

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL MIGRATION ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF ABOLESCENTS FROM MKOBA 3 HIGH SCHOOL AND BUDIRO B COLLEGE IN MKOBA AGED BETWEEN 13 AND 16 YEARS.

BY

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DEDICATIONS

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Tafadzwa and Ashirai and my loving husband Lyson Muuya for the sacrifices they had to make and the continuous support and encouragement they gave me as I embarked on this journey.

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ABSTRACT

The years 2000 to 2009 saw a lot of Zimbabweans from all walks of life experience a period of economic hardships. Many Zimbabwean parents out-migrated into neighboring countries and overseas in search of greener pastures, leaving their adolescent-children behind in their home country. The study sought to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro B College aged between thirteen and sixteen years with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe. The study also sought to explore on how left-behind adolescents at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro B College aged between 13 and 16 years view parental absence due to migration and how they cope with their situation. The research was prompted by the realization that a lot of parents in Mkoba are out-migrating leaving adolescents either on their own or with caregivers so the researcher saw the need to research on this topic. The study assumed that parental migration impacts negatively on the psychological well-being of adolescents. Qualitative methodologies were used. An exploratory design enabled the researcher to explore the experiences of the adolescents. Purposive sampling was used to come out with the twenty adolescents who participated in the study and the adolescents were chosen on the basis that they had one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe. In-depth interviews were used to allow the participants to share their own stories in their own words. The data that was gathered from the interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic areas were extracted into which the data was categorized and analysed. The study confirmed findings by other scholars in their countries and revealed that parental absence due to migration has a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents. Adolescents' perceptions on parental absence and coping styles were also identified. Recommendations were made to schools, parents, caregivers, policy makers and for further study.

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ACRONYMS

BBC – Budiro B College, a private college offering secondary education in Mkoba.

MHS- Mkoba High School, a high school situated in Mkoba, a high density suburb in Gweru

1.0 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study explored the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents from Mkoba 3 and Budidiro B College in Mkoba aged between 13 and 16 years of age. This introductory chapter introduces what the study is all about. It focused on the background to the study, statement of the problem, the significance of the study, purpose of the study, its objectives, research questions, assumptions, delimitations, limitations of the study and operational definitions of key terms.

1:2 Background to the study

The United Nations (1998), in its Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, revision, defines a migrant as “any person who changes his or her country of usual residence”. Migration can either be internal, that is migration within one country or international, which is movement from one country to another. For the purpose of this study, parental migration was defined as the movement of an adolescent’s father or mother or both to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions.

Weeks (1986) notes that the migratory process is a phenomenon that nearly all nations have gone through and they are still experiencing it. Held et al., (1999) share the same sentiments and postulate that migration is not a recent occurrence, even people from long back have migrated settling in new lands in the search of a better quality of life. In recent times, most migrants are parents and their movements are usually from developing to developed countries. Pekin (1989) postulates that the phenomenon is more common in Mediterranean countries, the Caribbean, Latin American countries and to a lesser extent, developed regions such as some of the more disadvantaged areas of Western Europe.

Current trends in worldwide migration in the last decade show a drastic increase in migration in all parts of the world. The number of migrants has more than doubled with about 192 million people living outside their place of birth. Migration is more prevailing in developing countries mainly in Africa, Asia and South of America. Many people continuously move to the

developed countries for better living conditions. Anarfi & Kwankye (2009) hold that, it is estimated that in 2009, about 3% of the world's population were residing in a country other than where they were born. One of the main reason why people migrate is lack of adequate employment opportunities and low wages in countries of origin. Other people have migrated in order to get educational opportunities and improved services such as health care, access to material goods and services. The increased demand in destination countries for unskilled labour, semi-skilled labour, and skilled workers coupled with higher wages than in the countries of origin is also another reason why people decide to migrate, (D'emilo et al., 2007).

Studies from China show that the country has been undergoing rapid development and migration at international level. Xiang (2007) posits that, by the year 2000, the majority of migrants from China were adults aged 25-49 years old. The number of children left behind as parents migrate from China was estimated to be around 20 million, (Xiang, 2007). For countries like China and other developing countries, migration is very important as it can provide a path out of poverty for populations that would otherwise be stuck in remote regions with poor resource environments. The Whitehead & Hashim (2005) report estimates that the percentage of children living in migrant households is between 18 and 40 percent in rural Bangladesh, 50 to 60 percent in rural Tanzania, and 80 percent in Mali. One study on Bangladesh discovered that an overwhelming 91 percent of the 5,930 children aged between 5 and 14 have one migrant parent (mainly the father) who is away, and another 2 percent of the sample has neither parent living in the household, (Kuhn 2006). Bryant (2005) estimates that about half a million children in Thailand aged 0 to 14 years are left behind by their global migrant parents mostly their fathers. Despite the considerably higher income prospects, migration is often accompanied by long-term family separations. The lengthy absence of parents from the lives of their children could carry negative consequences for child well-being.

According to de Bruijn et al., (2001), Africa has long been described as a continent of people on the move. Across Africa, migration has always played an important role in sustaining and expanding people's livelihoods in many different ways. Today, migration is considered as one of Africa's most important demographic features in explaining spatial distribution of population, (Meade and Emch, 2010). In Ghana, studies on migration show that a huge number of Ghanaians are migrating to other countries, (GSS, 2005). Many reasons given by people from Ghana for their continued emigration to other countries have been documented. Anarfi et

al (2003) are of the view that high unemployment rates and decline in economy due to the economic crises from the mid-1960s are some of the key reasons as to why people have out-migrated. The large scale of global migration in the country has raised concerns about its effects on the children left-behind, such as their education and health care needs, (Coe, 2012). Migration in Ghana has also been associated with a number of issues affecting children's personal and social development when they are left-behind as they are burdened by the cost of migration, (UNICEF, 2009).

Zimbabwe has been experiencing economic hardships for the past decade due to the effects of hyperinflation. The year 2000 to 2009 saw Zimbabweans from all walks of life experience a period of economic hardships. Hanke and Kwok (2009) assert that in the year 2008, the country suffered the second highest rate of price rises ever recorded in the world compounded by acute shortages of food, fuel and most basic commodities. The political crisis in Zimbabwe saw the country being sanctioned and denied any financial funding and this worsened the situation. Most companies had to close down leaving many people jobless, (Chetsanga & Muchenje, 2003). Other organisations that survived had to reduce their manpower and this resulted in many people being retrenched, and in a situation that they could not provide for their families. Shaw (2008) purports that the year 2008 saw the education system of Zimbabwe being affected by continuous strikes from teachers who were not happy about their salaries. The situation led to an increase in enrolment at private colleges like Herentals, Booms and others offering both primary and secondary education at an exorbitant fees which were paid on monthly basis. A lot of parents had no choice but to send their children there because despite being expensive, the teachers were always available and never went on strike.

Records from the Principal's office at Herentals College show that 55% of the students enrolled with the school have their parents working outside Zimbabwe. The problem with some of these colleges is lack of firm rules and regulations for their pupils when compared to formal schools. Some are mostly concerned with money such that even if a student absents himself from school for a month, he is free to join again as long as he pays school fees unlike in formal schools where absenteeism for this long will result in dismissal. The health system was also affected by acute shortages of drugs and doctors charging exorbitant fees far beyond the reach of many and this left a lot of adults in Zimbabwe with no choice but to migrate, (Sundari, 2007) As people continued to migrate to potentially attractive receiving countries, the receiving countries tightened their immigration laws and border controls as a way of restricting the number of immigrants who entered their countries. This has however caused people to migrate

to different parts of the world without their families a trend that has increased the plight of children left behind.

As a result of the Zimbabwean socio-economic and political crisis, many Zimbabwean parents have out-migrated into neighbouring countries and overseas in search of greener pastures, leaving their children behind in their home country. It is estimated that approximately one quarter of the population left the country to find work in other countries leaving children behind in the care of relatives and some on their own. Pasuwa (2009) asserts that, from a population of 13 million people in Zimbabwe, estimates suggest that between three and four million Zimbabweans left the country to the Diasporas due to the country's close proximity to countries like South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Mozambique. Others travelled overseas into Europe, America, Asia and Australia leaving a scar on families. Some had to opt for often dangerous migration routes with limited knowledge about the conditions in the country of destination. This has however impacted on the psychological well-being of adolescents left behind. Shaw (2008) posits that this move by parents has created a social phenomenon which he refers to as the, "**Diaspora orphans**", children of people working outside Zimbabwe left behind in the care of only one parent or even relatives and friends.

Some parents were left with no choice but to live their adolescent children on their own and this has however led to many child-headed households, (Sundari, 2007). Others end up engaging in deviant behaviours like stealing and prostitution in order to put food on the table while their parents are still struggling to secure jobs in foreign countries because they did not have proper documentations to allow them to work there. Parents' decision to migrate might be the best for themselves but can be traumatic for children especially adolescents who will have to adapt to a new environment posing an impact on their psychological well-being. Although these adolescents understand their parents' rationales for leaving, money is not the same as the physical presence of a parent.

Although many have loving relationships with their caregivers, it is not the same as living with ones' parents. In this situation, presence of parents is often thought to be bridged by parents responding through material things and recently with the advent of technology, voice or video calling and other social networking channels. Adolescents would however need physical presence that is, a parent who can be there physically and emotionally. Most previous studies either have examined parental absence as a result of migration holistically, talk about to the Caribbean region or have constricted their focus to some islands where the occurrence appears

most predominant, remarkably Jamaica, (Pottinger & Brown 2006). The distinctive nature of this study is that it is looking at the impact of parental absence due to migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16. Most studies which have been conducted to date have ignored the psychological well-being of adolescents at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba whose parents are absent due to migration, this study took this into account.

1.3 Statement of the problem

It has been observed that adolescents aged from 13 to 16 at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba with migrant parents are engaging in unbecoming behaviour. Records from the headmaster's office compiled in 2013 at MHS show that, 75% of disciplinary problems were from adolescents with absent parents who are engaging in delinquent behaviours. Records for the same period obtained from the Principal's office at BBC show a 39% increase in truancy amongst the same individuals. Individual Progress Records showed 25% absenteeism amongst students with immigrant parents and most of them ended up dropping out of school. Class teachers' records showed fluctuation in performance and more disciplinary problems amongst these adolescents when compared to peers with parents who are present. Substance abuse amongst these adolescents has also increased. Statistics from Gweru Provincial hospital recorded between 2008 and 2013 show that cases of sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy amongst adolescents with migrant parents have increased by 30% compared to the previous years. As of late, records obtained from the psychiatry ward where parasuicidal counselling is conducted by psychiatric nurses show that parasuicidal cases amongst these adolescents have also increased. Out of all the cases that were recorded in the counselling register, 50% of the cases were adolescents with migrant parents. There also seems to be increased rate in abuse of social network amongst these adolescents than those with parents who are present. Therefore, could it be because of parental absence that these adolescents are engaging in unbecoming behaviour.

1.4 Significance of the study

Any study is not undertaken for no apparent reason, but to be put to use by other interested stakeholders. This study will benefit the following audiences:

1.4.1 Parents

Previous studies have concentrated more on children in general but this study in particular has an important position in assisting parents to understand the impact of their absence on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 who they leave behind when they migrate. It will help them understand how these adolescents view their absence due to migration and how they in turn cope with the situation. Moreover, the study will also help parents understand why adolescents aged thirteen and sixteen engage in some of the behaviours that they engage in.

1.4.2 Adolescents

The study will help address the effects and dimensions of the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between thirteen and sixteen from MHS and BBC who have not had the opportunity to express themselves and to present their attitudes, feelings, and perceptions of migration and its effect on them. The information that will have been collected will help to come up with strategies on how to assist adolescents with immigrant parents. Thus more information on the psychological well-being of adolescents with migrant parents will be provided and solutions will be derived from this information.

