 1079. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2019.1690468 (Accessed on 31 May 2022).

Horii, H. 2021. Child marriage as a 'solution' to modern youth in Bali. *Progress in Development Studies* 20(4): 282 – 295. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993420977793 (Accessed on 6 December 2021).

Horton, R. 2013. Offline: who cares about human rights anyway? *Lancet* 382: 1390. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)62153-4 (Accessed 1 June 2021).

Hughes, DM. 2006. *From enslavement to environmentalism: politics on a southern African frontier.* Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Hull, G. 2015. From well-faring to well-being: prospects for a metric of liberal egalitarian justice. In *Social equality: essays on equality in theory and practice*, edited by G Hull. London: Lexington Books, pp. 137 – 163.

Human Rights Watch. 2021. Africa: rights progress for pregnant students. Available at: https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/09/29/africa-rights-progress-pregnant-students (Accessed on 10 August 2022).

Ibrahim, S. 2006. From individual to collective capabilities: the capability approach as a conceptual framework for self-help. *Journal of Human Development* 7(3): 397 – 416. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880600815982 (Accessed on 02 December 2022).

Ibrahim, S. 2014a. The capability approach: from theory to practice – rationale, review and reflections. In *The capability approach from theory to practice*, edited by S Ibrahim & M Tiwari. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1 – 28.

Ibrahim, S. 2017. How to build collective capabilities: the 3C-model for grassroots-led development. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 18(2): 197 – 222. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2016.1270918 (Accessed on 7 September 2022).

Ibrahim, AA, Idriss, ID & Maitma, JZ. 2021. Emoji's multi-interpretation effect on the intended emotion. *International Journal on Perspective and Cognitive Computing* 7(1): 92 – 98. Available at: https://journals.iium.edu.my/kict/index.php/IJPCC (Accessed on 12 August 2021).

Ikuenobe, P. 2021. Priority of duties, substantive human rights, and African communalism. *South African Journal of Philosophy* 40(4): 421 – 435. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2021.2010174 (Accessed on 20 May 2022).

Indongo, N. 2020. Analysis of factors influencing teenage pregnancy in Namibia. *Medical Research Archives* 8(6): 1 – 11.

Iwokwagh, NS. 2017. Enlarging participatory communicative spaces on adolescents sexual and reproductive health in Nigeria: A look at new media technologies. In *Digital transformation in journalism and news media: media management, media convergence and globalization*, edited by M Friedrichsen & Y Kamalipour. Cham (Switzerland): Springer International Publishing AG: pp. 37 – 53.

Jackson, AY. 2013. Spaces of power/knowledge: a foucauldian methodology for qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry* 19(10): 839 – 847. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413503803 (14 October 2021).

Jackson, LA. 2002. "When in the white man's town": Zimbabwean women remember *chibeura.* In *Women in African Colonial Histories*, edited by J Allman, S Geiger and N Musisi. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, pp. 191 – 215.

Jeater, D. 2005. Imagining Africans: Scholarship, fantasy and science in colonial administration, 1920s Southern Rhodesia. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 38(1): 1 – 26. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/40036461 (Accessed on 21 April 2022).

John, NA, Babalola, S & Chipeta, E. 2015. Sexual pleasure, partner dynamics and contraceptive use in Malawi. *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health* 41(2): 99 – 107. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1363/4109915 (Access 10 August 2022).

Johns, C. 2021. *Reflexive narrative: self-inquiry toward self-realisation and its performance*, first ed. London: Sage.

Johnson, CW & Parry, DC. 2015. Introduction: contextualizing qualitative research for social justice. In *Fostering social justice through qualitative inquiry: a methodological guide*, edited by CW. Johnson & DC. London: Routledge.

Jones, N, Presler-Marshall, E & Samuels, F. 2018. Introduction: the significance of adolescence in the life course. In *Empowering adolescent girls in developing countries: gender justice and norm change*, edited by C Harper, N Jones, A Ghimire, R Marcus & GK Bantebya. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 1 – 21.

Kabeer, N. 2021. Three faces of agency in feminist economics: capabilities, empowerment, and citizenship. In *The Routledge handbook of feminist economics*, edited by G Berik and E Kongar. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 99 – 107.

Kaler, A. 2006. 'When they see money, they think it's life': money, modernity and morality in two sites in rural Malawi. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32(2): 335 – 349. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/03057070600656333 (Accessed on 17 October 2021).

Kaliyati, K. 1998. Poverty in Zimbabwe since independence: incidence, intensity and trends. *Paper presented at the conference on: Zimbabwe: macroeconomic policy, management and performance since independence (1980-1998): lessons for the 21st century, Harare, 19 – 21 August 1998*

Kamanzi, A. & Shilunga, A. 2021. The role of the church in the transformation of 'no sex before marriage' social norm in Tanzania: from shameful to responsible sex. *East African Journal of Traditions, Culture and Religion* 4(1): 61 – 68. Available at: https://doi.org/10.37284/eajtcr.4.1.563 (Accessed on 23 June 2022).

Kangaude, GD & Skelton, A. 2018. (De)criminalizing adolescent sex: a rights-based assessment of age of consent laws in Eastern and Southern Africa. *Sage Open* 8(4): 1 – 12. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018806036 (Accessed on 17 October 2021).

Kanyenze, G, Kondo, T, Chitambara, P. & Martens, J. 2011. *Beyond the enclave: towards a pro-poor and inclusive development strategy for Zimbabwe*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Kararach, G, Otieno, RO & Makuve, T. 2016. The political economy and evolution of development policy in Zimbabwe. In *Economic management in a hyperinflationary environment: the political economy of Zimbabwe, 1980 – 2008*, edited by G Kararach & RO Otieno. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 3 – 20.

Kataya, H, Nyamhanga, T & Mosha, I. 2023. Intimate partner violence against adolescent brides in Pwani region, Tanzania. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 32(6): 551 – 561. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2022.2129603 (Accessed on 05 September 2023)

Kemmis, S. 2008. Critical theory and participatory action research. In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*. 2nd edition. edited by P Reason & H Bradbury. London: Sage Publications, pp. 121 – 138.

Kemmis, S. 2022. *Transforming practices: changing the world with the theory of practice architectures*. Singapore: Springer Nature.

Kemmis, S & McTaggart, R. 2005. Participatory action research: communicative action and the public sphere. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 3rd edition, edited by N Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 559 – 605.

Kemmis, S & McTaggart, R. 2007. Participatory action research: communicative action and the public sphere. In *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*, edited by NK Denzin & Lincoln, Y. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 271 – 330.

Kemmis, S, McTaggart R & Nixon, R. 2014. *The action research planner: doing critical participatory action research*. London: Springer.

Kesby, M & Gwanzura-Ottemoller, F. 2007. Researching sexual health: two participatory action research projects in Zimbabwe. In *Participatory action research approaches and methods: connecting people, participation and place*, edited by S Kindon, R Pain and M Kesby. New York: Routledge, pp. 71 – 79.

Khader, SJ. 2019. Adaptive preferences. In *The Routledge handbook of development ethics*, edited by J Drydyk & L Keleher. London & New York: Routledge, pp. 93 – 100.

Khanna, P. 2019. Positivism and realism. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, pp. 151 – 168

Khoja-Moolji, S. 2016. Doing the 'work of hearing': girls' voices in transnational educational development campaigns. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 46(5): 745 – 763. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2015.1084582 (Accessed on 18 October 2021).

Kidd, J, Medina, J & Pohlhaus, G. 2017. Introduction to the Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice In *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice*, edited by IJ Kidd, J Medina & G Pohlhaus. London: Routledge, pp. 1 – 9.

Kiguwa, P. 2019. Feminist approaches: An exploration of women's gendered experiences. In *Transforming research methods in the social sciences: case studies from South Africa*, edited by S Laher, A Fynn & S Kramer. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, pp. 220 – 235.

Kim, K. 2004. Can Bourdieu's critical theory liberate us from the symbolic violence? *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 4(3): 362 – 376. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708603254896 (Accessed on 29 November 2021).

Kincheloe, JL McLaren, P, Steinberg, SR & Monzó, LD. 2018. Critical pedagogy and qualitative research: advancing the bricolage. In *The sage handbook of qualitative research. 5th Ed.*, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Kincheloe, JL. 2004. Introduction: the power of the bricolage: expanding research methods. In *Rigour and complexity in educational research: conceptualising the bricolage*, edited by JL Kincheloe and KS Berry. Berkshire (England): Open University Press, pp. 1 – 22.

Kincheloe, JL. 2005. On the next level: continuing the conceptualisation of the bricolage. *Qualitative Inquiry* 11(3): 323 – 350. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/10778000405275056 (Accessed on 15 March 2021).

Kindon, S, Pain, R & Kesby, M. 2007. Participatory action research: origins, approaches and methods. In *Participatory action research: approaches and methods: connecting people, participation and place*, edited by S Kindon, R Pain & M Kesby. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 9 – 18.

Kirkegaard, AMØ, 2004. A matter of difference? Family planning and gendered discourses on sexuality and reproductive decision-making among Black and White Zimbabweans. PhD Thesis, Göteborg University.

Kirshner, J & Kamberelis, G. 2022. *Decolonizing transcultural teacher education through participatory action research: dialogue, culture and identity*. New York and London: Routledge.

Kjellström, S & Mitchell, A. 2019. Health and healthcare as the context for participatory action research. *Action Research* 17(4): 419 – 428. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750319891468 (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

Klugman, J, Rodriguez, F & Choi, H. 2011. The HDI 2010: new controversies, old critiques. *United Nations Development Programme Human Development Reports Research Paper* 2011/01. New York: UNDP.

