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Exploring Data Usage in Implementing the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy in Harare Province

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Research Report Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Master of Management in Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation for Examination, February 2023

Final Submission, August 2023

DECLARATION

I, Eziwe Mutsikiwa, student number 1535837, hereby declare that this work is a result of the original evaluation I conducted as part of my Master of Management in Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation, the content of this research report is entirely my own.

I, EZIWE MUTSIKIWA(1535837) declare this research report in Master of Management in Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation that I herewith submit at the Univesity of Witswatersrand, is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted it for qualification at another institution of higher education.



_____ **24 August 2023**

EZIWE MUTSIKIWA **Date**

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_____ **24 August 2023**

EZIWE MUTSIKIWA **Date**

DEDICATION

To my family, for their boundless support.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks go to my principal supervisor, Prof R.V.Niekerk from the University of Witwatersrand. I appreciate his encouragement to pursue the research beyond the demands of my degree.

Special mention also goes to my superiors at the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare who provided invaluable advice during the formative parts of the study and consent to use data generated by the ministry to compile this report. It would be remiss if I do not acknowledge Mr. S. Mazongonda who assisted me in developing my writing skills and taught me how to critically analyse issues.

Above all, I thank God for the grace and ability to carry out this research. He has been my constant support throughout it all.

ABSTRACT

There is need to understand the reasons why most government departments and implementing organisations do not fully use data and evidence when implementing public policies such as the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy (ZOCP). Understanding these reasons is vital for crafting a

prescriptive framework for data utilisation in all interventions towards improved decision making. A growing body of evidence suggests that most child protection interventions in developing countries do not surpass a ceiling of 65% with regards to data utilisation (see Garribet al., 2009; Andualem, Kebede, and Kumie, 2013). Zimbabwe is not an exception to this challenge. Rusakaniko et al. (2016) used a sharp increase of 82% in child protection cases between 2018 and 2021 to demonstrate that there is limited data usage in the implementation of the ZOCP. If data and evidence was fully utilised, such a sharp increase would not have been experienced. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) introduced a compulsory Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system in 2019 with the view of promoting use of data and evidence in implementing the ZOCP. To date, no known empirical research has focused on assessing the extent to which M&E best practice are being used following the introduction of the M&E system, and the reasons behind limited data usage despite its compulsory introduction. This study set out to examine the underlying reasons behind limited use of data and evidence in the implementation of the ZOCP and proffer a workable data usage framework considering the identified contextual reasons. The study was designed as single-holistic situational study of Harare Province, Zimbabwe. It was single because only one of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe was used and it was holistic because it focused on all data usage parameters to unveil the reasons behind limited data utilisation by the Department of Social Development (DSD). Within the case study, documentary review was used as the main evoker of experiences in Zimbabwe and elsewhere regard data usage by government departments such as the DSD. Then, one-on-one in-depth interviews with 6 DSD employees, 4 Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) employees, and 2 counterfactual interviewees were carried out. All of respondents were purposively chosen because of the exposure, experience, and expertise they have in working in the child protection space. This thesis confirmed that reasons for limited data usage can be broadly grouped into quality, capacity and institutional factors. However, the study extended and clarified this by demonstrating that everything rises and falls with institutional factors. Institutional factors (are partly shaped by acts of invisible politics) determine the capacity of the DSD with regards to budgetary allocation, disbursement of work tools, hiring of practicing professionals, and giving them opportunities to upskill. The capacity factors, in turn, influence the quality factors such as adherence to M&E best practices. This confirmation, extension, and clarification led to the development of a unified framework for data usage discussed in Section 4.8. It is evidently clear from the findings that if much emphasis is placed on re-orienting institutional factors towards full adoption of the M&E system introduced in 2019, other factors will follow suit, and the decision-making process will improve.

Key Words: DSD; Data Utilisation; Quality Factors; Capacity Factors; Institutional factors; Unified Framework for Data Usage; Public Policy.

LISTS OF ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
CPF	Child Protection Fund

DFID	Department for International Development
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
EA	Evaluability Assessment
FPL	Food Poverty Line
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
HSCT	Harmonised Social Cash Transfer
MPSLSW	Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare
NAP	National Action Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
SPPF	Social Protection Policy Framework
ToC	Theory of Change
TOCA	Theory of Change Approach
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations Children Emergency Fund
VM	Value for Money
WHO	World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This study provides a critical interrogation of the extent of robust evidence usage in developing and implementing policies aimed at improving the quality of care of Zimbabwean orphans and vulnerable children. The use of evidence in child protection programmes and services has become increasingly important over the years. Some of the determinants of evidence reported in some sections of literature include limited resources, data quality, data use, resistance to change, political, and cultural factors (Jia *et al.* 2019; Mboera *et al*. 2021). In the past, decisions regarding child welfare were often based on subjective judgments, which led to inconsistencies and disparities in services provided. However, scholars such as Rusakaniko *et al.* (2016) and Nicol *et al.* (2017) argued that the use of data rises above other factors since the quality of data and its usage shape the nature of evidence used in decision making and partly drives other determinants.

Nicol *et al.* (2017) further clarified that data utilisation is an integral component of a programme information system and influences policymaking, programme actions, and research. In support of this position, Nisingizwe *et al*. (2014) and Mboera *et al*. (2021) used a case of childcare to argue that programme data can help in ensuring effective service delivery, decision making, evaluation of existing programmes, and advocating for investments that address issues such as violence against children and child labour. So, data usage is one of the building blocks of evidence use; implying thata data use in a means to an end where evidence use is the desired end.

Furthermore, data could support the resourcing of specific elements of care service delivery such as workforce strengthening or expanding the structure of service so that children and families are adequately protected (Davis and McCaffery, 2012). Many low-and-middle-income countries have established Management Information Systems (MIS) to enhance facility-based data management. Although MIS has been partly enabled by the advent of digital technologies globally, most accessible studies have revealed that routine information utilisation remains low in developing countries, with 65% in South Africa, 59% in Uganda, 58% in Liberia, and 42% in Tanzania (Garrib*et al.*2009; Andualem, Kebede and Kumie, 2013; Jia *et al.* 2019).

Child protection is a crucial issue that has been given significant attention in recent years in most Governments including the Government of Zimbabwe. Data, among other dterminants of

evidence, plays an essential role in ensuring effective programmes and services are in place. Inspired by Mazongonda and Mandebvu (2023), this study is premised on the assertion that data usage is the process of gathering, analysing and utilizing data to make informed decisions on policies and programmes aimed at safeguarding children from harm. As such, the reference to data in this study is not limited to raw or unprocessed facts but widens to include its analysis and reduction to familiar language used in decision making. The literature review component of this study explores on how data usage has influenced evidence use in child protection programmes, the challenges faced, and the strategies for addressing them.

The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) has committed to ensuring a culture of monitoring and evaluating all policies, projects, and programmes implemented by government agencies and development partners around child protection (National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (NMEP), 2019). Following this policy announcement, the Ministry of Public Service, Labour, and Social Welfare (MPSLSW), through the Department of Social Development (DSD), established a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system to track the implementation of the Zimbabwean Orphan Care Policy (ZOCP). This initiative informs and guides the implementation of child protection programmes. Specifically, it provides a platform for data-driven decisions by setting up mechanisms for collecting and analysing relevant, accurate, and up-to-date programming data. The emphasis by the GoZ to adopt a data culture is partly driven by an 82% increase in child protection cases between 2018 and 2021 (Zimbabwe National Case Management Database (ZNCMD), 2021).

Furthermore, the ZNCMD (2021) contains child protection data collected weekly, monthly and consolidated annually. The data is available on dashboard summaries accessible to all levels of the relevant civil service in the government structure. It must be noted that dahsboards used by policy makers only contain synthesised and structued data, something that can be refeered to as information since it would have been processed (Davis and McCaffery, 2012). Given the available data, there are questionable interventions to suggest that continuous policy implementation is guided by data.

Even though institutional coherence is required to develop a data culture, Dagnew, Woreta, and Shiferaw (2018) have observed mixed reactions, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings on the type of data that must be collected to inform child protection services. One scholar has

argued that national governments deliberately suppress the use of data to manipulate evidence since some of the evidence politically expose them in cases of failure to deliver their mandate (Yiftachel, 2009). Yiftachel's position was supported by case data from Indian cities, which led to the conclusion that *"…while it has been often assumed that the modern state governs its subjects and conducts planning through technologies of visibility, counting, mapping, and enumerating, …regimes of urban governance also operate through an unmapping"*. (Roy 2009, pp80-81)

As a result, national governments' use of data can be arbitrary or selective in its application while still being a source of considerable state power. Selective application of data suggests that some politicians retain electoral loyalty by either misreporting or preventing use of accurate data in policy decision-making. This is aptly clear that other determinants such as resources availability and political interference are all dependent on data quality and its usage. Regarding challenges noted in some sections of literature, this study uses case data on the child protection system in Harare to explore the reliability and robustness of data used to inform policy for orphan and child protection programming efforts. This exploration seeks to bring to light the driving and restraining forces behind limited use of data by national governments in developing and implementing policies.

1.2 Problem Statement

Chipungu and Adebayo (2013) have noted that the policy making and implementation process in Zimbabwe is influenced by several factors such as politics and directives from ministers. They also noted that most policies have been failing dismally at the implementation stage, and the ZOCP is no exception. Accessible studies on child protection have revealed that in most developing countries, routine data utilisation does not surpass a ceiling of 65% (for example, Garrib *et al.*, 2009; Andualem, Kebede, and Kumie, 2013). This demonstrates low utilisation of child protection evidence due to inadequate up-to-date data in implementing policies. As such, the purpose of this research is to determine the level of data uptake and utilisation, as well as the underlying circumstances that determine such a level. In the recent past, the GoZ committed to monitoring and evaluating projects implemented around child protection (NMEP, 2019).

As far as it can be ascertained, no study has been done to evaluate data usage by implementing agencies since the adoption of the ZOCP. Rusakaniko *et al.* (2016) questioned evidence usage by implementing agencies because of a sharp increase of 82% in child protection cases between 2018 and 2021 as was reported in the ZNCMD report of 2021. That sharp increase could be partly attributed to data usage, but cannot be solely attributed to a lack of data use, considering that child protection is a complex intervention marred with a myriad of factors. Factors such as limited resources, data quality, data use, resistance to change, political, and cultural factors are interdependent and all contribute to evidence use in implementing government policies. Among other factors that contribute to evidence use, if data culture within the DSD is low, it would mean that the department will not effectually assess the effectiveness its interventions. Arguably, poor data systems will inadequately address the continued upward trend of child protection cases. Therefore, this study's primary concern is to determine the underlying factors behind limited data use by the DSD to achieve robust quality, data-driven, and evidence-based decisions on child protection through the enhanced use of data in policy development and implementation.

1.3 Purpose Statement

This study investigates the reasons behind limited data usage by the DSD in the implementation of the ZOCP. This position is informed by Smith (1975), who noted that data usage seeks to answer the following questions: are things working as they are supposed to? Are targets being met? Is there a need for change? If so, in what direction? Accessible studies on child protection have revealed that most developing countries are lagging in adopting a data culture (Garrib *et al.* 2009; Andualem, Kebede, and Kumie, 2013). In the infancy of having an M&E policy (2019) to guide the development and implementation of development and humanitarian interventions, the GoZ aims to improve its data use culture. To date, there is no solid evidence to establish reasons behind limited data use in implementing public policies since the adoption of M&E best practices in 2019. It is prudent to ascertain the degree to which the GoZ has been utilizing data for informing and improving policies that inform the implementation of the child protection system. In addition to the stated purpose, this study explores the DSD's degree of alignment to M&E best practices using case data on implementing ZOCP in Harare. M&E's best practices, in this case, include fully adopting a data collection cycle through conducting needs assessments, baseline studies, routine monitoring, and mid-term and summative evaluations. These practices must be partly aided by using visibility, mapping, and enumerating

technologies, and the existence of institutions that support the use of robust data. The outcomes of this study will be used to develop a framework for data usage informed by this study's results.