1.4.4 Policy makers

The study is not only going to make visible the opinions of adolescents on migration, but to contribute to the design of public policies that guarantee the full protection of adolescents “left behind.” In addition, the study will help local interested parties to develop their capacity to address more widely the non-economic needs of children who lack parental care. If findings of the research are distributed, they may enable policy makers to see the magnitude of the problem and allow them to come up with policies that reduce the negative impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of these adolescents. Additionally, the results will help the government, community based organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to formulate strategies and programmes that offer psycho-social support programs for adolescents with migrant parents.

1.4.5 Research community

Very few studies have explored the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents with migrant parents in Zimbabwe. This study will also serve as a basis for further research. Findings from this study would also have theoretical significance as this

will extend existing knowledge in understanding the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between thirteen and sixteen which has not been researched that much.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The study's aim was to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents at Mkoba 3 High and Budiriro B College who are aged between thirteen and sixteen with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe.

1.6 Objectives

The objectives of this research were:

To explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents at Mkoba 3 High school and Budiriro B College with immigrant parents. The research also sought to explore on how left-behind adolescents at MHS and BBC aged between 13 and 16 view parental absences due to migration. Furthermore, the research sought to identify different methods used by these adolescents to cope with their situation.

1.7 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1.7.1 Main Research Question:

What is the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of Left-behind adolescents (LBA) at Mkoba High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba?

1.7.2 Sub Research Questions:

How do Left-behind adolescents aged between thirteen and sixteen at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College view parental absence due to migration?

How do these adolescents cope with parental absence?

1.8 Delimitations

The research was restricted to Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College. The schools are situated in the high density suburb of Mkoba, about ten kilometres from Gweru CBD. Only those adolescents aged between thirteen and sixteen with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe participated in the study.

1.9 limitations of the study

One limitation of the study is that it was subject to the researcher's decisions due to the use of purposive sampling. The researcher faced challenges like withholding of information by participants, unwillingness to participate due to fear of victimization and even subjectivity of information. The researcher however assured participants that their names and everything that will transpire during the research will be kept as confidential as possible and also explain to them on the need to provide correct information. Language was also a barrier making some pupils not to grasp the questions well. The researcher restructured the questions as she interviewed the pupils so that they would understand the demands of the question. The researcher even went on to code switch the language to make the questions clear. The other limitation to the study is that the research was limited to adolescents from MHS and BBC aged thirteen to sixteen only, thus the results will be more generalised if applied to other adolescents in Gweru.

1.10 Assumptions

The study assumed that parental migration impacts negatively on the psychological well-being of adolescents at MHS and BBC. It also assumed that adolescents engage in unbecoming behaviour if their parents are absent. Furthermore, the study assumed that the research participants will cooperate and provide sincere responses. It is also assumed that the study will meet the required time frame as stated by the Midlands State University.

1.11 Definition of key terms

Adolescents- persons aged between thirteen and nineteen. For the purpose of this study, the term will be limited to persons aged between thirteen and sixteen.

Diaspora orphans- adolescents who were left behind by one parent or both.

Parental migration- is the movement of a father or mother to a new country in order to find work or better living conditions.

Psychological well-being – for the purpose of this study, psychological well-being refers to what is considered good health amongst adolescents encompassing their mental, physical and social dimensions.

1.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter laid the foundation for conducting a study whose aim was to explore the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between thirteen and sixteen from MHS and BBC from Mkoba with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe. Background to the study was done to show the extent of the problem on a large scale. The statement of the problem was drawn, highlighting on what exactly is disturbing that has made the researcher carry out the study. Research questions and objectives were formulated and the questions were structured in a way that they managed to fulfil the objectives of the study. Assumptions that the researcher held were noted down prior to the study as well as the limitations and delimitations of the study were drawn. Key terms were defined and the definitions were tailor-made specifically to suit the study.

2.0 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Holt et al (1998) purport that literature review refers to an evaluative report of information found in the literature related to a selected area of study and its purpose is to convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. This chapter deals with the conceptual framework, prevalence of parental migration problem, past studies on impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents, theoretical explanations on the experiences of adolescents with migrant parents and knowledge gap. The chapter is important because it provides the views of other scholars on the experiences of adolescents with migrant parents so as to reveal more about the research problem in order to try and close the existing gaps. Key concepts will be explained, descriptions, summarizations, evaluations and clarity on the literature will be made.

2.1.1 Parental migration defined

In their study on the impact of parental migration on children from the Carribean, Pottinger & Brown (2006) defined parental migration as when parents migrate for a different number of times or for life but have no intentions of having their children leave out of the country. These children are left behind and the only hope of ever seeing their parents again will be through irregular visits to them or upon their return. Another study on the impact of international migration on children left behind in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbbean conducted by UNICEF (2007), noted that migration is a predominant phenomenon all over the region, mostly in Latin America and the Caribbean caused by the decline of economies and employment prospects. This has however led to migration to the United States, Canada and Europe.

Despite the opportunities provided for individuals to earn meaningfully higher incomes that assists all family members, migration comes in handy with long-term family separations. The lengthy absence of parents from the lives of their children could carry negative consequences for child well-being. As a major family decision, migration by a parent may have difficult direct and indirect effects on the lives of children. However, for many children in developing countries, living in a family with at least one parent away for long periods of time is part of normal childhood experience.

Regionally, international migration has been more common within countries in West Africa, and also between the rest of the African region. Since 2007, the prevalence of migration from Zimbabwe has markedly increased, showing even greater numbers at present. Although the figures are estimates, they propose that parental migration affects tens of millions of children globally and perhaps even several millions in Zimbabwe alone, (Madzivadondo, 2012). In his study on the impact of spouses in the Diaspora on the family as an agent of economic development in Zimbabwe conducted in Masvingo, Madzivadondo (2012) outlined that it was revealed that from a country of about 13 million people, estimates suggest that between three and four million Zimbabweans left the country to the diasporas with an exceptional number of people migrating into, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Mozambique. Others travelled overseas into Europe, America, Asia and as far as Australia.

2.1.2 Causes of parental migration

Akokpari (2000) and Martin (2008) contend that, there is a connection between globalisation and international migration. They however note that, this connection is through factors such as joblessness and increased cost of living among others. In a study on the impact of international migration on children left behind in selected countries of Latin America and the Caribbean carried out by UNICEF (2007), four key factors associated with migration were identified. These factors included lack of sufficient employment opportunities in the countries of origin and low-wages, family reintegration and ties to the country of destination, seeking educational opportunities and improved healthcare services and also increased demand in destination countries for unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers. Held et al., (1999) supports the other scholars and contends that these migrants certainly tend to go where they perceive prospects to be greater. Smeekens et al, (2012) posit that these increasing attractive opportunities at potential destinations force people to migrate.

In Ghana, the documented reasons given by people for continued emigration to other countries include high rate of unemployment and economic decline, mainly due to the economic crises from the mid-1960s, (Anarfi et al, 2003). From the above stated reasons as to why people migrate, it is clear that the primary motivation is economic. However, the negative impacts of family separation caused are out looked as people focus their attention towards monetary gains. In Zimbabwe, the central issues for migration are diverse and complex ranging within age

groups and gender, (Zimbabwe's Exodus, Crisis, Migration and Survival, 2010). Economic and political issues have impelled global migration.

2.1.3 Effects of parental migration

The effects of parental absence are endless and impact on diverse aspects of the lives of adolescents left behind. Looking at the vast number of adolescents who are left in their home countries while their parents move to other countries in search of work or greener pastures, it is important to explore this topic further. Hugo (2002) purports that, family strains through migration separation pose a higher prevalence of mental disorders among women and children and lower levels of school performance and slows down social and psychological development among children. According to Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) 2003 study on left behind children, the rising involvement and their consequent long term absence of parents from home thus produce higher levels of anxiety about the well-being of the family when women migrate than when men migrate without their families.

2.2 Psychological well-being defined

Psychological well-being is conceptualised as the prevalence of positive attributes in an adolescent's life. Coe, (2012) is of the view that psychological well-being accounts for components of life satisfaction that cannot be defined, explained or primarily influenced by economic growth. Adolescents often come across unusual encounters, difficulties, obstacles and adversities. Psychological well-being concerns itself with how they cope or how they are doing in response and whether they find life to be interesting and enjoyable.

2.3 Adolescents defined

Adolescence is most commonly defined as the age period between 13 and 19 years. Smetana & Berent, (1993) define adolescence as a period of transition, covering the second period of life where the individuals' biological, psychological, and social characteristics go through change, becoming adult-like. For the purpose of this study, adolescents are boys and girls that are aged between 13 and 16 years.

2.4 Previous studies on Parental Absence

2.4.1 International Studies

In the United States, Engel et al, (2006), investigated the effects of parental absence due to military deployment on children's academic achievement, building on the work by Pisano (1992), Angrist & Johnson (2000), and Lyle (2006) who all looked at the effects of deployments on military households. Large numbers of troops from the United States military had been deployed overseas and this however led some children of American soldiers to experience parental absence due to deployment.

The above authors found that parental absences, produced feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and helplessness in children. Their study that was conducted using standardized test scores and personal characteristics of a sample of observations for school-age children enrolled in Department of Defence schools between 2002 and 2005, found that children suffer a small but persistent academic drawback when their parents deploy and that the increasing long-term effects of repeated deployments could become extensive by the time a child reaches the 11th grade. This study however did not only look at how children's academic achievement is affected by parental absence but on how adolescents are affected psychologically when their parents migrate. The previous study which was carried out on children of American soldiers who had been deployed elsewhere was conducted using standardised test scores, The present study was however carried out in Mkoba, a high density suburb in Gweru and did not look at parental absence due to military deployment but parental absence due to migration using in-depth interviews.

A study by Aguilera- Guzman et al., (2004) have found that adolescents find it traumatic having to assume roles that were once performed by their migrant parents. The new duties are normally in addition to previous ones, and include, the mother's role for girls who have to perform the nurturing role to their siblings, carry out the domestic work that their mothers used to perform. Boys on the other side are expected to perform all those duties that are fatherly in nature like maintenances and upkeep. They also provide support and advice to younger members, predominantly in the case of the eldest male.

Hess & Richard, (1999) note that coping can either be adaptive or maladaptive. Adaptive coping includes family and social support. Patterson and McCubbin (1987) view family support coping as turning to family members during times of stress. Social support is defined by Barker (2000) as a range of interpersonal relationships that have an influence on an individual's functioning given by family, friends, and surroundings, including social integration and coping assistance. For optimum development, there is greater need for the continued and stable presence of parents or caregivers in a child's life. The continuous presence of parents in an adolescent's life results in identity formation. If such figures are removed, it may be seen as a stressor and may elicit a variety of coping or defence mechanisms, which may, in turn, become maladaptive and be the cause of developmental problems and psychopathologies. This study aimed to identify those mechanisms used by adolescents at MHS and BBC in an effort to cope with parental absence, as a means to gain greater insight on how they manage their situation

Beets (2007) found that girls are more likely to turn to friends when feeling tense, anxious or stressed. Toth et al., (2007) are of the view that, some children get sick, and others look for surrogate parents including their teachers. They replace interaction to other children with excessive consumption of television. The emotional deprivation that children experience when their parents are absent is displayed differently depending on the age and personality of each child. Boys are more likely to turn to externalising behaviours like substance use.

When a parent is not active in a child's life, the child may be emotionally crushed, feeling unworthy. As such, the child may no longer strive to succeed socially, academically and later, economically. Some children may even demonstrate these feelings of unworthiness through disruptive behaviour. Alternately, some children develop rich fantasy lives to protect themselves from feelings of worthlessness. They tell themselves their parent must be doing very important things otherwise they would surely be there. Pribilsky (2001) asserts that some children may suffer from a depression-like disorder called *nervios*. In his study on psychological outcomes of paternal absence due to international migration on children left behind in Southern Ecuadorian Andes, Pribilsky (2001) is of the view that the disorder may be a child's way of using *nervios* as a mechanism of coping with their changing lifestyles

Pottinger (2005) investigated migratory separation in a case-control sample of 9 to 10 year-olds living in urban communities in Kingston and St Andrew, Jamaica. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations and it showed that parents' absence is directly related to poor performance in school and psychological difficulties in children.