Koggel, CM. 2020. Feminist relational theory: the significance of oppression and structures of power. A commentary on "nondomination and the limits of relational autonomy" by Danielle M. Wenner. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* 13(2): 49 – 55. Available at: https://muse.jhu.edu/article/764519 (Accessed on 20 June 2022).

Koray, MH, Adomah-Afari, A, Punguyire, D & Naawa, A. 2022. Knowledge of sexually transmitted infections among senior high school adolescents in the Wa Manicipality of Ghana. *Global Health Journal* 6(2): 95 – 101. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glohj.2022.04.002 (Accessed on 06 June 2023).

Kovach, M. 2018. Doing indigenous methodologies: a letter to a research class. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. 5th edition, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Kress, G and van Leeuwen, T. 2006. *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*. 2nd edition, London & New York: Routledge.

Krisch, M, Averdijk, M, Valdebenito, S & Eisner, M. 2019. Sex trade among youth: a global review of the prevalence, contexts and correlates of transactional sex among the general population of youth. *Adolescent Research Review* 4: 115 – 134. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-019-00107-z (Accessed on 23 July 2022).

Kyegombe, N et al. 2020. Sexual health of adolescent girls and young women in Central Uganda: exploring perceived coercive aspects of transactional sex. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters* 28(1): 232 – 244. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2019.1700770 (Accessed 23 November 2023).

Larsen, J. 2010. The social vagina: labia elongation and social capital among women in Rwanda. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 12(7): 813 – 826. Available at: http://www.jstor.com/stable/20787279 (Accessed on 18 July 2023).

Larsson, FM, Bowers-Sword, R, Narvaez, G & Ugarte, WJ. 2022. Exploring sexual awareness and decision-making among adolescent girls and boys in rural Nicaragua: A socio-ecological approach. *Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare* 31: 1 – 6. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.srhc.2021.100676 (Accessed on 21 April 2023)

Law, K. 2021. 'We wanted to be free as a nation, and we wanted to be Free as Women': Decolonisation, nationalism and women's liberation in Zimbabwe, 1979–85. *Gender & History* 33(1): 249 – 268. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0424-12491 (Accessed on 3 July 2021).

Lenette, C. 2022. *Participatory action research: ethics and decolonization*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lennie, J. 2006. Increasing the rigour and trustworthiness of participatory evaluations: learnings from the field. *Evaluation Journal of Australasia* 6(1): 27 – 35. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1035719X0600600105 (Accessed 30 May 2023).

Lett, D & Rothstein, M. 2020. Women victims of sexual assault and rape. *Clio. Women, Gender, History* 52: 45 – 70. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/27154714 (Accessed on 20 November 2022).

Liang, M, Simelane, S, Fillo, G, Chalasani, S & Weny, K et al. 2019. The state of adolescent sexual and reproductive health. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 65: s3 – s15. Available at: https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(19)30473-2/fulltext (Accessed on 16 March 2021).

Lincoln, YS, Lynham SA & Guba, EG. 2018. Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In *The Sage handbook of*

qualitative research. 5th edtion, edited by NK Denzin & YS Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Linders, A. 2017. Deconstructing adolescence. In *International handbook on adolescent health and development: the public health response*, edited by A Cherry, V Baltag & M Dillon. Cham: Springer Nature, pp. 15 – 28.

Lindqvist, A, Sendén, MG & Renström, EA. 2021. What is gender, anyway: a review of the options for operationalising gender. *Psychology & Sexuality* 12(4): 332 – 344. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19419899.2020.1729844 (Accessed on 12 October 2023)

Locke, L. 2002. The public understanding of science - a rhetorical invention. *Science, Technology & Human Values* 27(1): 87 – 111.

Long, H. 2017. Validity in mixed methods research in education: the application of Habermas' critical theory. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* 40(2): 201 – 213. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2015.1088518 (Accessed 2 March 2022).

Lorenzini, D. 2018. Governmentality, subjectivity, and the neoliberal form. *Journal for Cultural Research* 22(2): 154 – 166. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14797585.2018.1461357 (Accessed on 28 November 2021).

Lukes, S. 2005. *Power: a radical view.* 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lund, C. 2006. Twilight institutions: public authority and local politics in Africa. *Development and Change* 37(4): 685 – 705. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2006.00497.x (Accessed on 28 September 2021).

Lyn, A. 2022. Ending child marriage: ensuring healthy futures for girls. *The Lancet* 400(10345): 1. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)01241-7 (Accessed on 21 May 2022).

MacQuarrie, KLD, Juan, C & Fish, TD. 2019. Trends, inequalities and contextual determinants of child marriage in Asia. *DHS Analytical Studies 69.* Rockville, Maryland (USA): ICF. Available at: https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-as69-analytical-studies.cfm (Accessed on 20 July 2022).

Mafa, I & Simango, T. 2022. Exploring the "thigh-for-marks" phenomenon among public universities in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* 7: 138 – 147. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-021-00188-8 (Accessed on 22 June 2022).

Magadi, M et al. 2022. Sexual and reproductive health knowledge and behaviour of adolescent boys and girls aged 10 – 19 years in western Kenya: evidence from a cross-sectional pilot survey. *Journal of Biosocial Science* 54(5): 792 – 811. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021932021000353 (Accessed on 13 September 2024).

Maggwa, BN, Askew, I, Marangwanda, CS, Nyakauru, R & Janowitz, B. 2001. An assessment of the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council's community-based distribution programme. *FRONTIERS Final Report*. Nairobi: Population Council.

Magnusson, E & Marecek, J. 2015. *Doing interview-based qualitative research: a learner's guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Magosvongwe, R. 2016. Shona philosophy of Unhu/Hunhu and its onomastics in selected fictional narratives. *Journal of the African Literature Association* 10(2): 158 – 175. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/21674736.2016.1257477 (Accessed 12 March 2022).

Maguraushe, W & Mukuhlani, T. 2014. Kupururudzira muroora songs in Muzvezve: bride welcoming ceremony or relegation of women to the subaltern. *Nokoko* 4: 41 – 66. Available at: https://ojs.library.carleton.ca/index.php/nokoko/article/view/2191 (Accessed on 7 September 2023).

Maharaj, N. 2016. Using field notes to facilitate critical reflection. *Reflective Practice* 17(2): 114 – 124. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14623943.2015.1134472 (Accessed on 26 May 2023).

Mahlomaholo, SGM. 2013. On bricolage and the creation of sustainable postgraduate learning environments. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* 9(3): 379 – 392. Available at: https://doi.org/10.10.4102/td/.v9i3.185 (Accessed 09 January 2022).

Maina, B, Mbuthia, M, Nyakangi, V & Bangha, M. 2020. How early is too early? Adolescents' perspective on gender norms and sexual and reproductive health. *African Population and Health Research Center*. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep28643 (Accessed on 21 May 2022).

Makoni, B & Makoni, S. 2011. The discursive construction of the female body in family planning pamphlets. In *Language, Body and Health*, Vol. 2, edited by P McPherron & V Ramanathan. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, pp. 191 – 217.

Makoni, B. 2012. Discourses of silence: the construction of 'otherness' in family planning pamphlets. *Discourse & Communication* 6(4): 401 – 422. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481312457506 (18 November 2021).

Makuvaza, N. 2017. *Hunhu/Ubuntu* and the idea of Shona personhood: a tripartite perspective. *Zambezia* 42(1/2): 1 – 16.

Malhotra, A, Amin, A & Nanda, P. 2019. Catalyzing gender norm change for adolescent sexual and reproductive health: investing in interventions for structural change. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 64(4): S13 – S15. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2019.01.013 (Accessed on 12 June 2022).

Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and subject: contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. New Jersey (USA): Princeton University Press.

Manguro, G & Temmerman, M. 2022. A critical review of adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights in Kenya. *Med* 3: 361–368. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.medj.2022.05.007 (Accessed 25 August 2024).

Manji, F. 2019. Emancipation, freedom or taxanomy? What does it mean to be African? In *Racism after apartheid: challenges for Marxism and anti-racism*, edited by V Satgar. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, pp. 49 – 74.

Manohar, N, Liamputtong, P, Bhole, S & Arora, A. 2019. Researcher positionality in cross-cultural and sensitive research. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer, pp. 1601 – 1616.

Marino, P. 2019. *Philosophy of sex and love: an opinionated introduction*. New York & London: Routledge.

Marino, P. 2022. Sexual objectification. In *The Routledge handbook of philosophy of sex and sexuality*, edited by BD Earp, C Chambers & L Watson. New York: Routledge, pp. 487 – 498.

Marume, A, Maradzika, J & January, J. 2018. Adolescent sexting and risky sexual behaviours in Zimbabwe: a cross-sectional study. *Sexuality & Culture* 22: 931– 941. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-018-9508-4 (Accessed on 21 November 2021).

Masakure, C. 2016. 'We will make sure they are rehabilitated': nation-building and social engineering in operation clean-up, Zimbabwe, 1983. S*outh African Historical Journal* 68(1): 92 – 111. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02582473.2015.1118880 (Accessed on 12 October 2021).

Mashe, T et al. 2021. Genomic epidemiology of the SARS-CoV-2 epidemic in Zimbabwe: role of international travel and regional migration in spread. *Lancet Global Health* 9(12). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/s2214-109x(21)00434-4 (Accessed 12 October 2023).

Masquelier, A. 2020. Early marriage and the debates over gender-based rights in Niger. In *Legislating gender and sexuality in Africa: human rights, society, and the state*, edited by E Burrill & L Boyd. University of Wisconsin Press

Massingham, P. 2019. An Aristotelian interpretation of practical wisdom: the case of retirees. Palgrave Communications. *Palgrave Communications* 5(1): 1 – 13. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-019-0331-9 (Accessed on 3 October 2022).