1.4 The Research Question

What factors are associated with limited utilisation of data by implementers of the ZOCP and child protection programmes in Harare Province?

To address the above research question, the study asks the following sub-questions:

- How is data being utilised to develop and implement child protection policy interventions in Harare?
- What are the enablers and barriers of data utilisation for child protection programmes?
- Does the DSD has adequate capacity to implement M&E best practices? In this study, capacity refers to skills, leadership, M&E systems, and technical support.
- Are the ZOPC interventions informed by complete, up-to-date, and accurate data?
- What is the government's degree of influence in the implemention of the ZOCP?

1.5 Contribution to Theory, Practice, and Literature

This study provides a triple contribution to theory, practice, and literature. Firstly, accessible theories relevant to this study provide substantive and procedural explanations to some of the factors behind limited use of data by national governments. As such, they are disjointed. The present study seeks to provide a unified theoretical explanation to data usage that is contextual to childcare policies in developing countries. This is because accessible theories were developed elsewhere and are not in sync with living realities in Zimbabwe. Arguably, each setting has its own unique context and must be treated as such. So, variables drawn from accessible substantive and procedural theories, and findings of this study will be used to develop a unified theoretical explanation.

Second, theory feeds into and feeds from practice. Considering this assertion, the resultant unified theoretical explanation will be used to inform practice since it addresses the local context in a holistic manner. Arguably, any act of practice informed by local assumptions, realities, context, opportunities, constraints, and capacities has inherent potential to shape practice in the desired direction.

Thirdly, accessible studies have revealed that no evaluation study has been carried out since the GoZ adopted the M&E policy in 2019. This study explores the extent to which parameters enshrined in this policy are being put in practice in context of childcare programmes. Such an exploration flags out driving and restraining forces behind limited data use by the GoZ as suggested by some sections of literature. Findings of this study edifies accessible literature on data usage in the implementation of development policies around childcare.

1.6 Scope of the Study

In this case, scope refers to the broadness of the study in terms of geographical and conceptual coverage and period of study where focus is invested on. Outlined in this section are spatial, temporal and conceptual scope.

1.6.1 Spatial Scope

In terms of spatial extent, the ZOCP was designed to guide all childcare protection interventions implemented in Zimbabwe, but for the purposes of this study, specific attention was paid to Harare province only. Detailed reasons for choosing Harare as the spatial scope have been given in Chapter Three. It must be noted that only primary data gathered through respondents and accessible documents for programmes implemented in Harare were used as case data for Harare province. Then, literature for programmes implemented elsewhere was used as the main evoker experience on the reasons behind limited data usage by organisations responsible for implementing public policies.

1.6.2 Temporal Scope

In terms of timeframe, the study used data and experiences drawn from 2019 to 2022 considering that the GoZ, through the DSD, introduced compulsory M&E practices for all childcare programmes in 2019. Since M&E incorporation into childcare programming, no study has been carried out to assess the reasons behind limited data usage by implementing organisations. To date, there has been no reliable evidence that explain factors underlying limited data usage by organisations responsible for implementing the ZOCP. As such, this study is premised on the data generated between 2019 and 2022.

1.6.3 Conceptual Scope

This study places much emphasis on data use as the key determinant of evidence use. A considerable amount of literature has been published on parameters of data usage and reasons behind limited data use in programming (Ackoff, 1989; Breiter, 2003; Light *et al*. 2004; Mugendi, 2015; Head, 2016; Parkhurst, 2017). These studies used capacity, quality, and institutional factors to explain barriers and enablers of data use. Borrowing inspiration from most accessible studies, this thesis used the same conceptual constructs to design the study.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The first chapter establishes the tone of the study by stating the research problem, the questions the study sought to answer, and the general framework of the study. The second chapter, Literature Review, expands on the research problem by providing a detailed review of accessible and relevant literature as well as underlying theoretical issues. Chapter Three, Research Methodology, answers the six questions: what, why, where, how, who, and when data was gathered and analysed to answer research questions. The fourth chapter presents and discusses study findings in relation to research questions and literature reviewed. The final chapter, Conclusions and Recommendations, ties everything together by revisiting the research problem, making recommendations, and pointing to areas for future and further research.

1.8 Chapter Summary

This section has laid the groundwork for what follows by introducing the study and the problem it seeks to solve. The thrust of this study is to develop a unified theoretical explanation on data usage using substantive and procedural theories, and study findings. The key pillars and filters of the resultant theoretical explanation are the reasons behind limited data use by the GoZ. This is vital because most accessible theories on data usage were developed elsewhere, are disjointed in nature, and are not contextual to some of the local reasons behind limited data use by national governments. It is envisioned that a theoretical explanation informed by local assumptions, context, realities, driving and restraining forces will better inform practice. The following chapter expands on the research problem by reviewing literature on relevant theoretical, conceptual, analytical, and empirical issues. The formulation of the research problem is critical in identifying the research gap that this study intends to fill.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction and Structure

By expanding on the research problem, this chapter attempts to situate the current study within the existing literature. The issue of national governments' limited data use is a paradoxical discourse because it is a sensitive subject, but there is a group of scholars that has taken the lead in discussing it (Roy, 2009; Yiftachel, 2009; Jia *et al.* 2019). This study recognises the

non-linearity between theory and practice discussed in accessible studies (Mouton, 2009; Saunders *et al*. 2009; Yin, 2018). As such, the order of reviewing the two does not matter, so long there is coherence in their discussion. So, the first section of this chapter develops two theoretical perspectives on government departments' limited use of data in policy design and implementation. Furthermore, the reviewed theories are linked to the current study in order to develop an informed conceptual framework. Sections 2.4 to 2.7 then go over data quality, organisational capacity, and institutional factors in the context of childcare interventions, in that order. This is tailed by a prescriptive review of the data culture and ZOCP in terms of its provisions, paving the way for the presentation of the gap to be filled by the present study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Monaghan (2009), a solution to a problem is best designed when the theory about its cause is well-known. Two theoretical perspectives on data use in public are shaping this research. One of the theoretical points attempts to explain the substantive area of study, namely public policy. The other tries to explain the procedural issues surrounding data usage, that is, M&E best practises.

2.2.1 Conceptual Framework for the Implementation of Public Policy (CFIPP)

The CFIPP developed by Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) explains and clarifies issues that surround the implementation of public policies. The framework views implementation as the carrying out of policy decisions. According to the CFIPP, the implementation of government policies is met with several difficulties in different stages. In the field of public policy, implementing policy decisions has often proven to be challenging, with many policies falling short of their intended outcomes. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) developed the Conceptual Framework for the Implementation of Public Policy (CFIPP) to address this issue. This study explores the CFIPP, focusing on limited usage in carrying out of policy decisions, the challenges in the implementation of government policies at different stages, and the link between the CFIPP and limited data use in a child protection policy implementation. Based on this assertion, it reveals that it is not easy to implement government policies. Scholars such as Roy (2009) and Yifatchel (2009) have noted that national governments, at times, deliberately manipulate processes with the view of accumulating wealth, retaining political loyalty and control decision making. The CFIPP helps to explore substantive concepts, variables, assumptions, and assertions as they relate to the implementation of the ZOCP.

CFIPP draws its framework from a wide array of public policy implementation including education, urban planning, job creation, civil rights, environmental management, and health services. This broadness and diversity make it one of the most relevant frameworks for understanding public policies regardless of the area of implementation. As such, this framework provides some rich insights on the ZOCP being implemented in Zimbabwe considering the local socio-economic and political environment, and public opinion.

According to Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980), the implementation of public policy is a complex process that involves the integration of multiple stakeholders and organizations. The process of carrying out policy decisions involves four key stages: adoption, implementation, institutionalization, and evaluation. During the adoption stage, policy decisions are made and approved by relevant authorities. The implementation stage involves the development of programmes and procedures for carrying out the policy decisions. Institutionalization involves the integration of the policy decisions into the organizational practices and culture of relevant agencies. Lastly, the evaluation stage assesses the effectiveness of the policy decisions and their outcomes. This study is going to bring out more clearly on whether the implementation of the ZOCP made use of robust data.

The CFIPP provides an entry point to the appreciation of issues around public policies because it captures the dynamic nature of implementation by focusing on the way changes in socio-economic conditions, public opinion, and other factors affect the implementation process. Such theoretical contributions are critical in elucidating the reasons for limited data utilisation in the implementation of public policies. CFIPP provides entry point to the perspectives and dynamic associated with implementation public policies. However, expositions and explanations given by the CFIPP are unsatisfactory because they are general to any public policy and not specific to childcare and protection interventions. This study extends this theory by providing explanations specific to the implementation of the ZOCP.

2.2.2 Theory of Evidence for Evidence-based Policy (TEEP)

Evidence-based policymaking has become increasingly important in recent years as governments aim to create effective policies that can solve various social and economic

problems. The Theory of Evidence for Evidence-based Policy (TEEP) (2008) by Nancy Cartwright aims to guide policymakers in the use of evidence to design effective policies.

Then, to gain deeper insights on procedural issues, this study uses Cartwright's (2008) TEEP. Application of TEEP for this study is on use of data in public policy implementation. It explores the coordination of various policy implementers, institutional factors, dissemination of data, and political interference in data use. The TEEP provides the parameters for assessing data usage in different contexts. It is framed using how a problem is viewed, and how to evaluate effectiveness of an intervention using data. In this case, the study intends to explore the data usage by the DSD in developing and implementing child protection interventions and unravelling the reasons behind low data usage by the GoZ. As such, this theory shapes the development of tools for collecting data on the extent of data usage by the DSD with specific emphasis on coordination, capacity, institutional, quality factors and political Interference.

Firstly, capacity factors include available skills, leadership, and M&E system at the DSD. Cartwright (2008) notes that institutional factors such as organizational culture, structure, and leadership can affect the implementation of policies. For instance, a culture that is not supportive of evidence-based policymaking can hinder the effective implementation of such policies. Therefore, policymakers must identify and address institutional factors that may hinder policy implementation. On the institutional factors issues such as the 2019 M&E policy adopted by the GoZ, behavioural norms and patterns of the government regarding data usage are considered. Political interference in data use is a significant challenge in evidence-based policymaking. Furthermore, Cartwright (2008) notes that policymakers must ensure that data is not manipulated or distorted for political purposes. This may include ensuring that data is collected and analysed using rigorous scientific methods and that the results are presented objectively. Additionally, policymakers must ensure that there is transparency in the use of data and that stakeholders have access to all relevant information. This can help to prevent political interference and ensure that policies are based on sound evidence. Wherever politics are at play is becomes a stumbling in achieving the goals of the policy and objectives of the programme as false data will be used.

Lastly, quality factors refer to timeliness, relevance, authenticity, reliability, and completeness of data used in decision making. In keeping with this last point Cartwright mentions that policymakers must ensure that stakeholders have access to data and that the data is presented

in a clear and accessible manner. This study seeks to look at how these factors affect the ZOCP ‘s data usage.

2.2.3 The Relationship Between Reviewed Theories and the Current Study

The sum of these theories aids in predicting study variables, developing assumptions, shaping concepts, and selecting appropriate research questions, methods, and tools. The two theories reviewed in preceding sections are disjointed and can be generalised to different study contexts. The CFIPP is broad and explain issues inclined to implementation of public policies from a broadest sense and not directly to childcare programmes. Its building blocks are a summary of major issues observed and reported from implementation of numerous public policies. Since the present study seeks to assess a childcare policy (that is, the ZOCP) the richness, broadness, and diversity of the CFIPP enables adaptation of contextual variables, assumptions, and concepts for use in shaping this study.