Contrary to the previous study that used descriptive statistics, the present study used qualitative methods to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents at MHS and BBC. Data obtained from the research was analysed thematically.

Parental migration has also caused more serious forms of psychological distress, such as the adoption of risky behaviour that have been observed among adolescents left behind. Crawford-Brown (1993), concluded that the absence of mothers was a key determining factor to the involvement of children with violence. In her survey in Jamaica, Crawford-Brown found that 80% of children in conflict with the law had their mothers absent, while this was the case for only 30% of other children, and migration was the second most important reason explaining the absence of mothers. In Mexico, problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse were found to be greater for adolescents with migrant fathers, (Crawford-Brown, 1993). Reduced attention to school and tasks in the home was also stated as a result of migration.

The frequency of communication between children and migrant parents appears to have an impact on the children's wellbeing with a higher frequency contributing to better well-being outcomes. When one or both parents are absent due to migration, children are emotionally affected, the experience is emotionally depriving and traumatising on them. A study on the effects of migration on children in Romania confirmed this and highlighted that money and material welfare which migrant parent(s) give to their children cannot substitute parental love, (Toth et al., 2007). Findings from the same study also showed that children whose parents or mothers were absent were more vulnerable to depression than their counterparts with non-immigrant parents and have a tendency of isolating themselves from other children.

Migration of one or both parents may affect children's social behaviour in a number of ways. Battistela & Gastardo-Conaco (1998) discovered that children from Filipino whose mothers were absent showed poorer social adjustment and suffered from slow social and psychological development. The Philippines (2003) study contradicted with the above findings showing that children generally adjusted, had strong social support and had no problems with other family members. The 2003 Children and Family Survey conducted in the Philippines used school based surveys containing sections of bio data on family relations, social support, psychological and emotional health as well as focus group discussions were carried out to explore the various impact of migration on the well-being of children, (Asis 2006). However, the current study was different in that, in order to explore the impact of parental migration on

the psychological well-being of adolescents under study, information was drawn from in-depth interviews of adolescents with migrant parents and not focus group discussions.

Adolescents with mothers working out of their country perceive less warmth and motherly love. They view their mothers as being more aggressive and hostile towards them and feel abandoned. Parreñas (2006) similarly concluded that children still consider mother's migration as a form of abandonment, regardless of all material gains and the care that they provide from a distance. They expect much from their mothers as far as caring for the family is concerned. Although they accept the material advantages, they do not consider this as a form of care. Battisella & Gastardo-Conaco (1998) also show that children perceived parental absence due to migration as a form of abandonment.

Jimmenez-David (2002) identified feelings of solitude and abandonment in left behind children. Although teenagers left behind perceive less warmth and love from the father and more indifference and neglect, in general they feel the least neglected. This is mainly because, despite their involvement in household duties and children's care, men are still perceived as the main economic supporters of the family. As a consequence of this, fathers who migrate to find a better paid job may be considered to be more caring. Children whose parents left, particularly the mother think that life is more difficult and the world is not a safe place for them. In the same vein, a study conducted in the Republic of Moldova on left behind children shows that these children have less positive expectations of the future, they do not think that they would be able to ascribe value to their studies or find a job in their country, (Irimescu et al., 2008).

Xiang's (2007) review of studies on children left behind in China showed that children left in the care of grandparents may either be withdrawn or extremely violent as they either spoil or neglect them. Other studies carried out by UNICEF, NGOs, Save the children and the United Nations Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on the impact of parental migration on children left behind in Mexico, China and the Philippines, similar sentiments were echoed on the impact of migration particularly when mothers are away. The findings were that, left behind children were reported to suffer from psychological and emotional stress when left in the care of significant others and, are more prone to deviant behaviour and criminal offences whilst expressing feelings of resentment and abandonment at being left behind, (D'Emilio et al., 2007).

Similar findings were recorded in a cross-sectional study conducted in rural China (2007-2008) which explored the health impact of parental migration on the children they leave behind in rural China. The study discovered that, school children who were left behind in rural southern China engaged in higher rates of unhealthy behaviours. Parental migration appeared to influence girls into substance use and mental health problems. In the study, information on health behaviours, parental migration and demographic characteristics was gathered through the use of self-administered questionnaires. Information for the current study was obtained from in-depth interviews with the adolescents in question. Moreover, the current study looked at the impact of parental migration on an international level and not on a local level like the previous study.

Another study was carried out by Child Health and Migrant Parents in SE Asia (CHAMPSEA, 2008) in Thailand on the impact of parental migration on the mental health of children left-behind. The study found out that more than 10% of Thai children had mental health problems. The study did not find any relationship between current parental migration status and mental health status of children left behind because almost all the parents (94%) who migrated were the fathers, not the mothers. An interesting finding was that the mother's migration history was considerably associated with mental health problems of children left behind. More mental health problems were found to be common in children whose mothers had history of migration experience and had left child behind than in children whose mothers did not have migration history after the child was born. This negative impact on the psychological health of children with previous migration experience of the mother may be because the children might not have received better care in the absence of their mother indicating that the absence of parents may leave a long-term psychological consequence for left behind children.

SMC (2005) contradicts the findings from Thailand and posits that the children with absent mothers were found to feel lonely, angry, unloved, afraid, and anxious compared to children of non-migrants because a mother's love cannot be replaced. Female children were the most affected because they are more attached with their mothers than their fathers. The study was cross-sectional, all the factors analysed in the study were measured at a single point in time. The analysis can only provide evidence of statistical relationship between those variables and the mental health status of the children. Secondly, all the data was drawn from caregiver interviews, which may have resulted in reporting bias, such as under-reporting of stigmatizing behaviours or over-reporting healthy behaviour. This study however did not seek to find any

relationship between variables but to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents at MHS and BBC in Mkoba. Data for the current study was drawn from in-depth interviews the adolescents themselves and not caregiver interviews as in the previous study.

2.4.2 Regional Studies

Similar to studies that were conducted globally, a study was carried out in Ghana by Boabang Owusu on the experiences of children left-behind by migrant parents and the researcher concluded that parental migration affects the everyday lives of children left-behind who therefore go through a lot of experiences. Some children have better life circumstances through provisions that support their basic needs while others struggle to meet these needs, these children do not enjoy a high quality of life, care and support, (Coe, 2012).

2.4.3 Local studies

In Zimbabwe, Masango & Nyanjaya (2012) conducted a narrative study on the plight of absent fathers and its traumatic impact on adolescent male children in Zimbabwe that used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Findings from the study indicated that the absence of fathers in the life of their sons has produced feelings of emotional abandonment and betrayal in some adolescents and others felt disappointed by their father's carelessness. The adolescents were affected psychologically, their feelings made them fear involvement, limit father-son relationships, breed anger, bitterness and lack of any future dependence on their fathers. It is every adolescent's expectancy for a father to offer protection, being hurt or emotionally harmed by them is a betrayal of trust. The hurt would be carried through life and lead to further traumatic experiences. This study however was highly qualitative in nature and it used the exploratory design.

Masango & Nyanjaya (2012) concluded that these boys' experiences might lead them to becoming emotionally unresponsive men who are introverts. The behaviour may also lead them to be unfriendly to women in order to have freedom from either sex relationships. Makoni (2007) of the Girl Child Network concurs with these findings and highlights that parental absence has negative psychological effects on children, resulting in loss of concentration at

school that can be seen in older children who have the additional responsibility of heading the family. Masango & Nyanjaya's 2012 study is similar to the current study in that it explored and identified the impact of absent fathers on their male adolescent children and whether their absence can be classified as traumatic for these adolescents. It is however different in that it looked particularly on the absence of fathers and how it affects male adolescents. The current study looked at how the absence of either a mother or a father impacts on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents of either sex who were left behind.

In a study on how Zimbabwean adolescents experience their parent's absence due to Diaspora conducted in Chisipite, Fillipa (2011) found that, adolescents appeared to view parental absence due to migration as leaving them lacking in social support especially when their parent/s are unable to witness in person their accomplishments. This study however explored how adolescents at MHS and BBC in Mkoba view parental absence due to migration.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.5.1 Eric Erikson's theory of identity development

Erik Erikson's life-long developmental theory is characterised by crisis, which he reflected as being equal to turning points in life to be resolved at key stages. Erikson (1968) assumed that personality develops in a sequence of stages and his theory describes the effect of social experience across the whole lifecycle. The development of ego identity is the most vital element of Erikson's psychosocial stage theory, Erikson (1959). Ego identity is that self-awareness that people develop through social relations and it changes always due to new experiences and information that they gain when they interrelate with others daily. It refers to all of the views, standards, and values that help form and guide a person's behavior.

Erikson (1963) postulates that identity formation is an ongoing process that begins in childhood and becomes predominantly important during adolescence. The way people identify themselves provides a unified and cohesive sense of self that endures and continues to grow as they age. Roazen (1976) argues that, Erikson stresses the importance of social influences in development and sees behaviour as a result of inborn tendencies and patterns which are changed into specific personality traits by means of interaction one's surroundings. Therefore, a supportive environment will enable the successful negotiation of each developmental crisis and encourage the gaining of positive ego strengths and vice versa.

Additionally, Erikson also believed that a sense of competence motivates behaviors and actions, (Erikson, 1968). Each stage in Erikson's theory is concerned with becoming competent in an area of life. If the stage is handled well, the person will feel a sense of mastery, which is sometimes referred to as ego strength or ego quality. If the stage is managed poorly, the person will emerge with a sense of inadequacy. In each stage, Erikson believed people experience a conflict that serves as a turning point in development. In Erikson's view, these conflicts are centered on either developing a psychological quality or failing to develop that quality. During these times, the potential for personal growth is high, but so is the potential for failure, (Roazen, 1976).

All of Erikson's stages of growth are related, giving a sense of continuity in development. The first developmental crisis identified by Erikson is that of basic trust versus mistrust, which highly depend on the mother-child relationship, as do attachment theories, as it is the mother who, with her behaviour towards her child, teaches him or her the extent to which the environment can be trusted (Erikson, 1963). Adolescence, which is the transition from childhood to adulthood is characterised by children becoming more independent, and beginning to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, and families. During this period, they explore possibilities and identity formation begins based upon the outcome of their explorations. If one is hindered during this stage, they develop a sense of confusion about self and one's role in the world, (Erikson, 1968). Those who receive proper encouragement and support through personal exploration will develop a strong sense of self and a feeling of independence and control. Adolescents who feel insecure about their beliefs and needs will feel insecure and confused about themselves and the future.

Erikson (1963) propounds that the developmental crisis of adolescence is that of identity versus role confusion. Identity is a complex concept which can be defined as an agreement of people's self-images, and the views others have of them, (Roazen, 1976). The physical, psychological and social changes that adolescents face force them to reconsider all their former beliefs as they begin to search for a self-image, which Erikson calls continuity in life. This self-image needs to be consistent with society's expectations in order to form a sense of identity. This search often causes adolescents to clash with society and their parents and may cause a sense of confusion (Meyer et al 2003).

The absence of parents during adolescence may compromise the reworking of this stage and results in a reduced sense of hope as well as distrust, reflected in social interactions. Furthermore, if the parents are not willing or able to provide the child with a convincing explanation for their absence, further damage could take place. Adolescents left behind by their immigrant parents therefore may present with a sense of hopelessness and may also find it hard to develop trust in other relationships as a result of their failure, due to parental absence, to resolve this developmental crisis. Erikson (1963) sees distinctive adolescent behaviour patterns, such as taking part in group activities, as part of their search for identity. An environment favourable to the needs of the adolescent during this search for identity will enable the resolution of this crisis and result in the ego strength of dependability or trustworthiness which is characterised by confidence in one's identity and at the same time an acceptance of other's identities as well as loyalty towards one's social role, whilst failure to do so may result in what Erikson terms as role confusion. (Erikson, 1963). Absence of parents due to migration during this developmental stage may mean that such a supportive environment may be critically compromised and may hold back the successful resolution of developmental crises. This theory is relevant in the study's exploration of the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents at MHS and BBC.