Mathiyazhagan, S. 2020. Participatory youth-led community development: a child-centred visual SWOT analysis in India. *Children and Youth Services Review* 113: 1 – 8. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104963 (Accessed on 23 August 2023).

Matswetu, VS. 2019. Negotiating and regulating teenage sexuality in rural Zimbabwe: gender, culture and schooling. PhD Thesis, University of KwaZulu Natal.

Matswetu, VS & Bhana, D. 2023. Zimbabwean teenagers learning sexuality and negotiating abstinence. *Sex Education* (latest articles). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2023.2182280 (Accessed on 3 June 2023).

Matswetu, VS. & Bhana, D. 2018. Humhandara and hujaya: Virginity, culture and gender inequalities among adolescents in Zimbabwe. *Sage Open* 8(2): 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018779107 (Accessed 7 July 2021).

Mawadza, A. 2004. Stigma and HIV/AIDS discourse in Zimbabwe. *Alternation* 11(2): 420 – 439. Available at: https://journals.co.za/toc/alt/11/2?pageStart=2&pageSize=20 (Accessed on 23 August 2023).

Maxwell, JA. 2022. Interactive approaches to qualitative research design. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research design*, edited by JA Maxwell. London: Sage Publications. Available at: https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781529770278 (Accessed on 08 January 2023).

Maziwisa, MR. 2021. Barriers to access to contraceptives for adolescent girls in rural Zimbabwe as a human rights challenge. In *Advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa: constraints and opportunities*, edited by E Durojaye, G Mirugi-Mukundi & C Ngwena. London: Routledge: pp. 67 – 83.

McBride, KA, MacMillan, F, George, ES & Steiner, GZ. 2019. The use of mixed methods in research. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P. Liamputtong. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5251-4_97 (Accessed on 22 October 2021).

McClelland, SI. 2019. Critical methods for studying adolescent sexuality. In *The Cambridge handbook of sexual development: childhood and adolescence*, edited by S Lamb & J Gilbert. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 281 – 299. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108116121.015 (Accessed on 23 January 2022).

McCollum, J. 2012. Hermeneutical injustice and the social sciences: development policy and positional objectivity. *Social Epistemology* 26(2): 189 – 200. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2011.652212 (Accessed on 12 October 2022).

McDonald, L. 2022. Flirting. In *The Routledge handbook of philosophy of sex and sexuality*, edited by BD Earp, C Chambers & L Watson. New York & London: Routledge, pp. 207 – 217.

McShane, J. 2021. What does it mean to 'decolonise' gender studies? Theorising the decolonial capacities of gender performativity and intersectionality. *Journal of International Women's Studies* 22(2): 62 – 77. Available at: https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol22/iss2/7 (Accessed 4 April 2022).

Mehretu, A & Mutambirwa, CC. 2006. Social poverty of rural agricultural areas. In *Zimbabwe's agricultural revolution revisited*, edited by Rukuni, M et al. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, pp. 119 – 140.

Melesse, DY et al. 2020. Adolescent sexual and reproductive health in Sub-Saharan Africa: who is left behind? *BMJ Global Health* 5: 1 – 8. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2019-002231 (Accessed on 21 March 2022).

Metz, T. 2015. An African egalitarianism: bringing community to bear on equality. In *The equal society: essays on equality in theory and practice*, edited by G Hull. London: Lexington Books, pp. 203 – 226.

Meyiwa, T. 2020. University of South Africa COVID-19 guidelines: implications of alert levels for researchers and postgraduate students. *Unpublished Paper*

Mignolo, WD. 2011. Geopolitics of sensing and knowing: on (de)coloniality, border thinking and epistemic disobedience. *Postcolonial Studies* 14(3): 273 – 283. Available at: https://doi.org/10.13688790.2011.613105 (Accessed on 20 March 2022).

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. 2015a. *Family, religion and moral education: junior (grade 3 – 7) syllabus*. Harare: Curriculum Development Unit.

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. 2015b. *Family and religious studies (forms 5 & 6)*. Harare: Curriculum Development Unit.

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. 2015c. *Guidance and counselling syllabus: forms 1 – 4*. Harare: Curriculum Development and Technical Services. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. 2016. *Guidance and counselling syllabus: forms 5 and 6*. Harare: Curriculum Development Unit. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. 2022. *Primary and secondary education statistics report*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Mitchell, P. 2018. Adaptive preferences, adapted preferences. *Mind* 127: 1003 – 1025. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzy020 (Accessed on 22 June 2022).

Mkodzongi, G. 2023. Artisanal and small-scale gold mining and rural transformation in post-land reform Zimbabwe: a broad overview. *Journal of Rural Studies* 100: Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2023.103027 (Accessed on 12 September 2023).

Mlambo, AS. 2015. Mugabe on land, indigenization and development. In *Mugabeism? History politics and power in Zimbabwe*, edited by SN Ndlovu-Gatsheni. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 45 – 60.

Mohajan, HK. 2018. Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People* 7(1): 23 – 48. Available at: http://jedep.spiruharet.ro (Accessed on 11 March 2022).

Mohlabane, N & Tshoaedi, M. 2022. What is a woman? A decolonial African feminist analysis of womanhood in Lesotho. *South African Review of Sociology* 52(1): 40 – 57.

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2021.2015716 (Accessed on 17 December 2022).

Molefe, M. 2021. Personhood and moral recognition in African moral thought. *Eastern African Literary and Cultural Studies* 8(3): 176 – 195. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/23277408.2021.1930940 (Accessed on 12 May 2022).

Molyneux, M, Dey, A, Gatto, MAC & Rowden, H. 2020. Feminist activism 25 years after Beijing. *Gender & Development* 28(2): 315 – 336. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2020.1750140 (Accessed on 05 September 2024).

Morgan, DL. 2012. Focus group and social interaction. In *The Sage handbook of interview research: the complexity of the craft*. London: Sage, pp. 161 – 176.

Moser, A & Korstjens, I. 2018. Series: practical guidance to qualitative research: sampling, data collection and analysis. *European Journal of General Practice* 24(1): 9 – 18. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375091 (Accessed on 9 June 2021).

Mosia, MS. 2016. A strategy to improve teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge for teaching Euclidean Geometry using integrated information communication technologies software. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Bloemfonten (South Africa): University of Free State.

Motschenbacher, H. 2018. Sexuality in critical discourse studies. In *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies*, edited by J Flowerdew & JE Richardson. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 388 – 402.

Moyo, A. 2022. The judiciary and children's rights in Zimbabwe. In *The judiciary and the Zimbabwean constitution*, edited by J TSabora. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Press, pp. 228 – 250.

Mpofu, P & Salawu, A. 2021. Critical reflections on erotic content in Star FM's couples quality time and Ya FM's moto mubhurugwa (fire in underwear). *African Identities* 19(1): 31 – 47. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2020.1789448 (Accessed on 19 December 2022).

Muchabaiwa, L & Mbonigaba J. 2019. Impact of the adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health strategy on service utilisation and health outcomes in Zimbabwe. *PLoS ONE* 14(6): 1 – 19. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0218588 (Accessed 1 July 2022).

Mudau, TS. 2018. Enhancing self-regulation among teenage mothers: a university community engagement approach. PhD thesis, University of Free State (South Africa).

Müller-Doohm, S. 2017. Member of a school or exponent of a paradigm? Jürgen Habermas and critical theory. *European Journal of Social Theory* 20(2): 252 – 274. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431015622049 (Accessed on 27 November 2021).

Mulumeoderhwa, M & Harris, G. 2015. Forced sex, rape and sexual exploitation: attitudes and experiences of high school students in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 17(3): 284 – 295. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2014.935483 (Accessed on 12 May 2022).

Mupedziswa, R, Malinga, T and Ntshwarang, PN. 2021. Standard of living, well-being and community development: the case of Botswana. In *Improving quality of life: exploring standard of living, wellbeing and community development*, edited by RM Yonk. London: Intechopen, pp. 1 – 16.

Murewanhema, G. 2020. Adolescent girls, a forgotten population in resource-limited settings in the COVID-19 pandemic: implications for sexual and reproductive health outcomes. *PanAfrican Medical Journal* 37(1): 1 – 6. Available online at: https://www.panafrican-med-journal.com/content/series/37/1/41/full (Accessed 20 May 2021).

Musarandega, R et al. 2021. Causes of maternal mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review of studies published from 2015 to 2020. *Journal of Global Health* 9(11). Available at: https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.11.04048 (Accessed on 26 July 2022).

Mutimukuru-Maravanyika, T. 2010. Can we learn our way to sustainable management? Adaptive collaborative management in Mafungautsi State Forest, Zimbabwe. PhD Thesis, Wageningen University.

Muyambo, T. 2022. "The marital bed": a contested site for negotiating safe sex. In *Religion and sexuality in Zimbabwe*, edited by E Chitando & F Machingura. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Mwatwara W. and Mujere J. 2015. Corruption and the comrades: Mugabe and the "fight" against corruption in Zimbabwe, 1980–2013. In *Mugabeism? History, politics, and power in Zimbabwe*, edited by SJ Ndlovu-Gatsheni. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 181 – 199.

Nash, K, et al. 2019. "Our girls need to see a path to the future" --perspectives on sexual and reproductive health information among adolescent girls, guardians, and initiation counselors in Mulanje district, Malawi. *Reproductive health* 16(8): 1 - 13. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-018-0661-x (Accessed on 21 March 2021).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, SJ. 2018. Epistemic freedom in Africa: deprovincialization and decolonization. London: Routledge.