Then, TEEP provides the procedural parameters for assessing programmes implemented by private, public, and not-for-profit organisations. As such, it is also general and not specific to implementation of public policies. Selected variables and assumptions explained by this theory are merged with the ones drawn from the CFIPP to align the two and improve on their fitness to bring to the fore underlying reasons for limited data use in the implementation of the ZOCP. Interestingly, this study provides an inherent opportunity for developing a unified theoretical explanation riding on the reviewed theories and study findings. The use of a combination of theories aids in bringing in different perspectives, resulting in a more complete picture and deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Because there is no clear-cut distinction in the literature regarding the stage at which mixing should occur, different sections of this study reveal stages at which mixing occurred in explaining study variables and concepts. Surprisingly, concepts and variables are deeply rooted in various theoretical perceptions. The following section expands on the conceptual framework that is guiding this study.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework offers a logical structure for relating concepts to variables and how these relate to one another Camp (2001). Several sources concur that data culture is a function of institutional support, organisational capacity, and systems in place (Ackoff, 1989; Breiter,

2003; Light *et al.* 2004). As such, this study draws its variables from the driving and restraining forces inclined to institutional support, capacity, and quality factors as shown in Figure 2.1.

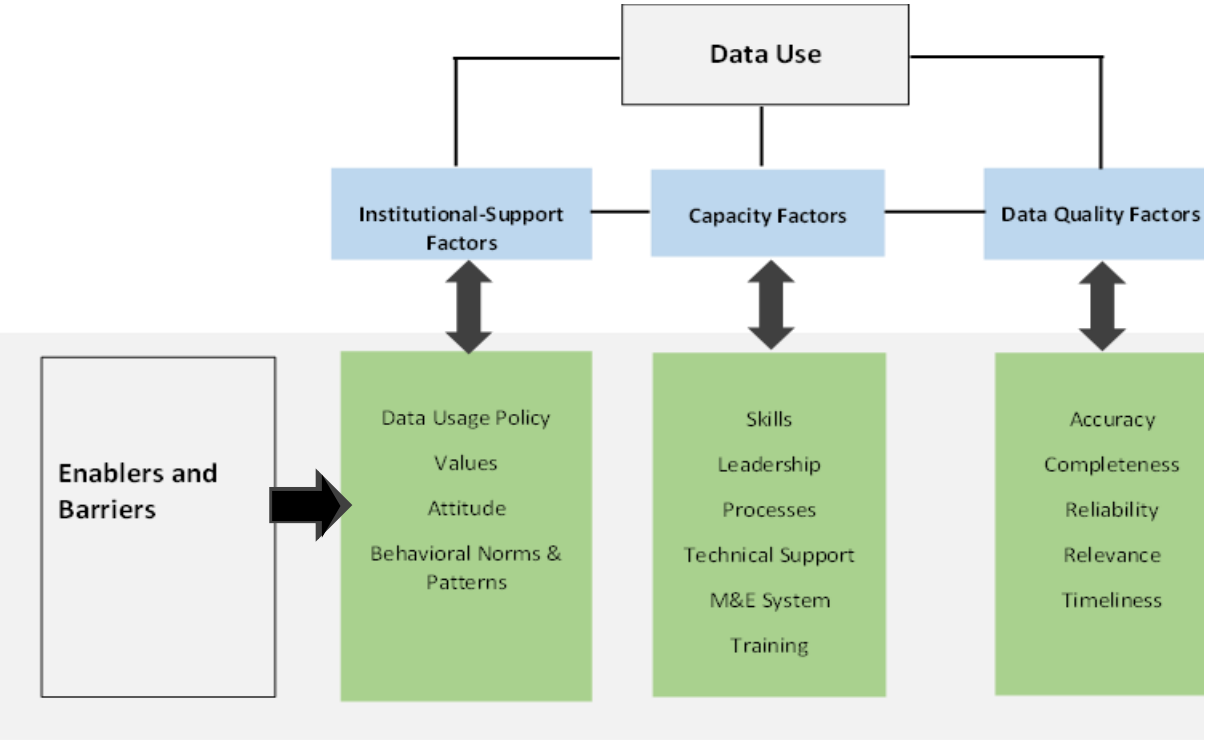


Figure 2.1: Factors associated with data utilisation/non-utilisation of data

Sources: Conceptual Framework (Researcher's Compilation, 2022)

Figure 2.1 depicts a conceptual framework that emphasises how data utilisation is influenced by enabling and barrier factors in the implementation of a public policy (in this case, the ZOCP). The organisation's vision and norms, leadership, support, and collaboration can be either an enabler or barrier to data utilisation, whilst the quality of data can either promote or hinder data usage. This is also the same with end users, who in this case are implementing organisations. The capacity to utilize data in the form of knowledge, skills, and commitment to using data can also promote or hinder data usage.

How data is gathered, analysed, and used for decision making is a function of organisational culture (particularly data culture) and organisational skills set. It is also a mere reflection of government's attitude towards the use of data and the concerns that emerge on the implications that usage of correct and authentic data might have on the legitimacy of the government. Data quality, capacity factors, and institutional factors flagged out in Figure 2.1 form the topics of Sections 2.4 to 2.6 respectively.

The configuration of child protection is that agencies collect data from a variety of sources, including families, service providers, and government databases. The data collected can be classified into three main categories; administrative, survey, and child welfare data. Administrative data refers to facts that are routinely collected by child welfare agencies during their work. This includes data such as the number of children in care, the number of child protection investigations conducted, and the number of children who receive services. Administrative data is important for monitoring trends and tracking outcomes over time. Then, survey data is collected through fresh studies conducted by child welfare agencies. This type of data provides more detailed information about the experiences and outcomes of children and families in the child welfare system. It can also be used to assess the effectiveness of interventions and programmes. Lastly, child welfare data is collected specifically for child protection purposes. This includes information about the child's family, the nature of the abuse or neglect, and the interventions that have been implemented. Child welfare data is essential for ensuring that child protection agencies can provide appropriate and effective services to children and families

2.4 The Nexus between Data Quality and Data Usage

Data is usable if it meets the parameters of data quality: completeness, timeliness, integrity, accuracy, and consistency. According to Mugendi (2015), quality data is essential in planning, management, and decision-making. Evidence-based plans and data-driven decisions must be based on accurate, complete, timely data. It has been argued that despite concerns about the poor quality of data collected routinely through facilities, the extent of reliability has not been well explored (Mugendi, 2015). As such, decisions to use or not to use data are made subjectively (Simba and Mwangu, 2009). This suggests that data quality can be a factor contributing to the non-utilisation of M&E best practices by child protection organisations. This study probes further the child protection partners' data quality in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating child protection interventions.

2.5 The Nexus between Capacity Factors and Data Usage

Capacity factors and data usage play an essential role in improving child protection programmes and services. The capacity of a programme refers to the organization's ability to deliver quality services, including personnel, financial resources, and infrastructure. Data

usage, on the other hand, refers to the process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data to inform decision-making in child protection programmes and services.

Capacity factors are crucial in child protection programmes and services because they influence the organization's ability to deliver quality services to children and families. According to Reilly, Orton, and Wilson (2021), capacity factors such as staff training and development, financial resources, and infrastructure are critical in determining the effectiveness of child protection programmes. These factors influence the programme's ability to recruit and retain qualified staff, provide adequate financial resources, and maintain an appropriate infrastructure to support service delivery.

M&E is a programme that is in its infancy in Zimbabwe; hence some organisations may not have skilled staffing to collect, analyse and interpret M&E data. In the context of this study, the GoZ recently (in 2019) launched an M&E policy to implement government policy programmes, including the ZOCP. Arguably, the described human resourcing context may impact the utilisation of M&E data for decision-making. A study conducted by USAID and Measure (2010) in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and India, revealed that a lack of technical skills in the collection of M&E data affects data quality and the ability to use it in decision-making. Insufficient M&E skills were universally cited as the critical barrier to collecting quality data and subsequently using it.

Over and above collecting relevant and accurate data, Head (2016) noted that the quality of public decision making largely depends on the quality of analysis and insights derived from the analysed data. It has been further noted that decisions that provided by public organisations is a function of the analytic output since evaluation practices and capabilities vary enormously. Head (2016) also asserted that in as much public agencies gather and analyse large volumes of data, very little is known regarding how this data is used for policy and programme improvement. So, having data is one thing, and utilising it is another thing.

In the same line of argument, a study by Schildkamp*et al.* (2017) revealed that numerous respondents answered *'...I don't know…'* on items about data use for accountability, data use for school development, and data use for instructions. This suggests a lack of knowledge concerning data use in schools and possibly similar government institutions. While these studies were conducted in the health and education sectors, little is known about the capacity

factors associated with data utilisation in the child protection sector. This study seeks to confirm or refute, extend, or clarify conclusions from previous studies by others concerning the capacity dimension.

Data usage plays a crucial role in improving child protection programmes and services. According to McDaniel, et al. (2018), data usage helps organizations to identify trends, patterns, and gaps in service delivery, and inform decision-making. Data usage involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data to inform programme improvement, resource allocation, and service delivery.

Capacity factors and data usage are interdependent in child protection programmes and services. According to Hughes and Rycus (2019), capacity factors such as personnel, financial resources, and infrastructure can influence the organization's ability to collect, analyse, and interpret data effectively. For instance, an organization with limited financial resources may not be able to invest in technology and personnel to support data collection and analysis. Similarly, an organization with inadequate personnel may not be able to collect and analyse data efficiently.

Moreover, data usage can also influence the capacity of child protection programmes and services. According to Mitchell and Mitchell (2020), data usage can help organizations to identify gaps in service delivery and allocate resources appropriately to address these gaps. For instance, an organization that uses data to identify a high number of child abuse cases may allocate more resources to training staff on child abuse prevention and identification.

Conclusion

Capacity factors and data usage are critical in improving child protection programmes and services. Capacity factors such as personnel, financial resources, and infrastructure are crucial in supporting data usage in child protection programmes and services. Data usage, on the other hand, can influence the capacity of child protection programmes and services by identifying trends, patterns, and gaps in service delivery, and informing decision-making.

2.6 The Nexus between Institutional Factors and Data Usage

Institutional factors, such as organizational culture, leadership, and policies, can significantly affect the utilisation of data in these programmes and services. The organizational culture of child protection agencies can impact how data is collected, analysed, and used to inform decision-making. Research suggests that a culture of collaboration and openness can facilitate the use of data in child protection services (Farmer, Ryan, & Ramey, 2015). However, a culture of blame and fear can hinder data utilisation and lead to the manipulation of data for political or personal gain (Drake, 2014).

Leadership plays a crucial role in creating an environment that values data utilisation in child protection services. Effective leaders promote a data-driven culture and provide the necessary resources and training to support data utilisation (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019). Conversely, ineffective leadership can impede data utilisation and hinder the development of evidence-based policies and practices (Griffin & Stepan, 2016).

Policies can impact data utilisation in child protection programmes and services. For example, policies that prioritize data quality and accuracy can lead to improved data utilisation (Rzepnicki, 2017). However, policies that prioritize compliance over data quality can hinder data utilisation and lead to inaccurate reporting (Carroll et al., 2015). Technology can play a vital role in enhancing data utilisation in child protection services. Electronic data systems can streamline data collection and analysis, reducing the time and resources required to generate insights (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019). However, inadequate technology infrastructure can hinder data utilisation and limit the scope and quality of data analysis (Nelson, 2015).

Furthermore, institutional factors can determine the utilisation or non-utilisation of M&E data for decision-making in various sectors, including child protection. USAID and Measure (2010) have noted that when organisational systems are in place to support a culture of data-informed decision-making, data producers and users can better understand the value of data, including its trends and its role in improving the quality of decisions made using robust and accessible data. Furthermore, USAID and Measure (2010) noted that an enabling environment supports training, develops the technical competency of its staff through supporting in-house and outsourced training, and allocates a certain percentage of the budget to M&E arm.

Institutional support is partly affected by politics of evidence because evidence is political. Parkhurst (2017) brought to light three dimensions of politics of evidence; political bias, overt politics in the pursuit of political interests, and the subtle politics feeding from cognitive-political origins of bias. The first dimension describes bias in the creation of evidence, and how evidence is prioritised, selected, and interpreted for political gains. It has been argued that a study can be designed to advance certain interests or manipulated mid-way through to take certain direction (Parkhurst, 2017). Then, evidence can be cherry-picked, or premature claims can be made to achieve or justify predetermined conclusions. This first dimension is in sync with one classical philosopher, Albert Einstein, often quoted as having said *'...not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted'*.