2.5 Knowledge gap

A number of studies on parental absence have been carried out. Most studies have centred on parental absence due to divorce, military deployment and death. A lot of research on parental absence due to migration centred on children in Jamaica, the Caribbeans, Mexico and Asian countries like Philippines, China, Thailand to mention but a few. In terms of methodology the Jamaican study by Pottinger used bivariate correlations, others used descriptive correlations, caregiver interviews and school based surveys. The present study used in-depth interviews to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of the adolescents under study.

Findings from the previous studies that were conducted in western countries cannot be generalised to adolescents in Africa, particularly in Mkoba. Most of the studies that were carried out in Asian countries looked at how internal migration impacted on the well-being of children who were left behind and were conducted in rural areas. This study however focused on international migration and how it affects adolescents left and the study will be conducted in an urban setting. In Africa, there seems to be lack of research on this subject. In Zimbabwe,

little research has been done on the subject despite the prevalence of migration due to the unstable economic situation. This has however led the researcher to conduct a research on the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 years from MHS and BBC in Mkoba.

The previous study conducted in Zimbabwe by Masango & Nyanjaya (2012) on the plight of absent fathers caused by migrant work, its traumatic impact on adolescent male children and the central focus was on male adolescents. The current study however focused on both male and female adolescents with one or both parent working outside Zimbabwe. It also does not centre its attention on a specific parent like the previous study by Masango & Nyanjaya which is centred on the plight of absent fathers. The principal objective of the study was to assess the traumatic impact of the absence of fathers on their adolescent male children and it was limited to only male adolescents from Methodist Church.

In terms of methodology both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were employed and the authors embraced a narrative approach. Contrary, the current study explored the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of both male and female adolescents using only qualitative methods. Masango & Nyanjaya (2012) drew their sample from males aged 10-22 years in order to identify how each male adolescent feels about his absent father, this study however drew its sample from adolescents aged between 13 and 16 years of age at MHS and BBC in Mkoba with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe.

2.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter looked at the review of related literature, theoretical framework and the psychological well-being of adolescents with immigrant parents. Left behind adolescents often face psychological challenges in the course of their parents' absence. This has been evidenced in the theoretical framework and previous studies on the impact of parental migration. The theories that will guide the research were discussed and also the knowledge gap that the researcher seeks to fill

3.0. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Coolican (2004) defines a methodology as a way in which information for a particular research was gathered and this includes the methods, techniques and procedures used to collect and analyse information. This chapter seeks to specify the research paradigm, research design, research instrument, target population, sample, sampling method, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations that were used by the researcher.

3.2 Research paradigm

Coolican (2004) is of the view that a research paradigm refers to symbolising the domain outlook that describes on behalf of its owner the kind of world and the person's dwelling in it as well as the variety of probable associations to that domain and its portions. Qualitative research approaches and qualitative informative methods were used in this study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) assume that qualitative research broadly defined means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

In this study the researcher explored the experiences of adolescents with parents who are absent due to migration and aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of the adolescents' behaviour and the reasons governing their behaviour. Qualitative research was best for this study because there was need for in depth discussions which enabled verbal encounters and in-depth probes with the adolescents with migrant parents. Qualitative research also enabled the researcher to note down the reflected feelings and emotions of the adolescents in question.

DeVos (2002) found out that, qualitative research progresses concepts inductively plus there stands certainly no obvious purpose towards calculating or enumerating the results. Instead, the judgements or conclusions remain described in the linguistic and employed in the course of the study investigation process. For this reason, the qualitative approach was employed as a way of using language to investigate the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents under study.

Some notable advantages of qualitative research design are that it takes place in natural settings and it allows for more diversity in responses as well as the capacity to adapt to new developments or issues during the research process itself. Qualitative research method was also

employed because it is inexpensive and efficient to use. More so, it was quick and enabled the researcher to get a picture of what was happening in the population (Dyer, 1995). However, its disadvantage is that, qualitative data is usually difficult to graph or display in mathematical terms. More so, small group of interviewed individuals cannot be taken as representative of the whole population.

3.3 Research design

Baron (1996) posits that, a research design is the overall structure of the research that involves the basic plan guiding data collection and analysis of the research. In an attempt to achieve the objectives of this undertaking, the researcher used the exploratory research design to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged 13 to 16 at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba.

3.3.1 Exploratory Research Design

Coolican (2004) defines exploratory research as initial research into a hypothetical and theoretical idea and its major emphasis is on gaining ideas and insights. Exploratory research is meant to explain a phenomenon, providing reasons or explanation for its occurrence and intends merely to explore the research questions and does not intend to offer final and conclusive solutions to existing problems. It is designed to gain insight into a little known situation and it explores or examines all the dimensions of what is being studied and the other factors with which it is related. However, the design is not intended to provide final or conclusive solutions to existing problems.

The researcher used this design in order to gain insight on the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged 13-16 years at MHS and BBC. The researcher also wanted to explore how the adolescents under study view parental absence due to migration and how these adolescents cope with parental absence. The design was also used because of its flexibility to provide opportunity for considering different aspects of the problem under study. Moreover, the researcher hoped to produce hypotheses about what was going on in the adolescents' lives when their parents were absent as a result of migration

3.4 Target population

A research population can be looked at as the bigger group or entire study subjects and topics from which the investigation example is available and ready to be drawn. Dyer (1995) concurs with this and defines a target population as the universe from which subjects of research are to be drawn. In this study, the researcher's target population comprised of adolescents aged between 13 to 16 from MHS and BBC in Mkoba with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe.

3.5 Sample

A sample is a subset of subjects that is representative of the whole population (Baron, 1996). The sample should be optimum, satisfying the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. The researcher interviewed twenty adolescents aged 13 to 16 with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe and 5 class teachers from the schools. Of the twenty adolescents who participated in the study, ten were male and the other ten were females.

3.6 Sampling procedure

Purposive sampling was employed in this research. Coolican (2004) argues that in purposive sampling there are no measurements, the person picking the model uses his or her understanding and capability to exclusively decide on the items to be tested. There are many kinds of purposive choices, (Patton, 1990). This study however used Criterion sampling which is a form of purposive sampling that involves searching for cases or individuals who meet a certain criterion. In this case, the researcher sampled adolescents aged 13 to 16 who have experienced parental absence due to migration. Adolescents who were chosen had one or both parents working out of Zimbabwe. Patton (1990) is of the view that purposive sampling entails the selection of participants who are well-versed with the issue at hand because of their complete involvement in and understanding of the situation. Creswell (2000) concurs with this and states that purposive sampling involves selection of sites or participants that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question. The participants must be willing to reflect on and share what they know. Adolescents aged 13 to 16 with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe were found to be the best source of rich and valuable information regarding their experiences with parental absence due to migration as they had

first-hand experiences regarding the study in question. The participants were selected on the basis of their particular knowledge of the phenomenon, for the purpose of sharing their experiences and what they know with the researcher.

The researcher personally recruited participants for her study. Purposive sampling was employed as the most appropriate method for this study, as it allowed the researcher to apply the knowledge of the research problem to choose adolescents with immigrant parents who are aged between 13 and 16. In this study, the researcher sampled 20 respondents with immigrant parents which is 10 percent of the target population. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental sampling and the burden of the judgment of which adolescents to choose remained on the researcher. It was also relevant to this study for the reason that DeVos (2002) points that, the kind of exploration in the study decides on the subjects predictability depending on what is being studied.

Rukuni (2000) adds that purposive sampling is additionally appropriate and cheaper to use than other techniques for choosing a model. Purposive sampling permitted the researcher to judge the subjects that are typical or representative of the phenomenon being studied. This sampling technique was also chosen because of its advantage that it is easier to get a sample of subjects with particular characteristics, in this case only those adolescents aged 13 to 16 with one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe were perfect participants. However, the approach can be discredited for its researcher bias, especially during selection of sample population as there may be inaccuracy.

3.7 Research instruments

Research instruments are tools used for collecting information and data needed, (Coolican, 2004). The researcher used in-depth interviews to collect information from adolescents under study so as to try and explore their hidden feelings and experiences. Holt et al (1998) defined an interview as a two-way conversation initiated by the interviewer to obtain information from a respondent. It is a verbal conversation in which one person asks questions and the other one answers. Interview guides were constructed and probes in line with the research questions were also used. In a bid to uphold confidentiality, individual interviews were administered

3.7.1 In-depth interviews

Baron (1996) defines an in-depth interview as a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular situation. In-depth interviews are designed to explore a general area of research and their main goal is to deeply explore the respondent's point of view, feelings and perspectives. Interviewees are encouraged to talk freely about events, behaviour and beliefs in relation to the research area. Baron (1996) gives several advantages of in-depth interviews which include the ability of the interviewer to sense non-verbal feedback. In-depth interviews are regarded as effective in terms of providing more detailed information and that they may provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information.

The researcher used an unstructured interview as the tool for data collection because it provides participants with the opportunity to fully describe their experiences. This method of data collection was ensued to allow the participants to share their own stories in their own words, rather than being forced by pre-established lines of thinking developed by the researcher. In this study the researcher used in-depth interviews to find out more about parental migration seeking new insights on the phenomenon.

The other reason why in-depth interviews were used is because they offer immediate feedback and room for clarification by the respondent and the researcher can also probe for more information. The interviews allowed for the use of open-ended questions worded so that respondents cannot simply answer yes or no, but expound on the topic. Some of the demerits of using interviews are that they are time consuming, the researcher has to move from one point to another (travelling). They are expensive in terms of transportation of the interviewer from one point to another. In-depth interviews helped the researcher to interpret what she was hearing, as well as seeking clarity and a deeper understanding from the respondent throughout the interview.

In-depth interviews were accepted as valid methods for studying experiences and perceptions of adolescents in question as they had been used in many qualitative studies on parental migration. For this study, unstructured interviews yielded rich data, as participants were able to raise their views without the influence of the researcher. In order to test the validity of the findings the researcher crosschecked the findings from the respondents, with the other people

who were expected to possess knowledge about the individuals concerned. Again in some cases validity was tested through primary observation.

3.7.2 Pretesting of the instrument

According to Coolican (2004), pretesting means testing the interview schedule in advance to find out whether it is capable of producing accurate responses from the respondents. Pretesting was done after translating to English since the interviews were also conducted in Shona. A pilot study is usually carried out on members of the relevant population, but not on those who will form part of the final sample. This is because it may influence the later behavior of research subjects if they have already been involved in the research. The draft interview schedule was administered to 5 % of the sample. The researcher used a student from another school in Mkoba. This was done to help find out whether the questions were properly understood by the respondents or they had difficulties in replying to them. Pretesting also helped to identify if the questions were logically organised. Necessary changes were made to the interview schedule basing on the responses that were obtained during pretesting.

3.8 Data collection procedure

This segment gives an insight on the measures that will be followed to collect data during the research exercise.

The research was carried out at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba, a high density suburb in Gweru. It took place from the 7th to the 11th of October when the researcher was no longer busy with lectures so she had enough time to run around. Moreover, schools were open around this time making it easier for the researcher to access the students that she wanted to use for her study. At Mkoba 3 high school, adolescents aged 15-16 were interviewed in the morning and those aged 13 to 14 in the afternoon since their classes commenced at 12pm. Interviews at BBC took place in the afternoon from 1 o'clock to 4 o'clock when the students had no classes but were attending clubs.

Firstly, an interview guide was drafted by the researcher and an expert analysis of the interview guide was carried out by the supervisor. The researcher then obtained an approval letter from

the Midlands State University's department of Psychology and took it to the heads of Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro Private College for approval. After getting approval from the relevant school heads, the researcher asked for consent to carry out the study from the parents and guardians of the adolescents who were below the age of 16 since they were minors below the legal age of consent. The researcher was assisted by class teachers of form 1-4 classes in coming up with students who were aged between 13 and 16 who had one or both parents working outside Zimbabwe. The organisation that the researcher represented and the purpose of the interview was explained to both the key persons and the respondents before the interviews commenced and all participants were reassured regarding anonymity and asked if they wished to ask any questions before beginning the interview. Respondents participated with consent and they were informed of their right to withdraw from the interview without any explanations.