Negrin, KA, Slaughter, SE, Dahlke, S & Olson, J. 2022. Successful recruitment to qualitative research: a critical reflection. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 21: 1 – 12. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221119576 (Accessed on 12 June 2023).

Neocosmos, M. 2012. *Thinking freedom in Africa: toward a theory of emancipatory politics*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Newman, S. 2022. Power, freedom and obedience in Foucault and La Boétie: voluntary servitude as the problem of government. *Theory, Culture & Society* 39(1): 123 – 141. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764211024333 (Accessed on 14 July 2022).

Nielsen, MEJ & Landes, X. 2016. Fighting status inequalities: non-domination vs interference. *Public Health Ethics* 9(2): 155 – 163. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/phe/phv029 (Accessed on 27 May 2022).

Nowell, LS, Norris, JM, White, DE & Moules, NJ. 2017. Thematic analysis: striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16: 1 – 13. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847 (Accessed on 23 September 2023).

Nunu, WN, Makhado, L, Mabunda, JT & Lebese, RT. 2021. Indigenous health systems and adolescent sexual health in Umguza and Mberengwa Districts of Zimbabwe: Community key stakeholders' perspectives. *Health Services Insights* 14: 1 – 9. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/11786329211013553 (Accessed on 21 June 2021).

Nussbaum, M. 2000a. *Women and human development: the capabilities approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nussbaum, M. 2000b. Aristotle, politics, and human capabilities: a response to Antony, Arneson, Charlesworth, and Mulgan. *Ethics* 111(1): 102 – 140. Available at: https://doi.org/0014-1704/2001/11101-0006 (Accessed on 21 September 2022).

Nussbaum, M. 2001. Adaptive preferences and women's options. *Economics and Philosophy* 17: 67 – 88. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266267101000153 (Accessed 30 October 2022).

Nussbaum, M. 2003. Capabilities as fundamental entitlements: Sen and social justice. *Feminist Economics* 9(2-3): 33 – 59. Available at: https://www.doi.org/10.1080/1354570022000077926 (Accessed on 10 January 2022).

Nussbaum, M. 2004. *Hiding from humanity: disgust, shame and the law*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Nussbaum, M. 2005. Women's bodies: violence, security, capabilities. *Journal of Human Development* 6(2): 167 – 183. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880500120509 (Accessed on 21 December 2021).

Nussbaum, M. 2011. *Creating capabilities: the human development approach*. Massachusetts: The Belknap Press.

Nussbaum, M. 2021. The capabilities approach and the history of philosophy. In *The Cambridge handbook of the capability approach*, edited by E Chiappero-Martinetti, S Osmani & M Qizilbash. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 13 – 39.

Nyamunda, T & Mukwambo, P. 2012. The state and the bloody diamond rush in Chiadzwa: unpacking the contesting interests in the development of illicit mining and trading, c.2006–2009. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 38(1): 145 – 166. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03057070.2012.649945 (Accessed on 20 May 2023).

Nyemba, F & Mayer, M. 2018. Exploring the roots of participatory action research: an interview with Dr Marja-Liisa Swantz. *Action Research* 16(3): 319 – 338. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750316684003 (Accessed 12 January 2023).

Offiong, A, Powell, TW, Gemmill, A & Marcell, AV. 2021. "I can try and plan, but still get pregnant": The complexity of pregnancy intentions and reproductive health decision-making for adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence* 90: 1 – 10. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2021.05.007 (Accessed on 12 August 2021).

Okonofua, F. 2021. Maternal mortality in developing countries. In *Contemporary obstetrics and gynecology for developing countries*, edited by F Okonofua, JA Balogun, K Odunsi & VN Chilaka. Cham: Springer, pp. 13 – 22.

Oksala, J. 2013. Feminism and neoliberal governmentality. *Foucault Studies* 16: 32 – 53. Available at: https://doi.org/10.22439/fs.v0i16.4116 (Accessed 8 December 2021).

Olaluwoye, T et al. 2022. Sexual violence against men in conflict and post-conflict settings: a qualitative research methodology. American Journal of Men's Health 16(2): 1 – 10. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/15579883221084496 (Accessed 30 November 2021).

Olamijuwon, E & Odimegwu, C. 2022. Saving sex for marriage: an analysis of lay attitudes towards virginity and its perceived benefit for marriage. *Sexuality & Culture* 26(2): 568 – 594. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-021-09909-7

Oliver, S & Duncan, S. 2019. Editorial: looking through the Johari window. *Research for All* 3(1): 1 – 6. Available at: https://doi.org/10.18546/RFA.03.1.01 (Accessed on 25 June 2023).

Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP). nd. *The ORAP story*. Available at: https://orapzenzele.org/who-we-are/the-orap-story (Accessed on 03 February 2023).

Oxfam International. 2019. *Cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe: an analysis of policy implications for post-disaster institutional development to strengthen disaster risk management*. Oxford: Oxfam International. Available at: https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/cyclone-idai-in-zimbabwe-an-analysis-of-policy-620892 (Accessed on 14 June 2023).

Owens, J, Entwistle, VA, Craven, LK & Conradie, I. 2022. Understanding and investigating relationality in the capability approach. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 52(1): 86 – 104. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111jtsb.12310 (Accessed on 10 September 2022).

Parkhurst, J. 2017. *The politics of evidence: from evidence-based policy to the good governance of evidence*. London and New York: Routledge.

Parliament of Zimbabwe. 2021. *National Assembly Hansard 47(64)*. Available at: https://parlzim.gov.zw/national-assembly-hansards/?cp=5 (Accessed on 20 May 2022).

Patrón, P. 2019. Power and deliberative participation in Sen's capability approach. In *The capability approach, empowerment and participation: concepts, methods and applications*, edited by DA Clark, M Biggeri & AA Frediani. London: Springer Nature Limited, pp. 55 – 74.

Pattman, R. 2015. Ways of thinking about young people in participatory interview research. In *Handbook of children and youth studies*, edited by J Wyn & H Cahill. New York: Springer, pp. 79 – 92.

Paul, M, Mejia, C, Muyunda, B & Munthali, L. 2017. *Developing measures of reproductive empowerment: a qualitative study in Zambia*. North Carolina: Measure Evaluation.

Pérez, MS & Canella, GS. 2015. Using situational analysis for critical qualitative research purposes. In *Situational analysis in practice: mapping research with grounded theory*, edited by AE Clarke, C Friese & R Washburn. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, pp. 216 – 233.

Pearce, J. 2013. A social model of 'abused consent'. In *Critical perspectives on child sexual exploitation and related trafficking*, edited by M Melrose & J Pearce. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 52 – 68.

Pendenza, M & Lamattina, V. 2019. Rethinking self-responsibility: an alternative vision to the neoliberal concept of freedom. *American Behavioral Scientist* 63(1): 100 – 115. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764218816827 (Accessed on 13 March 2022).

Permanyer, I & Smits, J. 2020. Inequality in human development across the globe. *Population and Development Review* 46(3): 583 – 601. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12343 (Accessed on 23 September 2022).

Peter, F. 2003. Gender and the foundations of social choice: the role of situated agency. *Feminist Economics* 9(2-3): 13 – 32. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/1354570022000078006

Pettit, P. 2008. Freedom and probability: a comment on Goodin and Jackson. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 36(2): 206 – 220. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/40212819 (Accessed on 30 May 2022).

Pettit, P. 2011. The instability of freedom as noninterference: the case of Isaiah Berlin. *Ethics* 121(4): 693 – 716. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/660694 (Accessed on 27 May 2022).

Phillimore, J., Humphris, R., Klass, F. & Knecht, M. 2016. Bricolage: potential as a conceptual tool for understanding access to welfare in superdiverse neighbourhoods. *IRiS Working Paper Series 14*. Birmingham: Institute for Research into Superdiversity.

Pillay, R. 2019. Ethnomethodology. In *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences*, edited by P Liamputtong. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, pp. 269 – 283.

Pincock, K. 2017. Girlhood, participation and empowerment in Tanzania: climbing material and discursive walls. *Children's Geographies* 15(6): 716 – 727. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2017.1310370 (Accessed 12 July 2021).

Pincock, K. 2018. School, sexuality and problematic girlhoods: reframing 'empowerment' discourse. *Third World Quarterly* 39(5): 906 – 919. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2017.1415141 (Accessed 15 February 2022).

Pincock, K & Jones, N. 2020. Challenging power dynamics and eliciting marginalized adolescent voices through qualitative methods. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19: 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920958895 (Accessed on 30 September 2023).

Piroddi, C. 2021. Hope, habitus and social recognition: a Bourdieusian proposal. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 51(4): 619 – 635. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/jtsb.12325 (Accessed on 12 May 2022).

Pizzarossa, LB. 2018. Here to stay: the evolution of sexual and reproductive health rights in international human rights law. *Laws* 7(29): 1 – 17. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/laws7030029 (Accessed on 1 February 2022).

Plan International. 2022. *Our voices, our future: understanding child marriage in food-insecure communities in Chiredzi district, Zimbabwe*. Woking: Plan International.

Poduzov, AA. 2008. The standard of living concept: an essay on current perceptions. *Studies on Russian Economic Development* 19(6): 610 – 617. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1134/S1075700708060075 (Accessed on 2 August 2022).

Pohlhaus, G. 2017. Varieties of epistemic injustice. In *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice*, edited by IJ Kidd, J Medina & G Pohlhaus. London: Routledge, 13 – 26.

Polar, V et al. 2021. When is choice empowering? Examining gender differences in varietal adoption through case studies from Sub-Saharan Africa. *Sustainability* 13(3678): 1 – 19. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073678 (Accessed 23 July 2022).