Arguably, and the other two dimensions describe the driving forces for manipulation. Overt politics is premised on the fact that public policy decisions are done in a contested and competitive political environment. This is explained in part by the fact that politics is a field of opposing viewpoints, competing needs, and divergent interests. It is against this background that Roy (2009) and Yiftachel (2009) claimed that national governments deliberately manipulate evidence to advance their political interests and ensure voter loyalty. Bero (2005, p. 200) unveiled the list of strategies used in overt politics to manipulate evidence. These include Fund research that supports the interest group position,publish research that supports the interest group position.Additionally strategies are, suppressing research that does not support the interest group position and criticize research that does not support the interest group position. Furthermore,disseminate interest group data or interpretation of risk in the lay press and disseminate interest group data or interpretation of risk directly to policy makers.

Strategies brough to light by Bero (2005) are a true testimony that there is intentionality in the way studies and studies' findings are handled. Then, the subtle politics dimension can be linked to a proposition made by one classical philosopher, Francis Bacon (1620), that *'...the human understanding is like a false mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it'.* This is one of the under explored dimensions because it feeds from cognitive factors hinged to mental processes. As such, its biases are less easily recognisable. According to Parkhurst (2017) this form of bias can be directly linked to existing political values and beliefs, hence making them political in origin. In support of Bero's (2005) assertion, Cairney (2017) concluded that policy makers use two types of shortcuts; either by pursuing clear goals and prioritizing certain kinds and sources of

data, or by drawing on emotions, gut feelings, beliefs, habits, and familiar reference points to make decisions quickly. This study seeks to assess the institutional factors that contribute to data utilisation or non-utilisation and processes which are in place at the DSD in the implementation of the ZOCP.

Rendell *et al*. (2020) noted that contextual factors such as politics and available resources affect use of data, both positively and negatively. These issues are often deeply entrenched in the local culture. While recognizing that these factors can be influential is important, little can be done in practice to promote or mitigate their impact in the short to medium term. Then, institutional factors, such as organizational culture, leadership, policies, and technology, can significantly impact data utilisation in child protection programmes and services. A positive organizational culture, effective leadership, policies that prioritize data quality, and appropriate technology infrastructure can all facilitate data utilisation in child protection services. Policymakers and child protection agencies should prioritize the development of evidence-based policies and practices that promote data utilisation to improve outcomes for children and families

2.7 Data Usage in Child Protection

There is limited literature on the usage of data in child protection programmes. However, existing literature reveals that while data seems to play only a supporting role in child welfare programmes, it has a big impact on programme implementation, policy setting and outcomes for children. A study report undertaken by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in the USA in 2012 concluded that data usage positively changed outcomes for children in foster care through the strategic use of integrated data. The data used in the study offered policymakers, programme administrators, and researchers a powerful tool to analyse the interactive effects of programmes and make more informed decisions to improve outcomes for vulnerable families. Policymakers and caseworkers have struggled to understand whether collecting offset child support is always in the child's best interests. Using data from the child welfare system and the child support enforcement system, researchers discovered unintended effects from their analysis, allowing them to recommend programme design changes.

Another study conducted in 2017 by Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) revealed insightful observations on the use of data. After reviewing the research findings based on the available

data, senior officials realized that reducing children's time in and out-of-home placements required a revision of state policy on using child support to offset out-of-home placement costs. Data was effectively used to produce better outcomes with little additional cost. Departmental officials in the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (WDCF) have since acknowledged using data to make decisions and bring together multi-stakeholder workgroups at the state and county levels as a model for future policy development.

The 2013 Joint Inter-agency Statement on strengthening child protection systems in Africa also emphasised the importance of quality of evidence and policies in ending violence, exploitation, and abuse of children. It has been noted on page 1 of the statement that:

> …effective child protection depends on the following elements: (i) appropriate policies, legislation and regulations; (ii) well-defined structures and functions and adequate capacities; (iii) supportive social norms; (iv) effective promotion, prevention and response actions; (v) high quality evidence and data for decision-making; and (vi) efficient fiscal management and sufficient resource allocation. When these elements and actors work together, they create a system that is better able to protect all children.

Actions (i) and (v) of the Statement directly speak to the main concern of this study. They emphasise the importance of linking policies and high-quality data to support interventions. This call to action implies that are gaps in interventions designed and implemented in child protection. In conclusion, the Statement proposed adoption of systems approach informed by sound policies, and quality of evidence to improve on child protection initiatives.

In sync with the Joint Inter-agency Statement (2013), the Training Resources Group and Play Therapy Africa (2012) also proposed a similar approach to child protection anchored on key pillars. Among the nine pillars, much emphasis was placed on the role of mapping and assessment, creating political space, policy development and law reform, social service workforce, and M&E. In the Zimbabwean context, the GoZ has a department called the DSD, and it introduced the M&E system in 2019 and made it a compulsory inclusion in all child protection interventions. Whether effective or not is subject that warrants further research. Since the launch of M&E system, in as far as it can ascertained, no studies have been carried out to assess the extent to which quality of evidence is used to inform practice. Reviewed theoretical and empirical literature in preceding paragraphs is all pointing to the general lack of data culture as the chief reason to limited data use by government departments in implementing public policies. Therefore, it is prudent to review issues surrounding data culture

and how best it can be promoted. So, the next section provides a prescriptive review of data culture in government departments such as the DSD.

2.8 Limited Data Usage in Child Protection

It should be noted that while there is increased call for use of data by Govts in child protection, use of data is significantly limited due to an assortment of factors as explained in this section. Child protection programmes and services are designed to protect children from harm and provide support for families in need. Data is a critical component of these programmes and services, as it enables policymakers and practitioners to identify trends, monitor outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. However, the usage of data in child protection programmes and services is often limited due to a range of factors, including privacy concerns, data quality issues, and a lack of resources.

Privacy concerns are a significant barrier to the use of data in child protection programmes and services. According to Marcolini et al. (2020), concerns about confidentiality and the potential for stigmatization can make it difficult for practitioners to collect and share information about vulnerable children and families. This can lead to fragmented and incomplete data, making it challenging to develop effective interventions and monitor outcomes.

Data quality issues are another challenge facing child protection programmes and services. According to Melton et al. (2018), poor data quality can lead to inaccurate or incomplete information, making it difficult for policymakers and practitioners to make informed decisions. In addition, data silos can create barriers to sharing information between agencies, which can exacerbate data quality issues and limit the effectiveness of interventions.

A lack of resources is also a significant barrier to the use of data in child protection programmes and services. According to Benbenishty et al. (2021), many child protection agencies lack the resources needed to collect and analyse data effectively. This can limit the capacity of practitioners to monitor outcomes and make informed decisions about interventions, ultimately reducing the effectiveness of these programmes and services.

Despite these challenges, there are several potential solutions to enhance the usage of data in child protection programmes and services. One approach is to develop standardized data

collection and sharing protocols, as suggested by Melton et al. (2018). This can help to ensure that data is accurate and complete and can be easily shared between agencies. Another potential solution is to invest in data management systems and infrastructure, as recommended by Benbenishty et al. (2021). This can enhance the capacity of agencies to collect, analyse, and share data, ultimately improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

While data is a critical component of child protection programmes and services, its usage is often limited due to a range of factors, including privacy concerns, data quality issues, and a lack of resources. Addressing these challenges will require a multi-faceted approach that includes standardized data collection and sharing protocols, investments in data management systems and infrastructure, and a focus on building a culture of data-driven decision-making within child protection agencies. The CFIPP framework posits that it is possible to develop effective data collection strategies that can help overcome the challenge of limited data use. The researcher encourages the policymakers to adopt this dimension of solution provided by the CFIPP which can improve the effectiveness of policy implementation and ensure that policy decisions achieve their intended outcomes. If there is limited incomplete and inaccurate data in the system the outcomes of the Orphans and Vulnerable (OVC) will not be achieved through the data starved ZOCP.

2.9 Promoting a Data Culture in Government Departments

One classical philosopher, William Edwards Deming, noted that *"...without data you are just another person with an opinion".* Inspired by this philosophical statement, this section discusses issues surrounding building and upholding a data culture within an organisation. According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, culture is defined as a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution or organization. The same dictionary defines data as facts and statistics collected for reference or analysis. From a scholarly viewpoint, Mazongonda and Mandebvu (2023, p.1) described data as a wide range of unprocessed facts, but clarified that the chain of data-use includes that *"collection, collation, presentation, analysis and interpretation of (mainly quantitative) data"*. Then, culture has been defined by Nkwake (2020) as the long held beliefs and norms that shape a given conduct. Considering these definitions, data culture within an organization can then be loosely interpreted to mean the set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices for collection of facts and statistics and the manner in which they are referred to for analysis. So, this study is mainly

focused on the chain of data-use (one key determinant to evidence-use) to explore limited evidence by the DSD. This section discusses the fundamentals of a data culture and how that culture can be promoted within government departments to ensure that all interventions and decisions are shaped by data and evidence.

Scholars such as Cartwright (2008) have argued that there are underlying benefits to having a fruitful data culture within an organization. Some of the most apparent and relevant to the context of government departments are as follows. The work of government departments is centred on changing the narrative for struggling communities (in this case, orphans) and enhancing their capabilities through a wide range of interventions. This sort of work requires decisions that are within very few standard deviations of the true distribution of the data used to make the decisions around such interventions. It is only through accurate data. Further, prudent analysis and brutal robust discussions with all relevant stakeholders of the programming sector which ensue that the right decisions are made. A working data culture is the only way to enable Governments to utilize data in policy implementation for the Govt of Zimbabwe implementation of the ZOCP.

Whilst government departments have networks to respond to disasters and shocks as evidenced by organisations that intervened after the Cyclone Idai that hit Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Madagascar in 2019; and the Zimbabwe cholera outbreaks of 2008 and 2018 amongst others, preparedness was still a key ingredient in all the work that was done. Better preparedness comes from good data sources and full understanding of current financial standing, available human capital and detailed knowledge of affected communities. With enough accurate data, modelling can then allow organizations to be even more proactive in the face of anticipated stress or shocks.

Most child protection's work is done through and with other organisations. Some organisations serve as funding partners and some as implementing partners. It is only through well designed empathy programmes that there is enough data available for decision making. This allows for effective cost management and ensuring of a decent Social Return on Investment (SRI).

The DSD has been on the social landscape for a length period impacting lives of children in different ways. So much work has been done and so many lives have been impacted and

transformed. National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (NAP for OVCIII) (2016) The department, through its network of partners, has done enough work to have rich literature on the African landscape and elsewhere. The collection, collation, analysis, interpretation, and utilisation of data can be a reliable tool in documentation of institutional memory which is important in informing the work that has been done, where organisations are coming from, and what it means to society.

One of the most significant benefits is the ability to identify trends and patterns in child abuse and neglect. This information can be used to develop targeted prevention and intervention programmes tailored to specific populations' needs. Data can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and interventions. By collecting data on programme outcomes, child protection agencies can determine which interventions are most effective and which need to be modified or discontinued. There are many examples of the use of data in child protection programmes and services. One example is using predictive analytics to identify children at risk of abuse or neglect, Munro (2019). Child welfare agencies can use data on risk factors, such as poverty and substance abuse, to identify families who are most in need of services and support.

Another example is using data to monitor outcomes and improve service delivery. Child welfare agencies can collect data on programme outcomes, such as the percentage of children who are reunified with their families or placed in permanent homes. Reunification and placement are quite an outstanding child protection activity in Zimbabwe, as prevalence is shown by the statistics in (ZNCMD 2022). Robust use of data raises the quality and standards of intervention would be raised to desirable stands if data were used appropriately.