The researcher administered in-depth interviews with 20 adolescents, 10 from each school and five participants were interviewed per day. Five class teachers, three from MHS and 2 from BBC were also interviewed in order to hear their own accounts on the problem under study since they interact with students on a day to day basis. All the participants took part in the study without anyone withdrawing. Each interview took approximately thirty minutes and everything was done within a space of five days. All interviews were carried out at the school in a closed quiet room to increase privacy for the participants as well as to smoothen the progress of effective data gathering without any disturbances.

Before the interview, the researcher had to build rapport with the respondents by talking about general things and made the respondents feel at ease by maintaining a relaxed atmosphere that enabled them to open up and not withhold information from the researcher. The interview was started by asking questions aimed at obtaining some background information on the adolescent, such as, "how old are you?" and, "do you have any brothers or sisters?" as well as questions aimed at obtaining information regarding what the parents do and where they worked. These questions served as "ice-breakers" and allowed the participants time to adjust to the interview context. Once the initial part of the interview was completed, the participants were asked to speak about their situation. The interview comprised of open-ended questions in order to fully explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of the adolescents in question. Questions were asked as they appeared on the interview schedule and the researcher even did some bit of explaining where an explanation was required but made sure that she did

not make any suggestions for the respondents. The interviewer had to make use of listening and interpreting skills in order to formulate gently probing and clarifying questions with the aim of eliciting more information. She used in-depth probing to assist participants in explaining their experiences with clarity so that valuable and complete information was elicited. Moreover, the researcher also paid particular attention to non-verbal cues and emotions of the participants.

Interviews were tape recorded and conducted in Shona and the results were translated to English. The researcher also empathized with the participants by being open to the meaning participants gave to their experiences. Skills like listening and questioning skills were used while the researcher played a less active role. Non-verbal communication such as nodding of the head was also used together with minimal responses like “yes” to make the respondents feel that they were being listened to. The researcher did her best to avoid discussions and arguments with the respondents and made all possible effort to keep the respondent on track. Research ethics were highly upheld throughout the research so as to protect the participants. At the end of the interview, participants were assured of the availability of the researcher should they feel the need for support or counselling. They were also invited to write down any additional thoughts they may like to share. The interviewer, where necessary, made field notes immediately after the interview in order to capture any non-verbal cues or additional information obtained before or after the formal interview and then transcribed the material onto a word-processing programme on the computer as soon as possible after the interview

3.9 Data presentation and analysis

Data was presented according to the research questions which guided the study. Data analysis is ensued after data collection. Data gathered from the interviews was analysed thematically. De Vos (2002) assumes that, qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data. Since qualitative data is non-numerical, usually in the form of written words, the researcher analysed the data collected by examining the words that were used. The interview transcripts were read and analysed and overarching themes were extracted.

3.9.1 Thematic Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) propose that, thematic analysis is a qualitative method of classifying, examining and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Boyatzis (1998) argues that thematic approach interprets several aspects of the research topic. It is not wed to any pre-existing theory so it can be used with different theoretical frameworks. Although not all. An advantage of thematic analysis is its flexibility which allows for a wide range of analytic options. However this can also be a disadvantage in that it makes the developing of themes in higher-phase analysis difficult and can be potentially paralysing to the researcher trying to decide what aspects of their data to focus on, (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic data analysis was performed through the process of coding which can be divided into six phases to create recognized, meaningful patterns. The six phases involve familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming the themes, and producing the final report, (Braun and Clarke, 2006). However, after data was interpreted and analysed it was then presented by means of words since the study was qualitative in nature. The researcher used thematic analysis because it is a realist method which reports experiences, meanings and the reality of participants. Other advantages of this process are; it allows understanding of themes supported by data and it also allows for categories to appear from data and it allows the researcher to expand range of study past individual skill.

3.10 Ethical considerations

According to Holt et al (1998), ethics are standards for proper and responsible behavior. Ethical considerations are issues which must be considered to avoid trampling on the rights of the individuals who participate in the research. They are principles of the right and wrong that guide the researchers when conducting their research. Ethical approval to undertake the study was obtained from the school authorities. Since the researcher was dealing with minors, she had to ask for the parents or guardian's consent before engaging the participants.

As the researcher carried out her research the process and data collection techniques were developed, there was need to consider whether the research procedures would cause any physical or emotional harm to participants involved in the research. To act ethically, the researcher first obtained informed consent before the study or interview, assured the participants of confidentiality of the data to be collected and observed and reserved cultural

values, traditions or taboos valued by the participants. Other ethical principles that were considered are protection from harm, informing the participants of their right to withdrawal at any time and debriefing.

3.11 Chapter Summary

The foregoing chapter presented the research methodology and it also enabled the reader to understand how the researcher came up with the research findings to be presented in the next chapter. The chapter also reflected the data collection procedures, the role of the researcher, and the ethical issues that were put into consideration by the researcher.

4.0 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of the data analysis and the interpretation of all the findings of the research. The main focus is on research findings from the field research which the researcher carried out at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba. Data was collected through in-depth interviews which allowed for the exploration of the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 at MHS and BBC. After data collection, the audio files from the interviews and the field notes were transcribed into English since they were conducted in Shona. Thematic areas were extracted into which the data was categorized and analysed. Exploration of the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents was done under the following themes, adolescents missing parental involvement during a critical stage, parental absence has negative consequences, adolescents' conflicting perceptions of parental absence and adolescents' coping styles. The research findings were presented thematically and the themes were drawn from the research questions.

4.2 Response Rate

Data saturation was reached at the number 20. Generally, the adolescents were so cooperative and helped the researcher in exploring their experiences. All the other respondents who were interviewed after 20th respondent gave information that was similar to what had been said by the other respondents before them so the researcher had to stop.

4.3 Personal Characteristics

The participants comprised of ten males and ten females with one or both parents outside the country. They were aged from 13-16 and were in form 1 to form 4. From each age group, the researcher took a representative from both sexes. Five teachers also helped in the study and they comprised of two female teachers and three male teachers.

4.4 Findings in themes

4.4.1. Theme 1: Adolescents missing parental involvement during a critical stage

Adolescence is a period of transition, spanning the second decade of life where the individuals' biological, psychological, and social characteristics undergo change, becoming adult-like. Adolescence in this study were persons aged 13-16 years of age. Participants interviewed described this period as a most critical stage in their lives. Some of the adolescents interviewed seem to miss the guidance and role model figure that the absent parent provided. Respondent 20 speaking about his life in the absence of his father said:

“My father had to go and work in South Africa during my puberty years. A lot of changes were taking place in my life. As a boy child, I needed a father figure to guide me and even explain some of the changes that were happening to me as a result of puberty. I could not ask my mother about this so I was really affected by my father's absence.”

“Life without my father has never been good. Every boy needs a father by his side. They need a male figure to tell them what to do especially when they are growing up.”
(Respondent 12).

Seven out of ten females interviewed also reported being severely affected by their mother's absence during adolescence. The girls interviewed for this study seem to miss most on someone to confide in.

“There are problems that I want to discuss with my mother and some personal issues that I find difficult to discuss with caregivers and I end up missing my mother.”(Respondent 4).

“There are changes that take place during adolescence that I cannot talk to anyone about. If only my mother was around, I would have someone to explain everything to me.”(Respondent 6)

The findings indicate that adolescence is a critical stage that needs parents to be there for their children as they undergo all the changes. Paternal advice and support is very important to these adolescents as evidenced in their responses. The absence of a parent of the same sex seems to have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of adolescents.

Sub Theme 1: Lack of social support

Lack of social support is a predominant theme that emerged in the course of the interviews carried out with adolescents at MHS and BBC with one or both parents outside the country. Most of the participants spoke openly on lack of social support. One of the girls said:

“I miss the support and encouragement of my parents. Although I stay with my aunt, she is not firm like my mother who always encourages me to read even at home.”

A number of adolescents complained that they always feel the lack of social support especially during parent-teacher consultation meetings when they are supposed to bring their parents to school or during prize giving ceremonies. One boy had this to say,

“My father does not come during prize giving, I always feel his absence as there will be no one to cheer me on when I get prizes. I wish he could be around to witness my achievements in person.”

One girl reinforced these sentiments and stated that:

“Last term I could not collect my report on the closing day as others did because there was no one to collect it for me as reports were being given to parents and guardians. My aunt had to go to Kwekwe so she could not make it school. It is during times like these when she longs for her mother to be around. I end up crying a lot.”

The adolescents also complained that they also feel their parents' absence especially when there are school trips which they cannot attend because of lack of money. Others who have reached the age of sixteen have problems in applying for national identity documents in the absence of parents. One young man said;

“My birth certificate that I need in order to apply for a national ID is at school and the authorities can only give it to a parent and this has affected me so much since I do not know when my parents will be back.”

A teacher at one of the schools confirmed this by saying that they have a lot of students to apply for national identity documents by giving them letters accompanying letters which they take to the registrar's offices. The adolescents interviewed confirmed that the lack of social

support is a particularly challenging aspect of their lives which makes their day to day living more stressful than it would be if their parents were not working outside the country.

4.4.2 Theme 2: Parental absence has negative consequences

Adolescents with one or both parents absent due to migration reported a lot of challenges resulting from parental absence.

Sub theme1: Role Changes and Role additions

The girls interviewed for this study confirmed that assuming roles previously carried out by their migrant mother is a common experience for adolescents with absent parents. Some of the Adolescents from both schools who were interviewed reported having to deal with certain role changes and role additions. All those who spoke on this aspect of their experience appeared stressed and even overwhelmed. One female participant aged 14 from MHS recounted that:

“...My mother left to visit my father in Botswana leaving me and my twelve year old sister behind. It has been two months now since she left us. I do all the house chores before I leave for school in the morning. When I come back from school, I have to prepare supper and be there for my younger sister who has just started her grade seven exams. I always assume the role of my absent mother. When we run out of basics, I call my parents. If they do not have any money to send, I have to come up with a plan. I also have to miss classes and attend my young sister’s school consultation meetings when my mother is not around as she always goes to Botswana regularly to be with my father...”

One young man aged 16 said that he has to manage his time carefully in order to fit in studying into his schedule which must include other tasks within the home that he has to fulfil in the absence of his parents.

“When I come from school I have to attend to a lot of things that need to be managed before I get back to my books. Both my parents are in South Africa and since I am the eldest in a family of three boys I have to take care of my other siblings. The younger one is seven and he needs much attention that I cannot give. This is one of the challenges that I am facing as I am supposed to study for exams since I am writing

this year. At times I go and study at a friend's place, leaving my siblings alone until 8pm."

This was also complimented by all the five teachers who were interviewed. A male teacher from BBC had this to say:

"These adolescents are assuming roles that their parents should be doing and it is somehow straining them. Some have to take their siblings to preschool and they also have to excuse themselves from classes earlier so that they can collect their siblings from preschool and it is affecting their school work as they always miss classes."

From the responses the researcher got, it can be seen that migration of a parent has a negative impact on the psychological well-being of adolescents. 14 out of 20 adolescents seemed obviously under a lot of pressure and experience the additional roles they have to carry out round the home as stressful. If they are not having enough sleep, the situation could progress into physiological or psychological problems brought about by sustained high levels of stress. These responsibilities which are inappropriate for their age rob them of their adolescence by making them grow up very quickly which can be both positive and negative. It can be negative in that they should develop in terms of 'normal' developmental stages which, if not properly worked through, could result in an incomplete resolution of developmental crises. The positive thing can be that, the adolescents gain a sense of independence and learn quickly how to take care of themselves and others making them better able to cope with subsequent developmental stages.