Potter, RB. 2014. The nature of development studies. In *The companion to development studies*, Third Edition, edited by V Desai & RB Potter. New York: Routledge, pp. 48 – 54.

Prabhu, KS & Iyer, SS. 2019. *Human development in an unequal world*. Delhi: Oxford Academic.

Prevost, EE. 2017. Troubled traditions: Female adaptive education in British Colonial Africa. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45(3): 475 – 505. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2017.1332134 (Accessed on 11 November 2021).

Price, K. 2020. What is reproductive justice? How women of color activists are redefining the pro-choice paradigm. *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 10(2): 340 – 362. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1215/15366936-8566034 (Accessed on 04 June 2022).

Putterman, TL. 2006. Berlin's two concepts of liberty: a reassessment and revision. Polity 38(3): 416 – 446. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/3877074 (25 May 2022).

Qizilbash, M. 2016. Some reflections on capability and republican freedom. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 17(1): 22 – 34. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2015.1127217 (Accessed on 31 July 2022).

Quincy, R, Lu, S & Huang, C. 2012. SWOT analysis: raising capacity of your organisation. *Huamin Philanthropy Brochure Series 2*. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/44537129/SWOT_Analysis_Raising_Capacity_of_Your_Organisation (Accessed on 23 August 2023).

Raftopoulos, B & Pilossof, R. 2021. Education in the first two decades of independence. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352480342 (Accessed on 11 August 2022).

Rahman, A. 2008. Some trends in the praxis of participatory action research. In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice. 2ⁿᵈ Ed.*, edited by P Reason & H Bradbury. London: Sage Publications, pp. 49 – 62.

Ranta, E. 2022. Alternative development approaches: utopias, co-options and transitions. In *The Routledge handbook on the history of development*, edited by CR Unger, I Borowy & CA Pernet. London: Routledge, pp. 52 – 65.

Rappaport, J. 2017. Participation and the work of the imagination: a Colombian retrospective. In *The Palgrave international handbook of action research*, edited by LL Rowell, CD Bruce, JM Shosh & MM Riel. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 147 – 159.

Rashdi, FA. 2018. Functions of emojis in WhatsApp interaction among Omanis. *Discourse, Context & Media* 26: 117 – 126. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2018.07.001 (Accessed on 12 October 2022).

Ravenek, MJ & Rudman, DL. 2013. Bridging conceptions of quality in moments of qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 12(1): 436 – 456.

Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691301200122 (Accessed on 21 October 2021).

Reader, S. 2006. Does a basic needs approach need capabilities? *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 14(3): 337 – 350. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9760.2006.00259.x Accessed on 14 August 2022).

Reason, P & Bradbury, H. 2008. Introduction. In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*. 2nd edition, edited by P Reason & H Bradbury. London: Sage Publications, pp. 1 – 10.

Reid, J. 2013. Interrogating the neoliberal biopolitics of the sustainable development-resilience nexus. In *The biopolitics of development: reading Michel Foucault in the postcolonial present*, edited by S Mezzadra, J Reid & R Samaddar. New Delhi: Springer, pp. 107 – 122.

Rhodes, C & Carlsen, A. 2018. The teaching of the other: ethical vulnerability and generous reciprocity in the research process. *Human Relations* 71(10): 1295– 1318. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726717741530 (Accessed on 15 November 2022).

Richardson, HS. 2007. The social background of capabilities for freedoms. *Journal of Human Development* 8(3): 389 – 414. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880701462213 (Accessed on 26 July 2022).

Roberts, JT.F. 2017. Autonomy, competence and non-interference. *HEC Forum* 30: 235–252. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10730-017-9344-1 (Accessed on 1 March 2022).

Robeyns, I. 2016. Capabilitarianism. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 17(3): 397 – 414. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/19452829.2016.1145631 (Accessed on 6 October 2022).

Robeyns, I. 2017. *Wellbeing, freedom and social justice: the capability approach re-examined*. Cambridge (UK): Open Book Publishers. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0130 (Accessed on 25 February 2022).

Robeyns, I. 2021. The capability approach. In *The Routledge handbook of feminist economics*, edited by G Berik & E Kongar. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 72 – 80.

Robeyns, I & Brighouse, H. 2010. Introduction: social and primary goods and capabilities as metrics of justice. In *Measuring justice: primary goods and capabilities*, edited by H Brighouse & I Robeyns. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1 – 14.

Rogers, M. 2012. Contextualising theories and practices of bricolage research. *The Qualitative Report* 17(7): 1 – 17. Available at: https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2012.1704 (Accessed 12 April 2021).

Romero, M et al. 2021. Abortion-related morbidity in six Latin American and Caribbean countries: findings of the WHO/HRP multi-country survey on abortion (MCS-A). *BMJ Global Health* 6(e005618): 1 – 14. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2021-005618 (Accessed on 13 July 2022).

Rondelez, P. 2021. How to decenter neoliberalism in the analysis of contestation and change? Reflections on the usefulness of Foucault's (extended) governmentality approach. *SN Social Sciences* 1(55): 1 – 32. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-021-00062-4 (Accessed on 28 November 2021).

Ross, LJ. 2017. Reproductive justice as intersectional feminist activism. *Souls* 19(3): 286-314. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/10999949.2017.1389634 (Accessed on 04 June 2022).

Rothe, M & Ronge, B. 2016. The Frankfurt school: philosophy and (political) economy: a thematic introduction by editors. *The History of Human Sciences* 29(2): 3 – 22. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0952695116637523 (27 November 2021).

Roulston, K & Halpin, SN. 2022. Designing qualitative research using interview data. In *The Sage handbook of qualitative research design vol. 1*, edited by U Flick. London: Sage, pp. 667 – 683.

Rutledge, PB & Hogg, JLC. 2020. In-depth interviews. In *The international Encyclopedia of media psychology*, pp. 1 – 7. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119011071.iemp001 (Accessed on 23 October 2023).

Russell, ST. 2019. Numbers and stories: bridging methods to advances social change. In *The Cambridge handbook of sexual development: childhood and* adolescence, edited by S Lamb & J Gilbert. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 336 – 351.

Sachikonye, L. 2012. *Zimbabwe's lost decade: politics, development & society*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Saldaña, J & Omasta, M. 2018. *Qualitative research: analyzing life*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Sarfo, EA, Yendork, JS & Naidoo, AV. 2022. Understanding child marriage in Ghana: the constructions of gender and sexuality and implications for married girls. *Child Care in Practice* 28(2): 228 – 241. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13575279.2019.1701411 (Accessed on 12 December 2021)

Saul, G et al. 2020. Voice without choice? Investigating adolescent girls' agency in marital decision-making in Niger. *Progress in Development Studies* 20(4): 270 – 281. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993420977801 (Accessed on 6 December 2021).

Save the Children. 2021. *Global girlhood report 2021: girl's rights in crisis*. London: Save the Children.

Save the Children. 2022. *Breaking point: children's lives one year under Taliban rule*. London: Save the Children.

Sawyer, SM, Azzopardi, PS, Wickremarathne, D & Patton, GC. 2018. The age of adolescence. *Lancet Child Adolescent Health* 2(3): 223 - 228. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(18)30022-1 (Accessed on 21 October 2021).

Sayi, TS & Sibanda, A. 2018. Correlates of child marriage in Zimbabwe. Journal of Family Issues 39(8): 2366 – 2388. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X18755198 (Accessed on 19 July 2022).

Schaffnit, SB, Wamoyi, J, Urassa, M, Dardoumpa, M & Lawson, DW. 2021. When marriage is the best available option: perceptions of opportunity and risk in female adolescence in Tanzania. *Global Public Health* 16(12): 1820 – 1833. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2020.1837911 (Accessed on 15 September 2024).

Scheffler, S. 2015. The practice of equality. In *Social equality: on what it means to be equals*, edited by C Fourie, F Schuppert & I Wallimann-Helmer. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 21 – 44.

Schroeder, E, Tallarico, R & Bakaroudis, M. 2022. The impact of adolescent initiation rites in East and Southern Africa: Implications for policies and practices. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 27(1): 181 – 192. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2022.2052123 (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

Schubert, K. 2021. Freedom as critique: Foucault beyond anarchism. *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 47(5): 634 – 659. Available at: https://doi.rg/10.1177/0191453720917733 (Accessed on 6 July 2022).

Schuh, KL. 2017. Making meaning by making connections. Dordrecht: Springer Nature

Schweiger, G & Graf, G. 2015. *A philosophical examination of social justice and child poverty*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Scott, RH et al. 2020. What and how: doing good research with young people, digital intimacies, and relationships and sex education. *Sex Education* 20(6): 675 – 691. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2020.1732337 (Accessed on 23 July 2022).

Seff, I, Steiner, JJ & Stark, L. 2020. Early sexual debut: a multi-country, sex-stratified analysis in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Global Public Health* 16(7): 1046 – 1056. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2020.1814833 (Accessed on 23 July 2022).

Šehović, AB. 2018. *Reimagining state and human security: beyond borders*. London: Palgrave Pivot.

Seider, S, Tamerat, J, Shelby, C & Soutter, M. 2017. Investigating adolescents' critical consciousness development through a character framework. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 46(6): 1162 – 11178. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-017-0641-4 (Accessed on 12 January 2022).

Sen, A. 2000. A decade of human development. *Journal of human development* 1(1): 17 – 23. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880050008746 (Accessed on 6 January 2022).

Sen, A. 2002a. *Rationality and freedom*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Sen, A. 2002b. Why health equity? *Health Economics* 11: 659 – 666. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/hec.762 (Accessed on 29 August 2022).