In addition, data can be used to improve decision-making in child protection cases. By analysing risk factors and outcomes data, child protection workers can make more informed decisions about the most appropriate course of action for each case. Adoption of a data culture is not without its challenges. One classical philosopher, Jay McInerney, said *"…sometimes I think the difference between what we want and what we are afraid of is about the width of an eyelash".* Whilst personnel within an organization want to be part of the data culture and be active contributors to the wave of change, there could also be a couple of hindrances to jumping onto the ship that is about to set sail. To them it is an exciting journey, but also an equally scary one. Considering some reasons that might be key to investigate amongst the teammates for existence and then clarification, Schrage (2013, p33) has written that:

> "…the evolving marriage of big data to analytics increasingly leads to a phenomenon I would describe as 'accountability creep'-the technocratic counterpart to military 'mission creep'. The more data organizations gather from more sources and algorithmically analyse, the more individuals, managers and executives become accountable for any unpleasant surprises and/or inefficiencies that emerge

When fear of learning new things takes over, it leads to a general decline of confidence and participation from the student, less work is done and less questions are asked (Bergin and Reilly, 2005). Within the organization some pushback on implementing a data culture will emanate from this existing fear amongst employees to learn the necessary skills that are needed for a complete data cycle. This tallies well with studies done by Rendell (2020) in Kenya which showed that the role of training and capacity-building activities is an important factor in public health data usage. The evidence suggests that the relationship between data use and training is straight forward; training in data use facilitates staff use of data at a local level, and conversely, an absence of training was cited as a barrier to data use. The analysis also showed that capacity building activities, which may be considered an extension of training by incorporating ongoing technical assistance and mentoring, resulted in an increased appreciation and ownership of data.

While people generally understand that technology is meant to ease the completion of work assignments, as any standard machine is supposed to achieve, it should also be noted that the use of new machines can be associated with *'more work'*. It should be suspected that team members are not keen on taking on new responsibilities in the data cycle that were not originally part of their job descriptions. This extra responsibility is just merely more work if time is not taken to educate the team members of how ease of doing things and increased knowledge comes from adopting this new data driven strategy.

Limitations to the implementation of a good data culture can still be further investigated so that management and executives can empathize with all known and unknown concerns of the intended beneficiary and the employee. Outlined below are some recommendations on how a data culture can be successfully implemented across government departments. It must be noted that these suggestions are from data borrowed from past studies by other scholars.

Davenport *et al* (2010) have noted that it must be made known to the employee what a data culture entails and the benefits it presents to the individual and the organization at large. The

contingency framework in Figure 2.2 is based on two factors; time horizon of planning, and value that can be derived at each time horizon. It can be deduced that data enables reporting, giving alerts, and extrapolation by looking into the past, present and future respectively. This implies that with data, limited value can be derived for decision making. To gain deeper insights, modelling, recommendations, and simulation can be derived by looking into past, present and the future respectively. It is from these deeper insights that well-informed decisions can be made. For organisations that have been in existence for a lengthy period, they can use data generated in the past to report and share their experiences and model their past experiences. Considering data being currently generated, alerts and recommendations can be made to inform current and future practices. Looking into the future, government departments can extrapolate past and present data and use it to predict, optimise and simulate what the future looks like. Understanding this framework gives valuable insight into the various stages of a data culture and how each of them are relevant to specific points in daily organizational discussion.

The thinking presented in Figure 2.2 can be uniformly applied to work being done by different departments within an organisation by personnel of different skill sets and can be used by any organisation. For the purposes of different discussions at different levels of the organization, the data can then be viewed as either information or insight, whether it is informing the past, present, or looking into the future. The more skilled personnel will likely be required for looking at data for the future but as a starting point, all members of staff must be able to gain both information and insights from data gathered in the past and present.

Data experts within the organization must set up a *'single source of truth'* for the organisation in form of a data bank. This database must be developed with the following in mind, data must be reliable and accurate. Additionally, data must be dynamic, that is, regularly updated and if possible, updated in real time as events are taking place in the field. It must be noted that data must be accessible to all, considering careful considerations around rights of access (view/write and edit/extract reports). Adding on, data must be easy to access from various devices, locations and with minimum viable resources across the board.

By having a single source of data, the data can be depended upon to foster same language amongst colleagues; allow for objectivity in proposals as source of pain points is the same; and when people walk into meetings and discussions, they will be on the same page regardless of where they could be coming from. With one source of absolute truth within an organisation,

everyone is required to have agreed seamlessly adopted definitions of all data items of interest. A good example is the definition of the term *'vulnerability'*, that if it ever so slightly differs between organisational records, then consequently at national level the reporting will be wrong. This inevitably results in poor planning and the variances in the work that follows could reflect erroneous on social return on investment analysis.

Different tools can and must be adopted for different levels of discussions. The tools that are used at lower level should allow for easy data collection, preliminary analysis, and reporting. For management and executives, the tools implemented must be synced with the lower-level platforms, but with a defined inclination towards preliminary reporting and dashboards for easy tracking of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

While tools at lower level are flexible to capture work done in the different strategic pillars, management should have dashboards that not only show how well their pillars are doing but allow for cross sectional analysis of results and strategy. This will help in collaborations, work planning, and budget reallocations. A preliminary study carried out to inform this study revealed that some tools are already in use at the DSD, and it is the knowledge of their utilisation and the ease of access that might need to be addressed.

Generally, with new input from lower level comes new expectations. The acceptance of project proposals, the adjustments to operational budgets, and the general day to day programming should only be feeding from the data that is available for all within the system. This gives positive reinforcements to good behaviour and will encourage the continuous growth of the data culture. Organisations must eventually do away with subjective decisions within management and senior executives taught to engage with the insight emerging from new compelling evidence or data unless if special circumstances prevail. I in such a case, the waiver to use data for the decision should be fully acknowledged. This could be easily enforced if incorporated into operations' policies and organizational frameworks.

The feedback on proposals should also be based on the provided data and this will develop into an acceptable norm and culture within support functions. The use of all collected data should also be done with the results; goal or purpose of the work in mind. Data that feeds directly into assessment of outcomes is more practical and easier to relate to as it speaks directly into the work done (past), work being done (present), and work that is yet to done (future). In all, data

use is not an isolated activity, it is the final stage in a series of activities that begins with planning information systems and continues through collecting, managing and analysing data. It must bring together many different elements.

With a good data culture, change becomes easy to adapt to. Workflow frameworks such as the Design Thinking (DT) strategy also becoming increasingly easy to adopt, as these workflows can be likened to new-born babies whilst the data collected is the much-needed feeding with the necessary nutritional requirements to see them grow and flourish. It should be noted at this point that the steps listed above are in no order of preference or priority. The steps are, however, iterative in nature and require disciplined thought and action to execute better every single time than the last.

The development of a new culture or the promotion of an existing one is also hinged on how much of the members of the community in question are willing to participate and contribute. Whilst there could be no penalties instituted immediately for assurance of adoption of required norms, management can assist by looking at some rewards for teams that are eager to adopt this strategy. Implementation of strategies that address challenges in data usage in child protection programmes and services is one astute approach of promoting data culture in Govt.

The protection of children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation is a critical issue for society. Child protection programmes and services use data to identify at-risk children, monitor their safety and well-being, and track the outcomes of interventions. However, the use of data in child protection can also present significant challenges, including issues related to privacy, security, data quality, and ethical considerations. Several strategies can be explored to address these challenges in data usage in child protection programmes and services.

Data quality is an essential factor in ensuring effective child protection programmes and services. However, maintaining high-quality data can be challenging due to the diverse sources and types of data used in child protection. According to the National Child Protection Clearinghouse (NCPC), data quality can be improved by implementing standardized data collection procedures, data validation checks, and regular data cleaning (NCPC, 2015).

Privacy and security are critical considerations when using data in child protection programmes and services. Ensuring data privacy and security is necessary to protect the sensitive information of children and their families. Child protection programmes can address these

challenges by implementing appropriate privacy and security policies and procedures, such as access controls, data encryption, and secure data storage (NCPC, 2015).

Ethical considerations are paramount in child protection programmes and services. Child protection professionals must consider the ethical implications of collecting and using data on children and their families. The ethical framework for child protection emphasizes the need to prioritize the safety and well-being of children while respecting their privacy and autonomy (Ife, 2012).

Interagency collaboration is an essential strategy for addressing data usage challenges in child protection. Collaboration among agencies can enhance data sharing and integration, improve data quality, and streamline service delivery. According to the NCPC, interagency collaboration can also reduce duplication of effort, increase accountability, and enhance service coordination (NCPC, 2015). The child protection sector in Zimbabwe has a wide range of implementers who by nature of this programming area should share data reasonably without holds to certain indicators. An effort has been made by the DSD Zimbabwe 2019, to create a Child Protection Technical Working Group where collaborations and further partnerships are formed by various implementers of different pillars of child protection. This arm still needs to be strengthened.

Technology can play a vital role in addressing data usage challenges in child protection programmes and services. Advances in technology have enabled the development of innovative tools and solutions that can support data collection, analysis, and sharing. For instance, the use of mobile technology and online platforms can improve data collection, while data analytics can help identify patterns and trends in child protection data (NACCHO, 2018).

Data usage in child protection programmes and services presents significant challenges related to privacy, security, data quality, ethics, and interagency collaboration. However, the strategies outlined above can help address these challenges and support the effective use of data in child protection. These strategies include implementing standardized data collection procedures, ensuring data privacy and security, considering ethical implications, promoting interagency collaboration, and leveraging technology. By adopting these strategies, child protection programmes and services can enhance their capacity to identify and respond to child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

Lastly, wisdom does tell us that the Chinese man once moved a mountain. What is more important than the fact that a mountain was indeed moved is the fact that he started with just one stone. There is need to pilot each stage and idea in smaller sections of the organization and through looping over working methodologies participants' pool can be expanded. Some of the questions to be answered by this study include, to what extent has the DSD adopted a data culture? Where its lagging behind, what are reasons behind that? What is that can be done to promote a data culture? Does the ZOCP has an orientation towards adoption of a data culture?

2.10 The ZOCP: A Review

The issue of orphan care policies is critical for countries worldwide. Orphans are children who have lost one or both parents, and they are among the most vulnerable groups in society. Countries have varying policies aimed at addressing the needs of orphans, including access to healthcare, education, and social welfare. Zimbabwe's. is the ZOCP (1999) borne out of the backdrop of HIV/AIDS epidemic which hit the world and the Southern African region in the late early 90s. It is comprehensive in nature. The policy covers a wide range of issues, including education, healthcare, social protection, and legal protection. This ensures that orphaned children receive comprehensive care and support that addresses their diverse needs.

The United States has among several polices of wellbeing of orphans the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 was enacted to provide safe and permanent homes for orphans. China has Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors and the Measures for the Protection of Abandoned Infants. The policy has been successful in reducing the number of orphans in the country, from 573,000 in 2010 to 514,000 in 2017 (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2018). There is no data on how the ZOCP has performed in terms of reducing the number of orphans from the 1 500 000 recorded during its inception.

The ZOCP is premised on the Zimbabwean culture regarding the caring and protecting children, particularly orphans. It is believed that children do not only belong to their nuclear family, but to the extended family, clan, society they live in, and the nation at large. Locally, the policy partly enabled by the Children's Protection and Adoption Act (CPAA) [Chapter 5], Guardianship of Minors Act (GMA) [Chapter 5:08], and Maintenance Act (MA) [Chapter 5:09]. Regionally, it draws its inspiration from the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). Then, globally, it is informed by the United Nations Convention on

the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). So, the policy is shaped by regional and global conventions, but has been localised considering the Zimbabwean culture and legislation regarding orphaned children. It recognises the collective role of individuals, communities, not-for-profit organisations, and the state in protecting, fulfilling and respecting children's rights.