Sub theme 2: Loneliness

Abandonment and rejection also appear to result in a sense of loneliness, which emerged prominently from the interviews conducted with these adolescents. Findings from the interviews indicated that seventeen out of twenty adolescents admitted feeling lonely during their parents' absence. Of the seventeen adolescents who reported feelings of loneliness, ten were females and the other seven were males. 75% of the participants had their mothers working out of the country and most of them were from broken homes where parents had divorced. Some of the participants said their fathers were deceased leaving the mothers in a difficult position to care for them. Participant 6 (female) had this to say:

“...I miss my mother so much. My parents separated and my mother had to go and seek employment in South Africa living me in the care of her younger sister. My father is a teacher here in Zimbabwe but I rarely see him. When he visits he does not spend the day but only hours if not minutes. Although I stay with my aunt, I feel lonely deep inside and I always long for my mother...”

Most of the adolescents from both schools spoke of feelings of loneliness. Respondent 13 who is 14 years old whose father is in Botswana said:

“I am always lonely when my father is not around...”

“I am lonely ... and there is no one...” (Respondent 15)

Another girl aged 16 reported that:

“I feel lonely, there is no one to talk to because I am always by myself. I do not even feel like this is home, my heart is not here at all.”

A teacher from one of the school supported this when he mentioned that:

“Although these adolescents may look presentable and better than other adolescents, they show a lack in something when compared to adolescents who live with their parents...”

The interviews carried out at MHS and BBC reflected that, abandonment, rejection and the resultant feelings of loneliness are a prominent experience amongst adolescents with migrant parents. Many of the adolescents interviewed came across as lonely, even those who live with one parent or who experience their caring arrangements as satisfactory.

Sub theme 3: Anxiety

The researcher discovered that adolescents worry too much when they are alone.

“When I am at home, I have no one to talk to so I end up worrying a lot especially when I think of my parents. I can't stop worrying because I have a lot of problems but I don't have anyone close to share with,” said one of the participants.

This was also confirmed by 13 other adolescents who also reported worrying a lot when their parents are away.

Sub theme 3: Behavioural problems

Another emerging theme that emerged during the interviews with adolescents at the two schools was the behavioural challenges that the adolescents face. One girl said:

“When parents are absent, one can easily fall in the wrong company.” If my parents were present, my brother would not be drinking and coming home late like what he is doing. My aunt is someone who is too soft to say anything to him.”

A teacher from one of the schools said:

“Of all the cases that are presented for disciplinary hearing, three quarters are from the students with absent parents. They are influencing other students here at school.”

“They are engaging in drug abuse and it is very complex for disciplinary measures to be implemented because when they are told to bring their parents to school, they bring in their friends masquerading as family.”

“Twenty five percent of these adolescents do not attend school regularly, if they do come they abscond classes, and others end up dropping out of school. There is higher evidence of moral decadence amongst these adolescence, there is no one to teach them our norms and values of our culture. It should be the position of parents to teach these youngsters if they are not around who will teach them” said another teacher.

All the teachers from both schools shared the same sentiments with the above teacher. This suggests that if adolescents are left without parental control, they engage in unbecoming behaviours.

Sub theme 4: Relationship with caregivers

Another theme that emerged from the interviews with adolescents at MHS and BBC is the challenges presented by their relationships with their caregivers. There seems to be conflict between the adolescents and their caregivers particularly for those who stay with their grandparents because of the generation gap.

One of the girls who were interviewed had this to say:

“I cannot relate well with my grandparents because we are from two different worlds. They use their lives as models for moulding my behaviour. They disagree with

everything that I do and even the way I dress saying in their days children were not allowed to dress the way I do.”

“I live with my aunt who is so abusive. She beats me and scolds me everyday. She complains about almost everything, sometimes I think of committing suicide,” complained another respondent.

Other adolescents complained about conflicts with caregivers due to abuse of funds from their parents. This was confirmed by one of the interviewed teachers who said:

“The adolescents are having problems because their caregivers abuse their funds such that a lot of parents have resorted to sending money directly to the school.”

From the interviews carried out with adolescents at MHS and BBC, it seems that relationships with caregivers are not always easy and that they can negatively impact on the psychological well-being of the adolescents in question.

Sub theme 5: Need for constant contact with Parents

The adolescents who were interviewed spoke extensively regarding the importance of constant contact, mostly via telephone, with their parent(s) and the anxiety arising as a result of being unable to contact their parents in this way. Nine out of twenty adolescents reported that they communicated regularly with their parents. Respondent 20 said:

“I communicate with my parents almost every day via WhatsApp. It is ok that I can talk to them whenever I want because Whatsapp is cheaper than telephone calls. This makes me miss them less.”

“With WhatsApp, I can share my photos with my mum, she also send hers so too. Before I went on Whatsapp, I used to miss my mum o much. Its better now, I can talk to her whenever I feel the need and I can also download her current photos online and she can also do the same,” remarked respondent 13.

WhatsApp has become a useful form of communication, for those who have access to it, as it affords the users with the opportunity to share photographs, videos and voice messages with

others and to chat online. Despite all the benefits of using WhatsApp, the adolescents contend that, it also does not make up for parental absence.

Respondent 18 was so much delighted when asked how often he communicated with his absent mother. He said:

“My mother calls me at least twice a week.”

“I do speak to my mother like once in two weeks. She makes a point that she calls to hear how I am doing.”(Respondent 9).

The adolescents interviewed brought up this topic of speaking to their parent(s) over the telephone or via Whatsapp, a social platform of sending messages via the internet, a confirmation that telephone calls or Whatsapp messages are an important links for them. Those adolescents unable to communicate with their parent(s) these adolescents appeared very distressed and some became quite emotional during the interviews.

“I do not always speak to my mother when she is out of the country because I don’t have a phone. I am staying with my aunt, my mother always calls her sister who stays at a distance. I am always happy to hear that she has called, the problem is that I cannot talk to her directly.”(Respondent 10).

The fact that the girl does not communicate directly to her mother causes a lot of psychological problem to the girl. The girl seemed to miss her mother so dearly and from the way she talked, there seemed to be no good relations between her mother and her brother’s sister whom she is staying with because she was not sure if her mother ever calls on her aunt’s phone. Lack of direct communication with the parent however seems to have a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of the adolescents under study.

According to the adolescents at MHC and BBC, another problem they encounter when communicating with their long-distance parent(s), is that they are constricted by circumstances and are not always able to speak freely and to say all that is on their mind during the course of a telephone conversation. For instance, Respondent 5 reported that:

“Sometimes when my mother calls, there are other issues that are much more important at that time, for example, I have to discuss with her issues to do with fees payment. However, at times she runs out of air time before I even talk to her about other issues.

When this happens, I am left with an unsatisfied feeling and an increased longing for the presence of my absent parent.”

Other adolescents complained that sometimes they are not given the privacy to speak with their absent parents.

“When my parents call, I will be desperate to tell them a lot of things but I cannot do it over the phone as I cannot take it outside. I cannot speak to my mother freely because her aunt always listens to her conversation and it appears that there is something her aunt does not want revealed. The girl appeared more angry and frustrated than some of those interviewed who are able to converse freely with their parent(s).

A male teacher from BBC confirmed this and had this to say:

“A lot of parents have resorted to use the school telephone to call their children so that they can talk to them freely without anyone from home listening. Some are even using my WhatsApp to chat with their children.”

However, it cannot be denied that from the way every adolescent spoke of the need for communication with parents suggests how important and vital communication with an absent parent is to these adolescents. The fact that those with parent(s) who do not communicate looked distressed and those with parents who always keep in touch seemed satisfied with the frequency of communication between them and their parent(s) suggests that communication can indeed mediate, at least to some extent, the negative effects of parental absence due to migration.

Sub theme 6: Materialism

The theme of materialism emerged in both sexes. When asked about the benefits of their parents' absence, thirteen out of twenty adolescents seemed to base their answers on material gains. Respondent 16 had this to say:

“My mother buys me nice clothes which most people of my age with parents working in Zimbabwe cannot afford, I am one of the smartly dressed girls in my class”.

“My father buys me the latest phones and mp3 players. A lot of boys envy me because I am always up to date with technology.”(Respondent 20).

A female teacher from one of the schools confirmed this and said that:

“The parents are trying to compensate for their absence through expensive things. These children bring very expensive phones to school that are not easy to confiscate.”

One male teacher also had this to say:

“When the school engages in entertainment activities, boys with parents who are out of the country bring in very expensive hi-fi systems to the school.”

The researcher found out that the adolescents justify and accept the absence of a parental figure in return for material goods. However, the views from the teacher showed that the material goods are contributing to behavioural problems amongst these adolescents.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Adolescents’ conflicting perceptions of parental absence

Conflicting views on parental absence were also noted. When asked if they would at one time leave their own children when they are parents, 15 respondents said they would never do something like that to their children and at the same time they said it all depends with the situation.

“If I am to have children one day, I would never leave them alone, if children are left alone, they can be easily influenced because they will be vulnerable but it depends on the situation at hand. If I am not working and the opportunities are out of the country I will definitely go.”

Sub theme 1: Conflicting feelings

Eleven of the twenty adolescents interviewed discussed the economic benefits obtained from having parents working out of the country, which appear to make up for their absence from home. Two of the boys expressed their views as follows:

“My father’s decision to leave the country was a positive thing to do since he had to do something to help the family, although I sometimes feel it was not fair for him to leave. I love and hate him at the same time.” said the first boy.

The second boy argued:

“Ever since my father started working outside the country, funding in the family have become more stable, a part of me think it is good to be here alone and the other part of me feels is a bad thing that he is absent. I am happy but feel rejected and abandoned.”

The girls interviewed for this study mirrored the feelings of the boys and appeared to feel that their parents were working outside the country in order to give them a better life.

“My mother is away so that I can get a better life, I miss her and wish she would come back but if she comes back, I will not be able to further my studies.”

Another girl commented that her mother will be doing something to benefit her future as far as education is concerned but she reported missing her at times and viewing her absence as unfair on her. The girl had this to say:

“My mother is doing all she can to pay my fees so that I can have a brighter future, I view my mother’s absence as good and bad at the same time. I get all I want but I cannot be with her.”

The adolescents’ words portray a sense that although they seem to view their parents’ absence as positive, they also view it negatively. This shows conflicting feelings as they probably wish they were closer, yet at the same time, desiring their presence would mean the lack of sufficient funds to benefit everyone in the family. The findings revealed that, although the adolescents seem to realise the necessity of their parents’ absence, they do not understand why they had to go living them behind. These feelings primarily stem from comparing the benefits of having a parent outside the country against the absence of the parental figure.

Sub Theme 2: Abandonment and Rejection

In the interviews carried out with adolescents from both MHS and BBC, abandonment and rejection are prominently evidenced in their words. Participant 18 who is 13 years old had this to say:

“I have never seen my father ever since I was born. He went to Namibia when my mother was pregnant with me. I only talk to him on the phone, I do not know him and he does not even know me. I have never known what it feels like to be with my father.”

The boy’s words were marked with sadness and a sense of loss as he narrated his experiences. He appeared to feel abandoned and gave the impression that his father did not pay him the

attention he felt he deserved. These adolescents appear to have experienced being left behind as a form of abandonment. This suggests that parental absence due to migration impacts negatively on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged 13-16 years.

Respondent 19 reported feelings of abandonment and rejection:

“I feel abandoned and rejected by my father who is in South Africa who neither calls nor visits since 2008. I am staying with relatives who are struggling to fend for themselves and I have added onto their burden. I have challenges in paying school fees yet my father is out there enjoying himself.”

Most of the adolescents reported that they feel rejected by their fathers than their mothers. This might also suggest that adolescents feel abandoned and rejected when their fathers leave them behind and never fend for them.

Respondent 16 had this to say:

“No matter how your caregivers may love you, it is not in the way your mother would, you will always have that longing...”

“I often think that if my mother was there things would be different,” reported respondent 18 as she echoed the same sentiments.

The findings from the above respondents suggest that the love and attention that adolescents receive from other people will not end the sadness and longing for their parent(s). Adolescents are affected by their parents’ absence, be it the mother or father, they just feel abandoned.

4.4.4 Adolescents’ coping styles

Different coping styles emerged from the interviews. Most adolescents were found to be using emotion focused coping, a technique that is meant to release emotions. Although the adolescents use emotion focused coping to deal with parental absence due to migration, the way these adolescents cope with parental migration particularly differed with gender.