Sen, A. 2005. Human rights and capabilities. *Journal of Human Development* 6(2): 151 – 166. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/14649880500120491 (Accessed on 4 July 2022).

Sen, A. 2006. Inequality reexamined. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. 2009. *The idea of justice*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press.

Sen, G et al. 2020. When accountability meets power: realizing sexual and reproductive health and rights. *International Journal of Equity in Health* 19(111): 1 – 11. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-020-01221-4 (Accessed on 17 April 2022).

Setty, R & Witenstein, MA. 2017. Defining PAR to redefine PAR: theorizing participatory action research in South Asian educational contexts. In *Participatory action research and educational development: south Asian perspective*, edited by H Kidwai. Cham: Palgrave McMillan, pp. 13 – 48.

Sezgin, AU & Punamaki, R. 2020. Impacts of early marriage and adolescent pregnancy on mental and somatic health: the role of partner violence. *Archives of Women's Mental Health* 23(2): 155 – 166.

Shah, GJ & Thomas, S. 2022. *Adolescence in India: an interdisciplinary perspective, 1st edition*. Delhi: Routledge.

Shikukutu, F & Ramrathan, L. 2022. 'You are not a real man until you have scored' masculine discourses and teenage pregnancy. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 27(1): 23 – 31. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2021.2021960 (Accessed on 22 July 2022).

Shimoni, B. 2018. Bring agency and social structure back into organisation development: toward a practice of habitus consulting. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 54(2): 208 – 225. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886317748935 (Accessed on 21 July 2022).

Sipeyiye, M & Mpofu, P. 2022. Sex gospel in Zimbabwe's Pentecostal Christianity as a response to social change: the case of Apostle Kapandura and Mai Lucia Guguwo. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 57(6): 1126 – 1140. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096211046274 (Accessed on 21 December 2021).

Smith, LT. 2021. *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. 3rd edition. London: Zed books.

Smith, P. 2011. The Balinese cockfight decoded: reflections on Geertz and structuralism. In *Interpreting Clifford Geertz: cultural investigation in the social sciences*, edited by JC Alexander, P Smith & M Norton. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 17 – 32.

Sobolewska, E. 2017. Tailoring methodological bricolage to investigate non-discretionary use of digital technology. *Paper Presented at the Conference on Electronic Visualisation and the Arts*, 11 – 13 July 2017, London. Available at: https://doi:10.14236/ewic/HCI2017.49 (Accessed on 19 January 2022).

Southern African Development Community. 2008. *Sexual and reproductive health strategy for the SADC region 2006 – 2015*.

Stark, L et al. 2022. Prevention of conflict-related sexual violence in Ukraine and globally. *The Lancet* 399: 2173 – 2175. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)00840-6 (Accessed on 24 July 2022).

Stawarska, B. 2017. Linguistic encounters: the performativity of active listening. In *Body/self/other: the phenomenology of social encounters*, edited by L Dolezal & D Petherbridge. New York: State University of New York Press, pp. 185 – 208.

Steinberg, SR. 2012. Critical pedagogy and cultural studies research: bricolage in action. *Counterpoints* 422: 230 – 254. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/42981761 (Accessed on 10 October 2021).

Stern, T. 2019. Participatory action research and the challenges of knowledge democracy. *Educational Action Research* 27(3): 435 – 451. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2019.1618722 (Accessed on 02 October 2022).

Stone, D. 2017. Understanding the transfer of policy failure: bricolage, experimentalism and translation. *Policy & Politics* 45(1): 55 – 70. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1332/030557316X14748914098041 (Accessed on 5 October 2021).

Sully, EA. et al. 2020. *Adding it up: investing in sexual and reproductive health, 2019*. New York: Guttmacher Institute. Available at: https://www.guttmacher.org/report/adding-it-upinvesting-in-sexual-reproductive-health-2019 (Accessed on 12 May 2022).

Susen, S. 2015. *The 'postmodern turn' in the social sciences*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Swantz, ML. 2008. Participatory action research as practice. In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*. 2nd edition, edited by P Reason & H Bradbury. London: Sage Publications, pp. 31 – 48.

Tamale, S. 2017. Exploring the contours of African sexualities: religion, law and power. In *Research on gender and sexualities in Africa*, edited by J Bennett & S Tamale. Dakar: CODESRIA, pp. 15 – 42.

Tandon, J. 2017. Participatory research in Asia (PRIA). In *The Palgrave international handbook of action research*, edited by LL Rowell et al. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 441 – 453.

Teddlie, C & Tashakkori, A. 2009. *Foundations of mixed methods research: integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioural sciences.* Thousand Oak: Sage Publications.

Temin, M, Amin, S, Ngo, TD & Psaki, S. 2018. How to give adolescent girls voice, choice, and control. A framework for programs focused on empowering adolescent girls. *Stanford Social Innovation Review.* https://doi.org/10.48558/8G8C-G302 (Accessed on 3 March 2023).

Thambinathan, V & Kinsella, EA. 2021. Decolonizing methodologies in qualitative research: creating spaces for transformative praxis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 20: 1 – 9. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211014766 (Accessed on 14 January 2023).

The Critical Methodologies Collective. 2022. Introduction. In *The politics and ethics of representation in qualitative research: addressing moments of discomfort*, edited by The Critical Methodologies Collective. London: Routledge, pp. 1 – 8.

Thiaw, Y et al. 2024. "He'll come with some sugar:" a qualitative study exploring the drivers and consequences of schoolgirls transactional sex behaviours. Frontiers Reproductive Health 6: 1 – 12. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3389/frph.2024.1325038 (Accessed on 23 May 2024)

Tie, YC, Birks, M & Francis, K. 2019. Grounded theory research: a design framework for novice researchers. *Sage Open Medicine* 7: 1 – 8. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2050312118822927 (Accessed on 12 November 2021).

Timm, AF & Sanborn, JA. 2016. *Gender, sex and the shaping of modern Europe: a history from the French Revolution to the present day.* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Tolman, DL, Davis, BR & Bowman, CP. 2015. "That's just how it is": a gendered analysis of masculinity and femininity ideologies in adolescent girls' and boys' heterosexual relationships. *Journal of Adolescent Research* 31(1): 3 – 31. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558415587325 (Accessed on 28 February 2021).

Tracy, SJ. & Hinrichs, MM. 2017. Big tent criteria for qualitative quality. In *The International Encyclopedia of communication research methods*, edited by J Matthes, CS Davis & RF Potter. John Wiley & Sons, pp. 1 – 10. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/97811189001731.iecrm0016 (Accessed on 12 February 2023).

Tracy, SJ. 2013. *Qualitative research methods: collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Tran, B. 2016. The nature of research methodologies: terms and usage within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. In *Mixed methods research for improved scientific study*, edited by ML Baran & JE Jones. Hershey: IGI Global, pp. 1 – 27.

UN Women. 2019. *Progress of the world's women 2019 – 2020: families in a changing world*. New York: UN Women.

UN Women. nd. Frequently asked questions: types of violence against women and girls. Available at: https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence (Accessed on 20 July 2022).

UNAIDS. 2019. *Women and HIV: a spotlight on adolescent girls and young women*. Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNAIDS. 2020. *Women, adolescent girls and the HIV response*. Geneva: UNAIDS.

UNAIDS. 2021. *Challenge the stigma, pursue your right to health*. Available at: https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2021/january20210120_Zim_srhr (Accessed on 27 May 2023).

UNDP. 2010. *Human development report 2010: the real wealth of nations: pathways to human development*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

UNDP. 2014. *Human development report 2014: sustaining human progress: reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience*. New York: UNDP.

UNDP. 2019. *Human development report 2019: beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: inequalities in human development in the 21st century*. New York: UNDP.

UNDP. 2020. *Human development report 2020: the next frontier, human development and the Anthropocene*. New York: UNDP.

UNDP. 2022. *2022 Special report: new threats to human security in the Anthropocene Demanding greater solidarity*. New York: UNDP.

UNDP. 2024. *Human development report 2023/2024: breaking the gridlock. Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world*. New York: UNDP.

UNESCO. 2018. *Global education monitoring report gender review*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. 2020. *Global education monitoring report – gender report: a new generation: 25 years of efforts for gender equality in education*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNFPA. 2004. *Working from within: culturally sensitive approaches in UNFPA programming*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2013. *Adolescent pregnancy: a review of the evidence*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2018. *Groundbreaking regional strategy on sexual and reproductive health gets ministerial approval for Southern Africa.*

UNFPA. 2020. *The impact of rites of passage and cultural practices on adolescents' and young people's sexual and reproductive health in east and southern Africa: a review of the literature*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2020. *The state of world population, 2020*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2021. *The state of world population 2021: my body is my own, claiming the right to autonomy and self-determination*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2022a. *Motherhood in childhood: the untold story*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2022b. *The state of world population, 2022*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2022c. *Getting to zero: towards rights and choices for all by 2030*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA. 2023. *State of world population 2023*. New York: UNFPA.

UNFPA East and Southern Africa. 2021. *Getting to zero: towards rights and choices for all by 2030*. Nairobi: UNFPA.

UNFPA Zimbabwe, Ministry of Health and Child Care & Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council. 2016. *Zimbabwe national adolescent fertility study*. Harare: UNFPA Zimbabwe.

UNICEF. 2011. *Adolescence: an age of opportunity*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2015. *Child marriage, adolescent pregnancy and family formation in West and Central Africa.* New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2019. *A profile of child marriage and early unions in Latin America and the Caribbean*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2020. *Action to end child sexual abuse and exploitation: a review of the evidence.* New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2021a. *Towards ending child marriage: global trends and profiles of progress.* New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2021b. *The state of the world's children 2021: on my mind – promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2021c. *UNICEF procedure on ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis*. Available at: https://gdc.unicef.org/resource/unicef-procedure-ethical-standards-research-evaluation-data-collection-and-analysis (Accessed on 28 May 2023).