In context of the ZOCP, a child is anyone below the age of 18, and orphaned children are children whose both parents have passed on. Initially, it was designed to target children whose parents died of HIV/AIDS, but it has broadened its focus to cover all orphaned children regardless of the cause of death of both parents and children who face various vulnerabilities. In fact, Children in Difficult Circumstances (CDC) are covered by the ZOCP. Its overarching purpose is to provide a package of basic care and protection for orphaned children to ensure that they are accorded all their rights. Interestingly, the policy places much emphasis on coordination, monitoring and information sharing among the stakeholders in child protection. It also recognises the importance of research and establishment of a database. When it was first launched in 1999, incorporation of M&E was emphasised, but was not compulsory. In the recent past (2019), incorporation of M&E best practices in all child protection intervention was made compulsory. Preliminary research carried out by the researcher before the onset of this study revealed that M&E best practices are not being adhered to, but reasons behind that observed reality are not bare for all to see. Furthermore, some sections of literature (for example, Oliver, Lorenc and Innvær, 2014; Rusakaniko, 2016; Parkhurst, 2017; Cairney, 2017; ZNCMD, 2021,2022) have revealed some reasons for limited use of data and evidence in implementing public policies. This ignited researcher's interest and curiosity to carry out structured research to reveal the driving and restraining forces to limited use of data and evidence in implementing the ZOCP. Data should be the mainstay that feeds and informs progress of the wide dimensions that the ZOCP contains.

The use of data in child protection programmes and services has been critical in enhancing the effectiveness of the measures put in place. The main reason for data usage is to provide policymakers and service providers with reliable information that can inform decision-making on interventions aimed at safeguarding children from abuse, neglect, or harm. The use of data has enabled policymakers to identify the areas where child protection services are most needed and where resources should be directed. In addition, data usage has helped service providers to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their programmes and services.

Data usage has enabled policymakers and service providers to identify the trends and patterns of child abuse and neglect. For example, the National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-4) conducted in the United States showed that there were approximately 3.6 million cases of child abuse and neglect reported in 2006 (Sedlak et al., 2010). The study also showed that most child abuse cases were perpetrated by parents or caregivers, and neglect was the most common form of abuse (Sedlak et al., 2010). Such data helps policymakers and service providers to identify the areas where interventions are most needed.

Furthermore, data usage has helped to identify the populations that are most vulnerable to child abuse and neglect. For example, studies have shown that children with disabilities are at a higher risk of experiencing abuse and neglect compared to their non-disabled peers (Benedict & Zuravin, 1992). Such data has enabled policymakers and service providers to develop specialized programmes and services that cater to the needs of these vulnerable populations.

Data usage has also facilitated the development of evidence-based interventions aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect. For example, a randomized controlled trial conducted in the United Kingdom showed that a parenting programme aimed at enhancing parental skills significantly reduced the incidence of child abuse and neglect (Barlow et al., 2012). Such interventions have been developed based on data that identifies the risk factors for child abuse and neglect and the most effective ways of preventing them. If the Govt of Zimbabwe can brainstorm on such expounded significance of data usage, it would endeavour to ensure that all factors around limited data are addressed for the ZOCP to be effective.

2.11 Gap Analysis

Preceding paragraphs have revealed that policymakers do not use evidence and that more evidence, gathered through research, would benefit policymakers and the general populace. Oliver, Lorenc and Innvær (2014) made a strong proposition that these assumptions are unsupported and much influenced by assumptions. The trio (p. 1) challenged researchers that *"…rather than asking how research evidence can be made more influential, academics should aim to understand what influences and constitutes policy and produce more critically and theoretically informed studies of decision-making".* As such, there is need for a unified theoretical explanation to the link between substantive and procedural theoretical explanation to better understand the link between policy and evidence.

Furthermore, previous studies on the nexus between public policies and data utilisation have exposed some of the challenges in the gathering, analysis, and interpretation of evidence to shape, reshape and improve policy interventions on child protection. Some sections of literature gave some prescriptions on how best child protection programmes can be improved. Among the suggestions is the setting up of effective social services departments and adopting a data culture through observing M&E best practices. In Zimbabwe, these suggestions have been taken up, but are yet to tested for their effectiveness. As such, this study seeks to assess the extent and quality of data utilisation by the DSD. This is important because it was reported that there was a sharp increase of 82% in child protection cases between 2018 and 2021 in Zimbabwe (ZNCMD, 2021). In 2016, Rusakaniko argued that this could be partly attributed to quality of evidence being used to make decisions. As explained in the conceptual framework, Section 2.3, these issues will be examined using capacity, quality and institutional factors.

2.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter has reviewed literature on public policies, child protection, the link between policy planning and politics, and parameters and practice of evidence-based decision making. Theoretical perceptions on public policy and data usage have indicated that most accessible studies have concluded that most national governments manipulate data and evidence using different strategies. Some sections of literature have revealed that these conclusions are based on assumptions and lack empirical backing to fully explain the link between quality of evidence and policymaking. The forthcoming chapter gives an in-depth scrutiny of the approach adopted for this study. Issues relating to research design, data collection, and analytic instruments used will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section frames the research approach and design adopted for this study. It answers six questions; what, why, where, how, who, and when data relating to data utilisation by the DSD was collected, collated, presented, and analysed. The population studied and the sampling method used, particularly the respondents and documents reviewed, are described. There is also a description of the data collection methods and techniques used, as well as how the data was recorded. This is followed by an explanation of how the data was organised and analysed. Critical ethical considerations for interaction with respondents, information handling, presentation, and usage are also discussed. The investigation of the underlying factors behind the DSD's limited use of robust data in implementing the ZOCP in Harare, Zimbabwe aims to generate knowledge. More importantly, the answers to the six questions are dependent on the researcher's global perspectives and understanding of what constitutes acceptable knowledge. Such beliefs and perspectives are deeply embedded in the research paradigm and philosophy.

3.2 Research Paradigm and Philosophy

This research is inspired and informed by the notion that research seeks to create knowledge (Hakim, 2000; Creswell, 2005; Bryman, 2007). It is contextual and debatable how knowledge is created and what constitutes sufficient knowledge (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). However, knowledge creation is based on a specific paradigm or set of assumptions, and the process includes data collection. Data and facts are processed into information, and information is transformed into knowledge. The process chain connects knowledge to theory, theory to wisdom, and wisdom to truth (Zins, 2007). Constructivism assumptions inform this study.

One classical scholar, Hutchins (1977) argued that constructivism is anchored on the belief that human learning is an active attempt to construct meaning from the world around us because reality is socially constructed and that there is no single reality. As such, there is need to investigate multiple realities through understanding unique and deviant views. Insights derived from deviant views are relative to time, context, and culture. In this case, reasons behind limited data utilisation by the DSD depends on how individuals perceive the truth and how they

understand the challenge. Reality is never uniform, and it varies and evolves as a result of changing thought patterns. This philosophy as a *"…a method of scientific inquiry [which] uses an 'empathic understanding' of another to generate information and understanding about that other… it has been characterised as an 'interpretive or qualitative method of inquiry."* (Glass 2005:1). As a result, it is possible to conclude that social reality is perceived and exists as a result of experience.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is a procedure of transforming research questions into a research project (Robson, 2005). A research design aims to detail the data needed to answer research questions, its uses and intended users. It collectively encompasses settling on research strategies, research choices, and time horizons (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). This is essential in ensuring that only relevant data is collected to respond to research questions in an explicit and informed manner. According to Mouton (2009), studies can either be empirical, using primary data (for example, surveys, experiments, case studies, programme evaluation or ethnographic studies) or non-empirical (for example, philosophical analysis, conceptual analysis, theory building, literature reviews, and analysis existing data). Creswell's five qualitative study approaches (phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative approach, case study, and ethnography) can also be applied to research design (Creswell, 2005). The current study seeks to explore reasons behind limited data utilisation by the DSD in implementing the ZOCP. So, both primary and secondary sources of data were used to interpret multiple realities since they vary from source to source.

To gather primary data, a case study research design was employed. Case study research design is an in-depth and detailed investigation of a single or a few instances of a phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Further supported, case studies can be categorised using two discrete dimensions; single versus multiple cases and holistic versus embedded cases (Yin, 2003). Using the first dimension, single situational studies focus on one case only and aim to reveal unusual or peculiar issues. Again, case studies can be used to investigate complex, real-life situations that are difficult to investigate through other research designs (Gerring, 2017). The non-utilisation of data in child protection programmes in Zimbabwe is a complex issue that requires an in-depth examination. The child protection programmes are implemented in the ten provinces of the country.

This study uses the single case study of the Harare province ‘s limited use of data in the implementation of ZOCP. This is for the researcher's convenience and the limited time available to carry out the analysis. It allows for a comprehensive examination of the context, events, and processes surrounding the non-utilisation of data in child protection programmes in Harare. The investigation will involve a detailed examination of the various stakeholders involved in child protection programmes. The stakeholders are such as the Department of Social Development (DSD)-civil servants, non-governmental organizations-non civil servants to permit for exploration of multiple perspectives. Then, it is holistic to cover data usage best practices in programme implementation. Therefore, this study is a single-holistic case study on data usage in implementing the ZOCP in Harare Province. the non-utilisation of data in child protection programmes is a complex issue that requires an in-depth investigation. The case study research design is an appropriate method for investigating the non-utilisation of data in child protection programmes in Harare province.

During the design stage, it is prudent to decide whether to utilise qualitative or quantitative methodologies to address research questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Qualitative methods were predominantly used in this study because there is a need to gain an in-depth understanding of the data usage by tapping from the personal narratives, views, and descriptions of crucial interview informants. Creswell (2005) argued that qualitative research methods enable researchers to use direct means to discern people's subjective perceptions, beliefs, and opinions, thereby ensuring the gathering of richly detailed data. Insights from such data inform the discovery and comprehension of the meaning of the phenomena under scrutiny. The researcher ensured trustworthiness in this study by establishing an audit trail highlighting every step of data collection and analysis to provide a rationale for the conclusions arrived at.

This study, therefore, utilised qualitative research, investigating the relationship between data use and child protection programmes which are the significant study variables. It enabled the research questions to be answered by providing a detailed account of the exploration of data used in implementing the ZOCP in response to child protection cases by participants. The participants are practitioners in diverse institutional settings who directly implement and use data in implementing the ZOCP and were able to answer this study's questions comprehensively.

The steps involved in qualitative data analysis encompassed transcribing the data, reading through the data, identifying patterns and themes, coding the data, developing a framework, and writing up the findings.

Then, secondary data was used as the main evoker of experiences in understanding the link between public policies and data utilisation. This secondary data was gathered using literature review and documentary examination of administrative documents. Review of existing data helped in establishing what has been and what is yet to be studied and they also provided rich, current scholarly information on data utilisation in the implementation of public policies. The next section provides details on the population studied and sampling techniques used.

3.4 Population and Sampling Procedure

Population, according to Mazongonda and Mandebvu (2014), refers to the entire family of the variable under study. Thus, population is a 'catch-all' word for the collection of people, objects, and organisms and so on, sharing the same attributes. However, a distinction between study population and target population is essential when carrying out studies. Specifically, Kazerooni (2001:993) has noted that, *"...a target population is the whole group of [individuals] to which we are interested in applying our conclusions. Unfortunately, the target population is not always readily accessible, and we can only study that part of it that is available. A study population, then, is the group of individuals or units to which we can legitimately apply our conclusions"*. Then, a sample denotes part of the population. It is really a subset of the entire group being researched. In any given exploration, a survey can be carried out on a sample (sample survey) or on a population (census). If the population is studied, the results are regarded as final, but if a sample is considered, the results must be inferred to the population. Mazongonda and Mandebvu (2023:226-227) further noted that:

> A sample survey is preferred to a census because, a population is, in most cases, large and complex to study. Thus, sheer unmanageable. Since a census is shear unmanageable, for convenience's sake, sample survey is advocated for. Again the downside of the census is that the units of the population are scattered and therefore difficult to bring together, so it is easier to target a particular group. In another view it is expensive to carry out a census as compared to a sample survey. AA sample survey is most preferred as it timeous; most research has a fixed time frame and deadline which may be impractical with a census. Increasingly a sample survey can be carried out accurately because of the nature of its manageable size.