Sub theme 1: Crying as a coping strategy

A lot of girls reported to be using crying as a coping mechanism. One girl said:

“When I think of my mother and all the challenges that I have to go through in her absence, I cry a lot until the feeling subsides.”

Only three boys out of the ten who were interviewed reported that they once used crying as a coping mechanism. However, a lot of boys seemed not too open to disclose how they cope with their situation.

Sub theme 2: Family and friends as social support systems

Almost all the adolescents reported that when they want to cope with their situation, they talk to friends who help them to feel better. One girl had this to say:

“Whenever I feel lonely, my friends stand up for me, they help me to cope but it is not enough because I still miss my parents.”

Another girl confirmed that her aunt and grandparents were so much supportive and they help her to cope but she admitted that, although they help her, she feels her mother’s presence will make her feel better.

“My aunt and grandparents are always there to comfort me whenever I am down,”
(respondent 11).

When I think of my absent parents, I go and talk to my friends or even play music.
(Respondent 16).

The above responses show that although adolescents use friends and relatives for coping, they still long for the presence of their parents. This longing impacts negatively on the psychological wellbeing of these adolescents.

Sub theme 3: Unhealthy ways of coping

Although were not free to discuss how they coped with parental absence, most teachers confirmed that the boys were engaging in drug and substance abuse as a way of coping.

“.... From the way the boys behave, it is clear that they will be under the influence of drugs, the problem with boys is that they do not like talking so they end up using unhealthy ways of coping,” said one female teacher.

4. 5 Chapter summary

The findings in the foregoing chapter were presented and analysed according to central themes and the subthemes that emerged from the interviews. Twenty adolescents took part in the study. The presentation and analysis showed that parental migration has a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents. The following chapter is a discussion of the findings from the interviews.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gave a summary of the research findings, conclusions drawn and recommendations made for further research in the field were also discussed, as well as the strengths and limitations of the study. The researcher in this section discussed the results and provided an analysis of the discussion emanating from the research in union with the data and literature obtained from other related studies.

5.2 Review of the study

The study sought to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents aged 13 to 16 from Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba. It was based on the assumption that parental migration impacts negatively on the psychological well-being of adolescents who are left behind when their parents migrate. Qualitative research approach was used in this study and the design was exploratory in nature.

Purposive sampling was employed and twenty adolescents aged 13-16 were sampled. The study was conducted using in-depth interviews and its direction was guided by the question: **What is the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 from Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College?** The other questions that were answered were: how do left behind adolescents aged between 13 and 16 from MHS and BBC view parental absence due to migration and how do these adolescents cope with parental absence?

5.3 Discussion of the results

5.3.1 What is the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents aged between 13-16 years at MHS and BBC in Mkoba?

The major finding that was revealed from the information that was gathered from the in-depth interviews is that parental migration has a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of left behind adolescents aged 13 -16. When a parent of the same sex is absent, adolescents find it difficult, because they lack the support from the parent to help them adjust to changes that

happen in their life as they move from childhood to adulthood and this has a negative impact as it makes their day to day living stressful.

Role additions and role changes proved to be stressful as some of the responsibilities are inappropriate for their age and rob them of their adolescence contributing to physiological or psychological problems brought about by sustained high levels of stress. This can be likened to a study by Aguilera- Guzman et al., (2004) which also found that adolescents find it traumatic having to undertake roles that were once performed by their migrant parents.

The study also revealed that adolescents aged 13 to 16 at MHS and BBC with migrant parents are lonely and worry a lot when their parents are absent. These findings concur with findings from a study by Engel et al, (2006) that was conducted in the United States which investigated the effects of parental absence due to military deployment on children's academic achievement. The authors found that parental absences, produced feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and helplessness in children.

According to Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) 2003 study on left behind children, the growing participation streams and the parent's consequent long term absence from home thus generate higher levels of anxiety about the well-being of the family when women migrate than when men migrate without their families. The findings from the current study and the previous study are similar because parental absence seems to have the same effects on adolescents despite the causes of the absence. However the adolescents interviewed for this study appeared to worry the same when either of their parents leave.

Furthermore, the current study also noted that parental absence due to migration has a negative effect on the behaviours of adolescents under study. This compares to similar findings from a study by Crawford-Brown (1993) who concluded that the absence of mothers was a key determinant to the involvement of children with violence. This finding however contradicts with the findings from the present study which noted that the absence of a parental figure be it the mother or the father has a negative impact on an adolescent's life. In her survey in Jamaica, Crawford-Brown found that 80% of children in conflict with the law had their mothers absent, while this was the case for only 30% of other children. Concurrently, In Mexico, problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse were found to be greater for adolescents with migrant fathers, (Crawford-Brown, 1993).

The results also showed that lack of communication with absent parents results in psychological problems like anxiety. This was also availed in a study that was conducted in Romania. Toth, et al (2007) found that the frequency of communication between children and migrant parents appears to have an impact on the children's wellbeing with a higher frequency contributing to better well-being outcomes. Parental migration has resulted in a lot of adolescents being left in the care of relatives and friends. Relationship problems with caregivers were also noted amongst adolescents in this study with other adolescents having suicidal thoughts contributing to a negative psychological well-being in the adolescents. The Philippines (2003) study contradicts the above findings and show that children who were left in with caregivers generally adjusted, had strong social support and had no problems with other family members.

The findings from the present study can be likened to Xiang's (2007) review of studies on children left behind in China which showed that children left in the care of grandparents may either be withdrawn or excessively aggressive as they either spoil or neglect them. Other studies carried out by UNICEF, NGOs, Save the children and the United Nations Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on the impact of parental migration on children left behind in Mexico, China and the Philippines, similar sentiments were echoed on the impact of migration particularly when mothers are away. The findings were that, left behind children were reported to suffer from psychological and emotional stress when left in the care of significant others, making them more susceptible to deviant behaviour and criminal offences whilst expressing feelings of resentment and abandonment at being left behind, (D'Emilio et al., 2007).

5.3.2 How do adolescents aged 13 to 16 at MHS and BBC who were left behind view parental absence due to migration?

The current study basically revealed that adolescents have conflicting views of their parents' absence due to migration. These conflicting views primarily stemmed from comparing the benefits of having a parent outside the country against the absence of the parental figure. Material gains were noted as some of the benefits that the adolescents gained from their parents who are out of the country. As a result of this, some adolescents appear to experience parental absence as more acceptable provided that it results in them having access to certain material goods.

The adolescents revealed feelings of abandonment and rejection and wished their parents were closer but at the same time, their desire for their parents' presence would mean the lack of sufficient funds to benefit everyone in the family. The adolescents also seemed to understand why their parents had to leave, viewing them as caring and warm. This finding contradicts with findings from Parreñas (2006) who noted that, adolescents viewed their mothers as being more aggressive and hostile towards them and feel neglected. In the same vein, Jimenez-David (2002) identified feelings of solitude and abandonment in left behind children.

It also came to light in the study that despite the material gains, they still missed their parents. Findings from a study on the effects of migration on children in Romania concur with the findings from the present study highlighted that money and material welfare which migrant parent(s) give to their children cannot substitute parental love, (Toth et al., 2007).

Similar sentiments were echoed by Masango & Nyanjaya (2012) in a study on the plight of absent fathers and its traumatic impact on adolescent male children in Zimbabwe. Their findings indicated that the absence of fathers in the life of their sons has produced feelings of emotional abandonment and betrayal in some adolescents and others felt disappointed by their father's irresponsibility. However, findings from the two previous studies differ from findings from the present study in that the adolescents from the present study did not only view parental absence as negative but also considered the positive gains of parental migration like the material gains that come as part and parcel of parental migration.

5.3.3 How do adolescents at MHS and BBC with immigrant parents cope with parental absence due to migration?

The current study revealed that most boys resort to drug and substance abuse because they do not want to open up. However, most girls reported using emotion focused coping. They reported that they cry a lot in order to release emotions. The use of family and other support system was also identified as another coping strategy. This is consistent with findings by Beets (2007) who found that girls are more likely to turn to friends when feeling tense, anxious or stressed.

Conversely, Toth et al., (2007) are of the view that, some children get sick, and others look for surrogate parents including their teachers. Some children may even demonstrate these feelings of unworthiness through disruptive behaviour. Alternatively, some children develop rich

fantasy lives to protect themselves from feelings of worthlessness. Pribilsky (2001) asserts that some children may suffer from a depression-like disorder called nervios. In his study on psychological outcomes of paternal absence due to international migration on children left behind in Southern Ecuadorian Andes, Pribilsky (2001) is of the view that the disorder may be a child's way of using nervios as a mechanism of coping with their changing lifestyles.

The difference in the findings from the present study and previous studies on the adolescents' coping styles is that the current study only observed crying, family and other social support systems as the means that the adolescents use to come with parental absence due to migration. Previous studies however found other means like, looking for surrogate parents in their teachers, demonstrating feelings of worthlessness through disruptive behaviour, some get sick and others develop depression-like disorders as a coping mechanism.

5.4 Conclusions

The study was based on the assumptions that parental migration impacts negatively on the psychological well-being of adolescents at MHS and BBC and that adolescents engage in unbecoming behaviour if their parents are absent. It aimed to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13-16 at MHS and BBC. Findings arrived at indicate that parental absence due to migration has a negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 who are left behind when their parents move to other countries in search of greener pastures. The finding also indicated that these adolescents engage in drug abuse, absent themselves from school and have behavioural problems both at school and in the home and have loose morals because they lack monitoring. Adolescents under study were found to be lonely resulting in feelings of abandonment and resentment. The unavailability of one or both parents means lack of some vital aspects in an adolescent's life and thus they may perform poorly at school, may have behavioural problems and end up Juveniles. It was also noted that the absence of parents during this critical stage of transition from childhood to adolescence has a negative impact on their development. This can be supported by Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which stresses the importance of social interactions in an adolescent's development. Erikson proposed that a supportive environment facilitates development and promotes the acquisition of positive ego strengths and vice versa. The absence of parents during this phase means that such a supportive environment may be critically compromised and may hinder the successful resolution of developmental crises.