UNICEF. 2021d. *The Relationship between child labour and child marriage: a discourse analysis.*

UNICEF. 2022. *Child marriage in Eastern and Southern Africa: a statistical overview and reflections on ending the practice*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF. 2023*. Is an end to child marriage within reach? Latest trends and future prospects*. New York: UNICEF.

UNICEF Mozambique. 2015. *Child marriage and adolescent pregnancy in Mozambique: causes and impact*. Maputo UNICEF.

UNICEF Zimbabwe. 2023a. *National assessment on adolescent pregnancies in Zimbabwe*. Harare: UNICEF Zimbabwe.

UNICEF Zimbabwe. 2023b. *Adolescents and youth strategy 2023 to 2026*. Harare: UNICEF Zimbabwe.

UNICEF, UN Women & Plan International. 2020. *A new era for girls: taking stock of 25 years of progress*. New York: UNICEF.

Unis, BD & Sallstrom, C. 2020. Adolescents' conceptions of learning and education about sex and relationships. *American Journal of Sexuality Education* 15(1): 25-52. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/15546128.2019.1617816 (Accessed on 12 May 2021).

UNISA. 2016. *Policy on research ethics*. Pretoria: UNISA.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, n.d. *Adolescent birth rate (ABR): annual number of births to females aged 10-14 or 15-19 years per 1,000 females in the respective age group: SDG Indicator 3.7.2*

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2024. *World population prospects 2024, online edition*. Available at: https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/MostUsed (Accessed on 26 August 2024).

United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016. *General comment No. 22 (2016) on the right to sexual and reproductive health (article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)*

United Nations General Assembly. 2015. *Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. New York: United Nations.

United Nations Human Rights Council. 2022. *Conflict-related sexual violence against women and girls in South Sudan*. Geneva: Human Rights Council.

United Nations Women. 2017. *Conflict-related sexual violence in Asia-Pacific: putting victims/survivors first*. New York: UN Women.

Urquhart, L. Brown, L, Duncanson, K, Roberts, K & Fisher, K. 2020. A dialogical approach to understand perspectives of an Aboriginal wellbeing program: an extension of Habermas' theory of communicative action. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*

van Dijk, TA. 2018. Socio-cognitive discourse studies. In *The Routledge handbook of critical discourse studies*, edited by J Flowerdew & JE Richardson. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 26 – 43.

van Schalkwyk, S. 2018. *Narrative landscapes of female sexuality in Africa: collective stories of trauma and transition*. Cham: Palgrave.

Velástegui, PG. 2020. Humanizing development: taking stock of Amartya Sen's capability approach. *Problemas del Desarrollo. Revista Latinoamericana de Economía* 51(203): 191 – 212. Available at:

Veritas Zimbabwe. 2022. *Constitutional court rules on age of consent*. Court Watch 3/2022. Available at: https://www.veritaszim.net/node/5689 (Accessed on 14 October 2022).

Verza, A. 2022. Vulnerability, justice and care. *Oñati Socio-Legal Series* 12(1): 211 – 230. Available at: https://opo.iisj.net/index.php/osls/article/view/1397/1540 (Accessed on 21 April 2022).

Wakefield, S & Zimmerman, K. 2020. Re-imagining resilience: supporting feminist women to lead development with transformative practice. *Gender & Development* 28(1): 155 – 174. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2020.1717198 (Accessed on 06 September 2024).

Walia, R. 2015. A saga of qualitative research. *Sociology and Criminology* 3(2): 1 – 3. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4172/2375-4435.1000124 (Accessed on 15 October 2021).

Walker, M & Boni, A. 2020. Epistemic justice, participatory research and valuable capabilities. In *Participatory research, capabilities and epistemic justice: a transformative agenda for higher education*, edited by M Walker & A Boni. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1 – 26.

Wamba, N. 2017. Inside the outside: reflections on a researcher's positionality/multiple "I's". In *The Palgrave international handbook of action research*, edited by LL Rowell, CD Bruce, JM Shosh & MM Riel. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 613 – 626.

Wamoyi, J et al. 2021. Capitalising on aspirations of adolescent girls and young women to reduce their sexual health risks: Implications for HIV prevention. *Global Public Health* Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2021.1929386 (Accessed on 12 October 2022).

Wamoyi, J. et al. 2019. Is transactional sex exploitative? A social norms perspective, with implications for interventions with adolescent girls and young women in Tanzania. *PLoS One* 14(4)

Wangamati, CK. 2020. Comprehensive sexuality education in sub-Saharan Africa: adaptation and implementation challenges in universal access for children and

adolescents. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters* 28(2): 56 – 61. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2020.1851346 (Accessed on 19 August 2024).

Warria, A. 2018. Girls' innocence and futures stolen: the cultural practice of sexual cleansing in Malawi. *Children and Youth Services Review* 91: 298 – 303. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.06.011 (Accessed on 2 January 2022).

Watkins, ES. 2012. How the pill became a lifestyle drug: the pharmaceutical industry and birth control in the United States since 1960. *American Journal of Public Health* 102(8): 1462 – 1472. Available at: https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2012.300706 (Accessed on 19 August 2024).

Webber, KH. 2018. Justifying development aid: communicative freedom and capabilities. University of California, United States of America.

Wells, J. 2017. The "terrible loneliness": loneliness and worry in settler women's memoirs from East and South-Central Africa, 1890 – 1939. *African Studies Quarterly* 17(2): 47 – 64. Available at: http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v17/v17i2a3.pdf (15 November 2021).

Wenner, DM. 2020. Nondomination and the limits of relational autonomy. *IJFAB: International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* 13(2): https://muse.jhu.edu/article/764518 (Accessed on 20 June 2022).

Whyte, K. 2021. Against crisis epistemology. In *The Routledge handbook of critical indigenous studies*, edited by B Hokowhitu, A Moreton-Robinson, L Tuhiwai-Smith, C Andersen & S Larkin. London: Routledge, pp. 52 – 64.

Wiles, R. 2013. *What are qualitative research ethics?* London: Bloomsbury.

Willis, JW. 2007. *Foundations of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Wondon, Q, Montenegro, C, Nguyen, H & Onagoruwa, A. 2018. The cost of not educating girls: missed opportunities: the high cost of not educating girls. Washington DC: World Bank.

Woollett, N, Bandeira, M, Marunda, S, Madekunye, L & Ebersohn, L. 2021. Adolescent pregnancy and young motherhood in rural Zimbabwe: findings from a baseline study. *Health and Social Care in the Community* 29(6): e377 – e386. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.13362 (Accessed on 21 September July 2021).

World Bank. 2017. *Economic impacts of child marriage: global synthesis brief*. Washington DC: World Bank.

World Bank. 2021. *Improving the well-being of adolescent girls in developing countries*. Washington DC: World Bank

World Bank. 2024. Gross national income per capita 2023. Available at: http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators (Accessed on 25 August 2024)

World Bank, UNESCO & UNICEF. 2021. *The state of the global education crisis: a path to recovery*. Washington D.C., Paris, New York: The World Bank, UNESCO, and UNICEF.

World Health Organisation. 2018. *Guidance on ethical considerations in planning and reviewing research studies on sexual and reproductive health in adolescents*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Health Organisation. 2020a. *Adolescent pregnancy. evidence brief*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Health Organisation. 2020b. *global status report on preventing violence against children*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Health Organisation. 2021a. *Access to medical abortion medicines in the South-East Asia region: a status report*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Health Organisation. 2021b. *Violence against women prevalence estimates, 2018: global, regional and national prevalence estimates for intimate partner violence against women and global and regional prevalence estimates for non-partner sexual violence against women*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

World Health Organisation. 2022. *World health statistics 2022: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

World Health Organisation. 2023. *Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2020*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Health Organisation, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank & the United Nations Population Group. 2019. *Trends in maternal mortality 2000 to 2017*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

World Vision International. 2019. *The violent truth about teenage pregnancy: what children say*. London: World Vision International.

World Vision International. 2020. *COVID-19 aftershocks: access denied*. London: World Vision International.

Yamazaki, S. 2021. Pigou's welfare economics revisited: a non-welfarist and non-utilitarian interpretation. In *Welfare theory, public action and ethical values: revisiting the history of welfare economics*, edited by R Backhouse, A Baujard & T Nishizawa. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 97 – 117.

Yap, ML. 2017. In pursuit of culturally relevant indicators of indigenous wellbeing: Operationalising the 'recognition space'. PhD Thesis, Australian National University.

Yee, J & Bremner, C. 2011. Methodological bricolage: what does it tell us about design? *Paper presented at the Doctoral Design Education Conference, 23-25 May 2011, Hong Kong Polytechnic, Hong Kong.* Available at: http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/8822/ (Accessed 19 January 2022).

Youé, C. 2018. Settler colonialism or colonies with settlers? *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 52(1): 69 – 85. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00083968.2018.1429868 (Accessed on 15 November 2021).

Yuh, T et al. 2020. Sexually transmitted infections among Kenyan adolescent girls and young women with limited sexual experience. *Frontiers in Public Health* 8: 1 – 5. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2020.00303 (Accessed on 3 June 2021).

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Intersectionality and feminist politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 193 – 209. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506806065752 (Available 2 March 2022).

Zheng, Y et al. 2022. Global burden and trends of sexually transmitted infections from 1990 to 2019: an observational trend study. *The Lancet Infectious Diseases* 22(4): 541 – 551. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-30399(21)00448-5 (Accessed on 23 August 2023).