In this study, the population included organisations (state and non-state) responsible for implementing the ZOCP, officers employed in these organisations, and childcare programmes under the ZOCP. All non-state organisations in child protection are registered with the DSD and they report directly to the same department. As such, the DSD coordinates all non-state organisations in social protection and child protection. Additionally, the DSD has an oversight role to the implementation of the ZOCP, but operationalises it through and with other partners.

With respect to organisations, the DSD has register of implementing organisations in childcare. It is from this register that organisations that are implementing programmes in Harare were purposively and conveniently singled out. So, the sampling technique was purposive because only registered organisations working in Harare were selected. Then, it was convenient because the study had a limited timeframe and did not receive funding. As such, the researcher chose Harare since she is based in Harare and had no funding to cover a larger spatial location. Interestingly, most of these organisations have representatives that served as contact persons in carrying out this study. Some if not all are interviewees with a position of influence.

3.5 Data Collection Methods and Tools

This section provides details on the methods and tools used to collect data that was used to answer research questions. Specifically, the type of data gathered using each of documentary review and interviews is discussed, how the methods were used and why they were used are also discussed.

3.5.1 Review of Documentary Evidence

Documents come in different forms and types. Bélanger (2006:2) argued that documents can be *"…a written document, a painting, a monument, a map, a photograph, a statistical table, a film or video. Anything from the past that helps us to learn what happened, and why, is a document"*. In the same vein, it has also been noted that whole range of documents can include *"...annual reports, letters, company forms, accounts or human resources data, flow charts, policy literature, legislation, cartoons, photographs, minutes, memos, procedures and policies, speeches, time sheets, newspapers, magazine articles, film and other media and graffiti"* (Hutchins, 1977:17). Content analysis was used in extracting important facts and deriving themes from existing data. Secondary data to partly address the research problem was gathered using literature review and document review. In both instances, content analysis was employed

to peruse, skim, collate and generate themes from existing literature and administrative documents.

Relevant literature was identified using key word search (for example, childcare programmes, public policies, and data utilisation) and subsequently perusing abstracts of various published works on utilisation of data in the implementation of public policies. Literature review was used as the main evoker of experiences in data usage in public spaces. The review placed emphasis on theoretical, empirical, methodological and analytical literature. Then, documents reviewed include the ZOCP and the Alternative Care Policy (an updated version of the ZOCP). Document analysis is a technique that is applicable to all types of documents. The review of documents served as the foundation for triangulation, comparison or contrast of existing data, and consideration for longitudinal aspects of 'given' data. According to reports, the method is even more cost effective than social surveys, in-depth interviews, or participant observation (Mogalakwe, 2006). The method is not without drawbacks. According to Mogalakwe (2006), ethical considerations explain its inability to influence methods or methodology, the difficulty it presents in identifying author(s), problems it presents with selection of relevant documents, and access constraints.

3.5.2 Interviews

In research, interviews have a long history of use and application (Kvale, 1983; Opdenakker, 2006; Creswell and Tashakkori, 2007; Creswell et al. 2007). They are especially useful for learning the story behind a respondent's experiences or as a follow-up to issues discovered in literature or administrative documents. This means that the researcher considers how a particular method will help or hinder obtaining the necessary information. One must also distinguish between different types of informants in order to determine whether an expert with social connections to the interviewer or an expert with only knowledge of the subject matter is present. In this study, the researcher spoke with experts from M&E, DSD, childcare implementation organisations, and policy analysis and implementation. Given the complexities of the issue of using evidence to implement public policies, it was necessary to conduct interviews with these experts. All one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face, allowing the researcher to gain new insights, ask questions, and assess phenomena from various perspectives and gain a deeper understanding of the research topic.

The method is used primarily when: written records or published documents are limited or non-existent; there is need for information from different perspectives; and when there are key informants who are reachable and have in-depth knowledge about a situation or event. However, some researchers have expressed scepticism on the quality and nature of information generated through key informant interviews. Kumar (1989) links this to the relative lack of care invested in the selection of the key informants, inadequate preparation of the interview guides, inapt wording and asking of the questions, and the lack of precision in analysing the data. Too often, *"...this potentially useful and versatile method of data collection becomes a poorly planned activity generating information of dubious value and low credibility"* (Kumar, 1989:4).

As outlined earlier in this section, one-on-one in-depth interviews were carried out with *'front line workers'* involved in implementing child protection cases in Harare Province, Zimbabwe. These include experts in M&E, Social Development Officers (SDO), and representatives from selected NGOs that complement the Government in implementing the ZOCP. They are mainly responsible for implementing various child protection activities daily. They are involved in data collection, such as prevention and response awareness activities, case management and probation work, and M&E. Therefore, their direct involvement with child protection programmes was relevant for the study as they are knowledgeable about implementing child protection programmes. As such, they were able to discuss the processes and procedures involved in implementing child protection interventions.

Table 3.1 provides the profile of the 12 interviewees that served as respondents. As earlier alluded the study selected DSD –civil servants' officers and non-governmental organisations-non civil servants. Selection was done according to criteria outline before. (i)must be working in the child protection programming or at least implementing a component of child protection, conversant with ZOCP (ii) must have more than two years working experience (iii) must be at an organisation's office in Harare.

Table 3.1: Profile of Interviewees (Researcher's Compilation, 2022)

Respondent	**Profile**
Key Respondents	

1. DSD - Head Management	Seasoned personnel with 20 years of experience
2. DSD - Provincial Head	Social Development Officers (SDOs)/Social Worker with 10 years of experience
3. DSD - Provincial Social Development Officer (SDO)	Senior SDO with 10 years of experience
4. DSD Provincial (SDO)	SDO with 5 years of experience
5. District Head - SDO/Social Worker	Senior SDO with 10 years of experience
6. District SDO/Social Worker	Senior SDO with 10 years of experience
7. District SDO/Social Worker	Senior SDO with 23 years of experience
8. NGO 1	Child protection programming officer operating in Harare and other areas with more than 10 years of existence
9. NGO 3	Child protection programming officer operating in Harare with a more than 10 years of existence
10. NGO 4	Child protection programming officer operating in Harare with all more than 10 years of existence
Control	
11. NAC	NAC, an independent department set up by GoZ to respond to HIV, and has been there since 1999, with a component of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) which is Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) since the time of heightened HIV. NAC is the organisation that was the first to record 1.5 million OVC in ZIM.
12. Representative from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education	Education has been running other child protection activities in the school apart from lesson delivery since the time of HIV and is the prominent institute that houses the OVC.

Table 3.1 suggests that all the respondents have a considerable amount of experience in child protection interventions. Of the 12 respondents, 7 of them work in different capacities under the DSD, and 3 are from NGOs supporting the government in implementing the ZOCP. Then, the other 2 provided counterfactual evidence since they are not directly involved in the implementation of ZOCP, but indirectly work with the DSD and other organisations in the child protection space. It is believed that the assortment of respondents that participated in this study provided rich, diverse and authentic data used to better understand the subject under review.

Decisions regarding interview formulation are founded on fundamental ideas such as the target audience, sample design, available resources, and data collection technique (Kvale, 1996). In this case, the interviewer developed and used an interview guide (*see Annexure One*). An interview guide served as a list of open-ended questions and topics, in a particular order, to be covered during conversations with respondents. The open-ended nature of questions not only explored the use of data in the implementation of child protection interventions, but also provided opportunities for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss the topic in detail. The flexible structure of interviews allowed the researcher to prompt or encourage interviewees to provide more data. Emphasis was placed on specifying, follow-up, and probing questions. This helped in getting the interviewees to clarify their experiences and opinions regarding the

handling and usage of data. All interviews were recorded varying between 12 minutes and 1 hour.

It must be noted that this study partly borrowed the concept of control group though it was not a quasi-experiment research. As such, the use of control group considered only used mere basic principles, and not the concept in its entirety. In this case National AIDS Council (NAC) and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MPSE) are not directly operating under the auspices of the ZOCP. The researcher was interested in understanding how data was being utilized in organisations that do not implement ZOPC. These organisations have their own mandates; that is coordinating HIV and AIDS activities in the country, and providing learner education at primary and secondary levels, respectively. This strategy was argued by NIH (2022) citing that researchers can control for this effect and isolate the actual effects of the treatment.

3.6 Data Analysis

Patterns of responses from gathered data formed the basis of insights used to answer research questions. Different people interpret the reality, public policies, and use of evidence differently. According to Kvale (1996), there are six critical steps in qualitative data analysis. These are as follows: the researcher experiencing the reality of the research; the discovery of new relationships and their meanings with the informants; condensing meanings and conveying the message; transcribing and clarifying meanings; re-interviewing; and, where possible, action by the interviewees.

This procedure, however, is not as straightforward as was suggested by Kvale. For example, the researcher transcribed one interview and returned it to the respondent for clarification and, in some cases, addition of additional information. We should edit, change, or even remove certain sections, according to the interviewee. As a result, information deemed to be answering some of the study's research questions was omitted. The interviewee was attempting to strike a balance between his honest opinion about how his organisation uses data and evidence and protecting his job after discovering that what he had revealed may have violated the Official Secrets Act [Chapter 11:09]. While verification is essential, care must be taken to ensure that the true story is told. Otherwise, a fabricated image will be created.

Analysis of data was partly enabled by content analysis. It involves the systematic analysis of textual data to identify patterns, themes, and meaning. This method can be used to analyse a range of textual data, including transcripts, documents, and media content (Krippendorff, 2004). Content analysis was chosen based on its merit of permitting for a systematic and objective approach to data analysis. Additionally, for its provision for a structured method for analysing textual data that lets objective identification of patterns and themes in the data. The use of this systematic approach leads to diminished risk of bias in analysis and increase the validity of their findings.

Microsoft Office Dynamics 365 was used to transcribe all of the audio files (see Annexures Four to Six). The transcribed files were then subjected to content analysis in order to derive the themes reported in the fourth chapter. According to Creswell (2005), qualitative data analysis for this study entailed going through all of the transcripts and taking notes to get a general sense of the study. It also included taking notes, which aids in recording information and facilitating reflection (Boch and Piolat, 2005). Furthermore, going through the interviews and attempting to understand the described phenomena, as well as listing and categorising all topics. Again, comparing the listed topics to the data and *'coding'* with appropriate text was required. It involved identifying appropriate descriptive wording for the topics and turning them into categories and relating these topics. Additionally, putting together, the grouped data and conducting preliminary analysis. And finding an agreeable position on the coded data, to ensure a common thread of argument. So, the critical analytic framework proposed by Creswell (2005) helped in deriving themes, topics, and categories from the interview research output.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

It is the researcher's primary responsibility in all human-related research to ensure that the people involved in an interview study are protected. This is because informants have the right to make an informed decision about whether or not to participate in a particular project, to be treated with respect during the research process, and to have their personal responses and identity kept confidential at all times (Brener, 2006). Ventegodt et al. (2003) also emphasise that qualitative interviews require special considerations because personal relationships are formed with informants before, during, and after the interviews. In general, the researcher should avoid research sites where informants may feel compelled to participate. As such, the informants' privacy was considered critical in carrying out this study.

Communication about the expected time of completion of an interview process is required. The researcher must safeguard the informant's identity so that the information gathered does not jeopardise their personal integrity or cause them harm. Respecting informants entails soliciting their cooperation throughout the research process. The research process must be viewed as a 'contract,' with clear terms of agreement. Honesty and integrity are essential, especially because the report and findings must accurately reflect the reality on the ground (Bracken, 1981; Ventegodt et al. 2003; Brener, 2006).

Considering these research prescriptions, the researcher sought official authorisation from the appropriate authorities (management) to conduct this study. All respondents were asked for their consent to participate after the study's goal, educational value, and societal value of the study was thoroughly explained. Furthermore, all the respondents gave the researcher the consent to record the interview sessions.