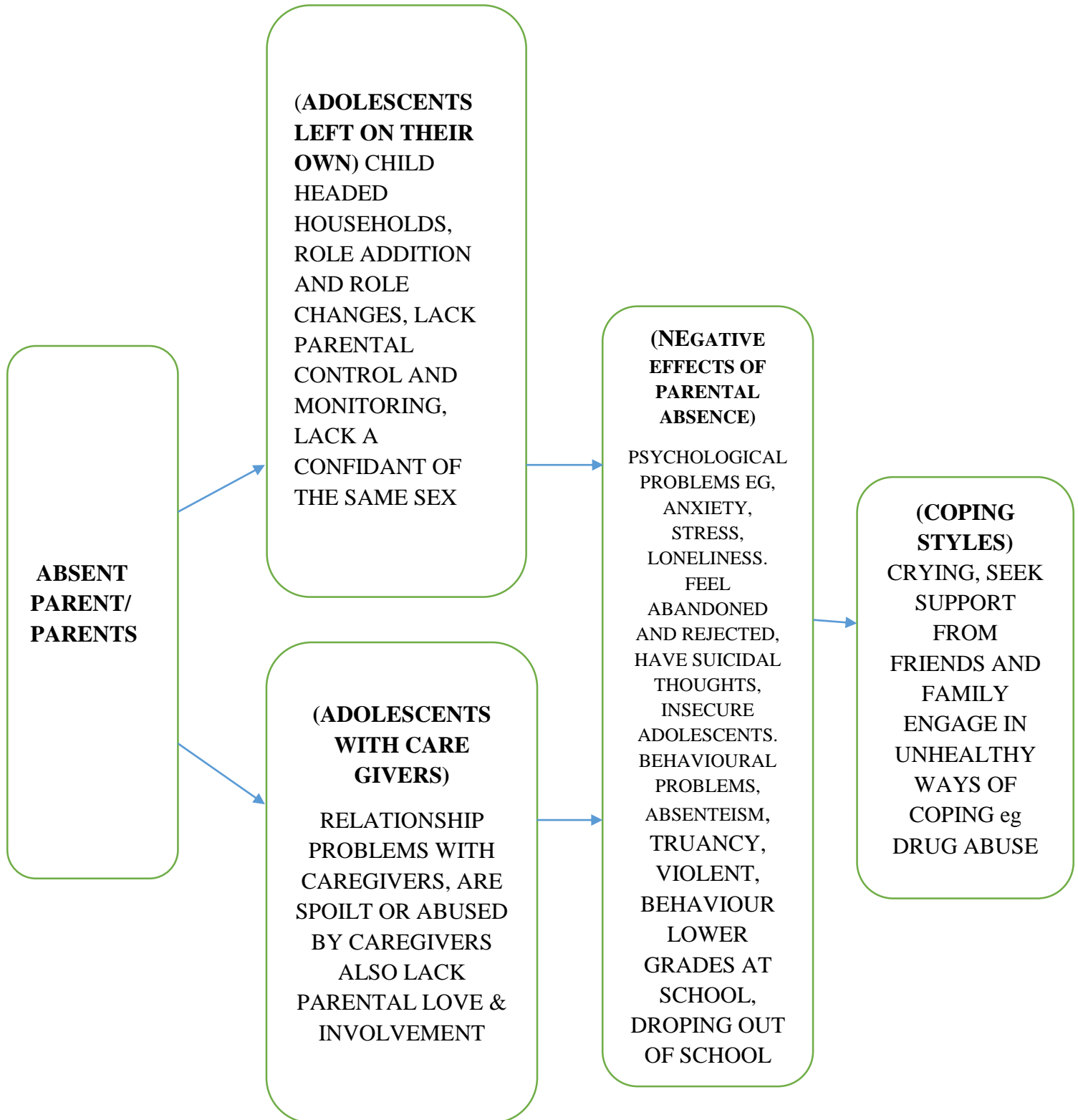
The adolescents from the present study seemed to view their parents' absence with mixed feelings. Contradictory views were noted as the adolescents seemed happy about their parents' movement considering all the material benefits and at the same time felt resentment and abandonment at being left behind. The adolescents seemed to understand why their parents had to leave and they viewed them as being caring a finding that is in contrary to previous studies like Parreñas (2006) in which adolescents viewed their mothers as being more aggressive and hostile towards them and feel neglected. The study however similarly concluded that children still reflect their mother's movement as a form of abandonment, irrespective of all material gains and the care that they provide from a distance.

Similar to other studies, the study unveiled that the most commonly employed coping mechanism amongst the adolescents appeared to be seeking support. The adolescents interviewed for this study in most cases turn to their friends to provide them with the support they need to cope better with parental absence, a finding that concurred with findings preliminary studies. However a new finding that emerged in the current study was that, most girls employed emotion focused coping in order to cope with parental absence. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that when parents leave adolescents behind when they migrate, they become insecure and confused and go through a lot of challenges and this has a negative impact on their psychological wellbeing. Lack of parental guidance and control that most of them end up engaging in becoming behaviour.

Most studies on parental migration were carried out in Western countries particularly the Caribbean, Jamaica, Mexico and in Asian countries. This study is distinct in that it was conducted in an African context and the findings relate to the Zimbabwean cultural context especially in this era when family support systems are weakening such that it is now the role of the parent to guide adolescents into identity formation. With the economic crises in the country, a lot of parents have out-migrated leaving the adolescents with no one to guide them.

The researcher designed the model below to summarise the findings from the study:

Fig 5.4.1: model summarising the findings from the study



However in treating these findings, it must be noted that, subjectivity and withholding of information amongst participants particularly amongst boys limited the researcher in her study. The other limitation was that the sample was small and limited to adolescents from MHS and

BBC aged thirteen to sixteen only, thus the results will be more generalised if applied to other adolescents in Gweru. It also came to the researcher's attention during the study that it was not only those adolescents with parents out of the country who were being affected, orphans were also among the number but the researcher could not interview them since her study was limited to adolescents with immigrant parents. Language was also a barrier as the researcher was only familiar with Shona but there were other participants who were Ndebele speaking so she could not translate the questions from English to Ndebele. The in-depth interviews that were used to gather data for the study were also a limitation as they were time consuming, the researcher had to spend at least 30 minutes with each participant.

5.5 Recommendations

After a thorough analysis of the findings, the researcher recommends the following be implemented by parents, caregivers, schools and policy makers in order to promote the psychological wellbeing of adolescents who are left behind and minimise the negative effects of parental absence.

5.5.1 Parents

Parents should be educated on the impact of their absence on the adolescents they leave behind. It would be really helpful if parents could be educated on how best to prepare their children for migration and life in the absence of their parents. The importance of communicating with their children regularly should be treated with great emphasis.

5.5.2 Caregivers

They could be provided with information on some of the challenges that adolescents with immigrant parents face specifically those that make adaptation and integration into their new family units difficult.

5.5.3 Schools

Schools could become a life-line for these adolescents and provide them with support and guidance. Support groups for those students with parents who are absent due to migration could also be formed at the schools and these can be used as meeting points and discussion forums for adolescents with parents who are out of the country as well as to teach these adolescents healthy ways of coping and problem solving strategies. Life-orientation lessons specifically targeted at the adolescents with parents who are absent due to parental migration

could be held at school in order to equip these adolescents with whatever they need to effectively deal with their situation.

5.5.4 Policy makers

Non-governmental organisations, government departments like the Social services department, and all other relevant stakeholders should investigate further on the plight of the adolescents that have been left behind.

5.5.5 Recommendations for further Research

There appears to be a lack of research in Mkoba on the topic of adolescents who are left behind when their parents migrate. Statistics are either inaccessible or unreliable and the researcher could not find any studies precisely relating to adolescents left behind by migrant parents. Taking into account the family separations resulting from migration and the psychological impact on local children left behind, it is important that more information is gathered on the cultural impact of migration in relation to adolescents in Gweru. Research in this area would not only provide experimental evidence relating to the prevalence of this phenomenon and related topics, but also allow for a greater understanding of the experiences of adolescents who are left behind. The researcher however recommends further research using various other forms of qualitative methods that have not been explored in this study in order to provide additions to the existing body of knowledge and aid the aid in the development of interventions aimed at the adolescents with immigrant parents.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave a real of the overall study, presented the discussion of findings, conclusions and recommendations in an attempt to explore the impact of parental migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro B College in Mkoba. The findings of this study were however in agreement with other previous studies although there were few differences noted.

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APPENDIX 1: REQUEST LETTER

Midlands State University



Established 2000
P BAG 9055
GWERU

Telephone: (263) 54 260404 ext 261
Fax: (263) 54 260233/260311

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Date... 03/10/14

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE WITH DISSERTATION INFORMATION
FOR... AGNES MUUYA
BACHELOR OF PSYCHOLOGY HONOURS DEGREE

This letter serves to introduce to you the above named student who is studying for a Psychology Honours Degree and is in his/her 4th year. All Midlands State University students are required to do research in their 4th year of study. We therefore kindly request your organisation to assist the above-named student with any information that they require to do their dissertation.

Topic: Impact of Parental Migration on the psychological well-being of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 years at Mkoba 3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba.
For more information regarding the above, feel free to contact the Department.

Yours faithfully
.....
F. Ngwenya
Chairperson

THE PRINCIPAL
BUDIRIRO B MKOBA COLLEGE
08 SEP 2014
P.O. BOX MK 38 MKOBA
GWERU, CELL: 0772 771585

SENIOR MASTER/WOMAN
MKOBA 3 HIGH SCHOOL
08 OCT 2014

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
30 SEP 2014

APPENDIX 2

4912 Mkoba 11 Gweru

Cel: 0773154499

Date:

Dear Parents/Guardians

RE: BSc Psychology Honours Dissertation: impact of Parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents from Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro B College aged between 13 and 16.

I am currently doing my studies with Midlands State University. Much has been written, in other countries, on how these children view their situation, but little information appears to be available on the Zimbabwean context. As part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study to explore more on the above topic and deepen our understanding of these children and I am kindly assisting for your assistance. The study will consist of one or more interviews with you son/daughter when they will be asked to talk about their experience of having their parent(s) working away from home. No names will be published in the study, everything will be treated with confidentiality. Participation is voluntary. A copy of the final product reporting on the findings will be sent to the school upon completion of this study.

If you agree to your child's participation in this study, please sign in the attached consent form and return it to the school. For any clarifications, feel free to contact me. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Agnes Muuya

MAY YOU KINDLY RETURN THIS CONSENT FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE
UPON COMPLETION

I, the undersigned..... (Parent or guardian's name) give
consent that my son/daughter (Child's full names) may
participate in the study regarding the impact of parental migration on the psychological
wellbeing of adolescents from Mkoba 3 High School and Budiro B College in Mkoba aged
between 13 and 16. The purpose of this study has been clarified to me and I am
knowledgeable about what is expected of my child and I understand that everything that will
transpire during the interview will be treated with confidentiality. I therefore give my consent
voluntarily.

..... (Signature of parent or guardian)

APPENDIX 3

AGNES MUUYA

R104124T

Interview Guide: The impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents from Mkoba3 High School and Budiriro B College in Mkoba aged between 13 and 16 years.

1. How old are you?
2. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
3. Where are your parents?
4. Who do you stay with?
5. For how long have your parents been away?

What is the impact of parental migration on the psychological wellbeing of adolescents aged between 13 and 16 years with one or both parents who are working out of the country?

1. What challenges do you face as a result of your parent's absence?
2. How does it feel to be staying on your own as children in the absence of a parent?
3. How is your relationship with your caregivers?
4. How often do you communicate with your parents?

How do you perceive parental absence?

1. What do you say about your parents' decision to migrate leaving you behind?
2. What advice can you give to a friend whose parents have just left the country?
3. Suppose you have your own children, would you at any time leave them behind, either on their own or in the care of someone?
4. In your own opinion, is it good for parents to leave their children when they leave the country?

How do you cope with parental absence?

1. Who do you talk to about all the challenges that you are facing?
2. Is the support that you get sufficient enough?
3. Apart from the support, how else do you cope?
4. What keeps you going despite all the challenges that you face?

APPENDIX 4

AGNES MUUYA

R104124T

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS: THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL
MIGRATION ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF ADOLESCENTS
FROM MKOBA 3 HIGH SCHOOL AND BUDIRO B COLLEGE IN MKOBA AGED
BETWEEN 13 AND 16 YEARS.**

1. What are the most critical challenges that you have observed in adolescents who have immigrant parents?
2. From your own analysis, are these challenges emanating from parental absence?
3. What problems are you facing with these children?
4. What needs to be done in order to improve the psychological well-being of these adolescents?

APPENDIX 6

APPENDIX
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
RESEARCH PROJECT
SUPERVISOR-STUDENT AUDIT SHEET

Date	Activity/ Chapter	Student's signature	Lecturer's signature
30/04/14	Research topic	A. Mahara	AmD
20/05/14	Approval of research topic	A. Mahara.	AmD
09/06/14	Proposal	A. Mahara.	AmD
16/06/14	Approval of proposal	A. Mahara.	AmD
30/06/14	Submitted chapter 1	A. Mahara.	AmD
18/07/14	Submitted corrected chapter 1	A. Mahara	AmD
04/08/14	Submitted chapter 2	A. Mahara.	AmD
07/08/14	Discussed chapter 2	A. Mahara.	AmD
15/08/14	Submitted corrected version of chapter 2	A. Mahara.	AmD
20/08/14	Submitted chapter 3	A. Mahara.	AmD
30/08/14	Discussed chapter 3	A. Mahara.	AmD
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08/09/14	Research instrument approved	A. Mahara.	AmD
16/10/14	Submitted chapter 4 and 5	A. Mahara.	AmD
20/10/14	Final draft	A. Mahara.	AmD

Appendix 2: Letter to parents/ guardians

Appendix 3: Interview guide for students

Appendix 4: Interview guide for teachers

Appendix 5: Audit sheet

Appendix 6: Marking Guide