Zilber, TB. 2018. Stories as social action: rethinking narrative studies of organizing. In *The Routledge companion to qualitative research in organization studies*, edited by R Mir and S Jain. New York: Routledge, pp. 128 – 140.

Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies. 2003. *Zimbabwe human development report 2003: redirecting our responses to HIV and AIDS*. Harare: Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) & ICF International. 2016. *Zimbabwe demographic and health survey 2015: final report*. Rockville, Maryland, USA: Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) and ICF International.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) & UNICEF (2019). *Zimbabwe multiple indicator cluster survey 2019: survey findings report*. Harare: ZIMSTAT and UNICEF.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT) & World Bank. 2020. *Zimbabwe poverty update 2017 – 19*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). 2013. *Provincial report Manicaland, census 2012*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZIMSTAT). 2023. *Zimbabwe 2022 population and housing census report, vol. 1*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee. 2022. *2022 Rural livelihoods assessment report*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association. 2018. "Deliberate transmission of H.I.V": the law in terms of section 79 of the criminal law codification and reform act (Chapter 9:23). Available at: http://www.zwla.co.zw/media-room/news/deliberate-transmission-hiv-law-terms-section-79-criminal-law-codification-and (Accessed on 28 July 2023).

Zimmermann, N. 2019. Gillick competence: an unnecessary burden. *The New Bioethics* 25(1): 78 – 93. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/20502877.2019.1564004 (Accessed on 21 August 2024).

Zimmerman, LA et al. 2021. The intersection of power and gender: examining the relationship of empowerment and gender-unequal norms among young adolescents in Kinshasa, DRC. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 69: 64 – 71. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.03.031 (Accessed on 29 March 2022).

Zulaika, G et al. 2022. Impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on adolescent pregnancy and school dropout among secondary schoolgirls in Kenya. *BMJ Global Health* 7(1): 1 – 9. Available at: https://10.1136/bmjgh-2021-007666 (Accessed on 9 August 2022).

Zulu, IZ et al. 2022. Application of community dialogue approach to prevent adolescent pregnancy, early marriage and school dropout in Zambia: a case study. *Reproductive Health* 19(30): 1 – 9. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-022-01335-8 (Accessed on 13 February 2022).

APPENDIX A: PERMISSION LETTER

CHIMANIMANI RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

TELEPHONE 0272052272/3
FAX 0270252463
Email: chimanimanirdc@gmail.com

All correspondences to be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer

Stand 267
P.O. Box 65
Chimanimani

7 November 2022

Councillor ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛
⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛

Re: Clearance to Conduct Research In Ward ⬛ of Chimanimani District

This letter serves as clearance for Mr Rusinga from the University of South Africa to conduct research in your ward. The research is part of his fulfillment to attain a PHD.

Kindly inform the local leadership and assist in the best possible way

Regards

[signature]

⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛
E.O. Social Services and Community Development
For Chief Executive Officer
Chimanimani Rural District Council

Cc: Headman ⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛

APPENDIX B: TEMPLATE FOR PROFILING CO-RESEARCHERS

Name (Do not write real name):…………………………………………………………

Age………………………………

Marital status……………………………………………

Level of education………………………………

Describe your background and of your household……………………………………

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

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

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

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

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

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

What are your life goals and aspirations…………………………………………………

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

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

APPENDIX C: FLYER FOR INVITING PARTICIPANTS

(Photo ©Government of Zimbabwe, 2016)

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Demographic Data

1. How old are you? *(Une makore mangana?).*
2. What is your marital status? *(Wakamira papi maererano newanano?).*
3. What is your highest level of education? *(Wakasvika papi pakudzidza?).*
4. Are you still at school? *(Uchiri kufunda here?).*
5. If No, why? *(Kana uchiti kwete, nemhaka yei?).*

SRH Decision-making

1. What do you know about sexual and reproductive health issues? *(Ndezvipi zvaunoziya maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka?).*
2. What sexual and reproductive health decisions did you voluntarily make? *(Ndedzipi sarudzo dzawakaita maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka pasina kumanikidzwa?)*
3. Can you share your experiences of sexual and reproductive health decisions you make? *(Ung.anditaurirawo here zvawakasangana nazvo pasarudzo dzawakaita maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka?).*
4. Did you look for help when making sexual and reproductive health decisions? *(Wakambotsvaga rubatsiro here pawaiita sarudzo dzako maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka?).*
5. If yes, where did you seek help and why? *(Kana uchiti hongu, ndekupi kwawakatsvaga rubatsiro uye nemhaka yei?).*
6. Can you share the help you get from the people you consult? *(Ung.anditaurirawo here rubatsiro rwawakawana kubva kuvanhu vakakubatsira?).*
7. When you reflect on sexual and reproductive health decisions, what do you cherish and/or regret about your choices? *(Paunofunga uri wega nesarudzo yawakaita kana dzawakaita maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka, ndezvipi zvaunofarira kana kushoora?).*

8. Are there any experiences of sexual and reproductive health you feel you were forced? *(Pane zvimwe here zvawakasangana nazvo maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka zvaunoona sekuti wakamanikidzwa?).*

9. If yes, can you share the experiences? *(Kana zviripo, unganditaurirawo?).*

APPENDIX E: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

1. In your opinion, how important is sexual and reproductive health knowledge in influencing your life choices? *(Maonero enyu, ruzivo maererano neutano hwepabonde nekubereka rwakakosha zvakadini musarudzo dzamunoita muupenyu?).*

2. What are the challenges faced by adolescent girls in making decisions on sexual and reproductive health in line with lives they want to lead? *(Ndezvipi zvamunoona zvinokanganisa vasikana kuita sarudzo pasina kumanikidzwa maererano neutauno hwepabonde nekubereka kufambidzana neupenyu hwavanozvishuvira?).*

3. What is the ideal control of sexual and reproductive health decisions you believe can enhance adolescent girls' freedom to pursue their life goals? *(Ndezvipi zvamunoti ndiyo shuwiro yevasikana pavenenge vachiita sarudzo panyaya dzezveutano hwepabonde nekubereka pasina kumanikidzwa kuti vaenderere mberi neupenyu hwunoyemurika?).*

4. What do you suggest on addressing experiences of violence and maltreatment in sexual and reproductive health decision-making among adolescent girls? *(Ndezvipi zvamunokurudzira zvingaitwa kurwisa mhirizhonga uye kushungurudzwa kunosangana nevasikana pavanoita sarudzo pamusoro peutano hwezvepabonde nekubereka?).*

APPENDIX F: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNISA | university of south africa

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

29 March 2022

Dear Mr Oswell Rusinga

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 29 March 2022 to 29 March 2027

NHREC Registration # :
Rec-240816-052
CREC Reference # :
63693755_CREC_CHS_2022

Researcher(s): Name: Mr Oswell Rusinga
Contact details: 63693755@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Supervisor(s): Name: Dr TS Mudau
Contact details: 0825739589

Title: The nexus between sexual and reproductive health decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani district, Zimbabwe

Degree Purpose: PhD

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for five years.

The *medium risk application* was reviewed by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, 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 College 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 Personal 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 **(29 March 2027).** Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **63693755_CREC_CHS_2022** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature: pp

Prof. KB Khan
CHS Research Ethics Committee Chairperson
Email: khankb@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429 8210

Signature: PP
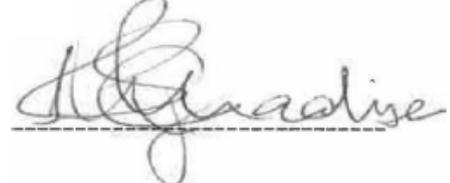
Prof K. Masemola
Exécutive Dean: CHS
E-mail: masemk@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429 2298

APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Research title: The nexus between sexual and reproductive health decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Researcher: Oswell Rusinga (63693755)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.
I agree to the recording of the interview or focus group discussion.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname…………………………………… (please print)

Participant Signature…………………………………………..Date…………………

Researcher's Name & Surname……………………………………(please print)

Researcher's signature…………………………………………..Date…………………

APPENDIX H: ASSENT FORM

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Research title: The nexus between sexual and reproductive health decision-making and human development among adolescent girls in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe

Researcher: Oswell Rusinga (63693755)

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my assent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the interview or focus group discussion.

I agree to the recording of the interview or focus group discussion.

I will receive a copy of this informed assent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname……………………………………… (type)

Participant Signature…………………………………………Date…………………

Researcher's Name & Surname……………………………………(type)

Researcher's signature………………………………………..Date…………………

APPENDIX I: SOCIAL WORKER'S LETTER

Chimanimani High School
Box 100
Chimanimani

08 February 2022

Mr O. Rusinga
University of South Africa
Department of Development Studies
TvW Building 04-26
Unisa Main Campus
Muckleneuk

Dear Sir

REF: **CONSENT TO PARTAKE IN THE RESEARCH**

I, Mususa Melody as a registered Social Worker confirm that I was recruited by Oswell Rusinga to provide counseling services to the population study he is using in his research. I will be available during the time of field work with assistance in providing counselling services either individually or group counselling through psychosocial support to the population study. I am also aware of the ethics to be considered when providing counseling to clients and I certify that I will maintain those ethics such as issues to do with confidentiality and trying to be non-judgmental during the counselling process.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Yours faithfully
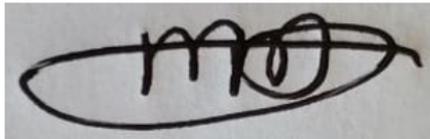
Mususa Melody
Social Worker Zimbabwe