They were advised that the study is purely academic, and study findings were not used for anything outside the agreed-upon educational purpose. Participants were also advised that the purpose of the research is to understand data usage in the implementation of ZOCP. They were also told that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and they can choose not to participate and may withdraw at any time during the study process. To alleviate the concerns of individuals who occupy jobs with a single incumbent, the researcher used a generic name (management and residents) rather than particular positions when reporting.

Study participants were also assured of confidentiality. All data obtained during the study that can identify with participants has been kept confidential, and only the researcher and her assistants were allowed to see the data. If the research is published or publicly presented, only group results will be stated, and the researcher will not share names. The researcher will store data related to the study offline on a secure encrypted dedicated external drive backed up on a second such device.

The participants were also advised that the data will be stored separately in; (1) a file with the names of survey respondents, where each respondent's name is matched with a code; and (2) a file with the responses, where each response is categorised by code (rather than by name). The two files are always kept separate and the ones with codes are encrypted. The files will be

destroyed after five years. Furthermore, in all face-to-face interviews, World Health Organisation's (WHO's) regulations and protocols on COVID-19 were adhered to. These include maintaining a safe physical distance between the researcher and the interviewee and proper wearing of face masks as may be necessary.

One institution asked the researcher to *'swear'* that the information they were going to share will not be abused. Some *'demanded'* to see the final copy of findings/report. This, the researcher promised to honour and will honour. Given the political polarisation in the country during the time of the study (the upcoming 2023 harmonised elections), the researcher hid behind the name of the university that *"…as you might be aware, the university is politically neutral as it works with and for everybody"*. Overall, it was the observance of research ethics that made this study possible.

3.8 Limitation of the Study

The study had some aspects that were beyond the researcher's control, both theoretically and practically. Conceptually, this study focuses on the subject of evidence use in implementing the ZOCP were evidence is determined by availability of resources, data quality and its use, political and culatural factors. However, this study is limited in scope because it placed much emphasis on the chain of data use (that is, collection, collation, analysis, and interpretation) and discusses other determinants in passing, just to clarify and specify issues. This conceptual orientation, though limited, provided some rich insights that can be used to shape future and further research on evidence used in implementing government policies.

Overall, bureaucracy was a *'necessary evil'*. Its necessity was in legitimising the researcher's presence in the offices of key informants. As the media sniffing around any information and opinion on the pending elections, the research areas this time around in Zimbabwe is essentially *'politically charged'*. To overcome the highlighted problem, the ethics' approval and organisation's permission letters which states the researcher 's mission eased the tension for the researcher. To offset any ambiguities that could be presented by certain questions the researcher tested the instrument and refined accordingly. However, the test discovered that the questions were reasonably straight. Some potential interviewees could not be reached. For example, one official stated that the researcher was welcome to see him '*anytime*'. Even with an approval stamp from his office, he couldn't find time to speak with the researcher when he arrived at his office.

As outlined earlier in this chapter, the study is limited to a population of respondents in Harare Province due to resource and time constraints. So, the outcomes of this study are limited in sample size and are geographically skewed. This has huge bearing on the generalisability of the findings. Yet, the researcher is convinced that the study findings help, in a way, in the understanding of some of the dimensions and issues in use of data and evidence in implementing public policies. It is believed that the study results give some essential insights though they cannot be generalised to other government policies since the study is a single situational study of the ZOCP. Furthermore, the study's duration is time defined as prescribed by the university and the researcher is in a full-time employment position.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This segment has detailed the research approach and strategy used in gathering and analysing data made use of in addressing the research problem. Essentially, the information related to the; philosophy and paradigm that informed this study design, sampling procedures and processes used, data collection techniques and tools used, and techniques of analysis used have been unveiled and justified. Overall, the foregoing chapter answered the six questions what, why, where, how, who, and when data on the use of evidence in the implementation of the ZOCP was collected, collated, presented, and analysed. The next chapter presents synthesised finding and specific discussions in line with research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter collates, presents, analyses, and interprets the study findings drawn from reviewed documents and interviewees. The analysis of these findings is kept in line with the purpose of the study and the reviewed literature. Overall, this study seeks to bring to light underlying reasons behind limited data utilisation by the DSD in the implementation of the ZOCP. Specifically, this chapter presents a synthesis of sentiments raised by respondents during

interviews carried out, and evidence drawn from reviewed documents. The presentation of these finding is keeping with research questions and issues noted in accessible past studies by others. The first section characterises study respondents, tailed by themes drawn from interviews conducted before detailing lessons learnt.

4.2 Understanding Study Respondents

As outlined in the preceding chapter, a total of 12 respondents were reached to with the checklist of questions in the interview guide (*see Annexure One*). Arguably, an understanding of the respondents gives an insight into and contextual interpretation of the findings. In this study, respondents' organisations, programme area, position held, and gender were noted. Names of respondents were not captured for anonymity. Table 4.1 is a summary of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Characterising Study Respondents (Study Findings, 2022)

Code	Programme Area	Gender	Remarks
01	Child Education	Male	The MPSE is responsible for the administration of children's education in Zimbabwe. As such, they partly implement child protection programmes inclined to education. Then, NAC is a government department under the Ministry of Health and Childcare (MHC) but runs independently like a Commission or parastatal.
02	Child Protection	Male	The DSD is mandated by the MPSLSW to oversee all child protection interventions, whether implemented by the government or independent organisations (*see Section 1.1*). So, a significant proportion of respondents (50%) was drawn from this department since they assume an oversight role.
03	Child Protection	Female	
04	Child Protection	Male	
05	Child Protection	Male	
06	Social Protection	Female	
07	Social Protection	Male	
08	Social Development	Female	
09	Child Protection	Male	This interview specifically targeted interviewees with positions of influence, but a few minutes into the interview another official was invited to clarify some issues. So, it ended up being dual interview where the two respondents helped each other answer questions.
10	Child Protection	Female	REPSSI and other NGOs are not-for-profit organisations that independently implement child protection programmes in Zimbabwe, but they are all registered with the DSD.
11	Child Protection	Male	
12	Child Education	Male	The MPSE is responsible for the administration of children's education in Zimbabwe. As such, they partly implement child
13	Child Protection	Male	

			protection programmes inclined to education. Then, NAC is a government department under the Ministry of Health and Childcare (MHC) but runs independently like a Commission or parastatal.

A total of 12 respondents participated in one-on-one in-depth interviews carried out. A significant percentage of these respondents (75%) are male. As such, the results are gender skewed towards male. The reasons behind this gender skewdness could not be established because they are beyond the scope of this study, but it helps in ascertaining whether responses vary according to gender. This characterisation is essential in tracing differences, similarities and congruencies in respondents' reactions to reasons behind limited data utilisation in implementing the ZOCP.

In terms of organisational affiliation, 58% of the respondents are from the DSD. These respondents directly represent the government regarding social welfare and child protection issues. Additionally, being custodian of the ZOCP. As such, their views are informed by experience working with the government, beneficiaries of child protection interventions, and NGOs that implement child protection programmes in Zimbabwe. The perspective of NGOs on use of evidence in implementing the ZOCP not clearly articulated by members of the DSD were best addressed by 25% of the respondents that work within the NGO sector. This gives a balanced view on data usage issues since there is some fair distribution of respondents through the lens of organisational affiliation.

Interestingly, most of the respondents have experience working with child protection issues on different capacities. This is partly explained by at least 83% of the respondents that work with child protection issues daily. As such, they have first-hand information because of their exposure and experience in the area of study. A minimal of 17% of the respondents who were involved as a control pair work as M&E officers and better positioned to understand the best practices of used of data, this can be deduced one of the respondents between these two. In one interview, a programme manager for an implementing NGO felt that it was important to invite an M&E officer during the interview session so that they can help each other answer questions since they work hand-in-glove. So, the interview session ended up being more of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) though there were only two participants. It helped in bringing in numerous salient issues that form part of the findings presented in this chapter. Overall, though the sample size was very small, the sample was well balanced in terms of organisational affiliation,

programming area, and positions of respondents within the organisations they work with. It was only biased towards males. Forthcoming sections of this chapter presents a synthesis of limiting factors to data utilisation by the DSD as perceived and presented by the respondents.

4.3 Data Quality Limiting Factors

Quality, in general, defines the totality of a product or service to satisfy its stated or implied needs. In this context, data is said to be of quality if its available in a usable form and can be used to inform decisions regarding the implementation childcare interventions supported by the ZOCP. The overarching challenge limiting data usage by the DSD is the inadequacy of the M&E system in place. The general pattern of responses revealed that the M&E systems was recently adopted (in 2019) and is still at its infancy. Implementing organisations are still trying to incorporate it in their planning and implementation frameworks. One responded pointed out that there is general absence of a dissemination plan to orient users on the M&E framework and how it is supposed to be integrated in their programming. As such, there are no standard data collection procedures and reporting templates. Users collect and present results using what suits them, and they, at times, subjectively apply M&E systems. This finding is supported by Simba and Mwangu (2009) who noted subjective data collection and reporting by programming teams.

One respondent from the NGO sector reiterated the challenge of consistency in approaches used to extract relevant and usable data. It was revealed that the DSD, at times, demands the submission of disaggregate data, and in some instances asks for aggregate data. So, the question that begs an answer is *'…how do they analyse trends and derive meaning from data that comes in different forms…'*? Over and above the inconsistency in data submitted to the DSD, the respondent 12, had this to say in his own words:

> …there is general lack of understanding of the data management process as a whole. Some enumerators are not very much aware of the implications of the mistakes they incur in the collection of data and the challenges it presents to data analysts.

One of the implications of this reported reality is that much of the gathered data is lost during data cleaning stage. So, by the time insights are derived, they represent incomplete reality. Inconsistence in data format or presentation templates is partly explained by the fact that no one directly responsible for maintaining data quality and monitoring its collection at the DSD.

It has been revealed that M&E systems sound existent at Provincial level (for example, Harare province), but are non-existent at district level. Since districts use different standards to collect and report their findings, there is serious data fragmentation or disharmony of data formats. As such, it is a mammoth task to consolidate and coordinate the data sets. In selected cases, there are issues of data overlap where there are duplicate files. Further gravitating the matter is the fact that some data sets are incomplete and cannot be easily merged to come up with a provincial picture. Incompleteness of data challenges the generalisability of the data. In the end, decisions are made using *'thumb-sucked'* data and individual opinions.

Where efforts are made to give complete data, its authenticity is seriously questionable. Most respondents lamented that no systems are in place to do quality checks or control. So, bulk of the data submitted for policy consumption is error infested. One respondent working the DSD noted that the most reliable data is the one that comes from donor funded programmes. For example, programmes suppose funded by the USAID. This is so because USAID in their opinion makes every effort to ensure accuracy of data for ease of trace of its impact overtime. However, quality data submitted by some NGO is not include in the national reports. Whether the data is deliberately dropped or not is not known. This is a clear testimony that the DSD does not value data generated by implementing organisations. One then wonders where data reported in national reports comes from if data submitted is not considered. On better quality of data from donor supported constituencies respondant **11** stated that:

> There is good quality data in the USAID-supported districts, but with a compromised dimension regarding community-level data from Child Care Wards (CCWs) where it originates from the residential and communities where children stay.

USAID covers only a small constituency of the Harare province, hence if this data is taken in isolation, it's a small fraction and cannot be used to provide a true picture of the state of child protection cases. This shows that donors alone cannot solve the issue of data quality as a factor that ultimately affects data utilisation. One area that is a cause for concern according to the respondent and resonated by almost all the first 83% of other respondents in this study is the use of Community Child Care Workers (CCWs) in the collection and management of data.

Community Child Care Workers (CCWs) are an essential component of child protection services in many low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). They are typically recruited from

the local community and provide a range of services, including identifying and reporting cases of child abuse and neglect, providing support to families, and linking them with appropriate services. (Palermo & Peterman, 2009). In the case of Zimbabwe CCWs are considered an extension of the DSD and report directly to the DSD districts. However, the use of CCWs in the collection of child protection data poses several challenges.

One of the main challenges of using CCWs in the collection of child protection data is the lack of standardized training and supervision. CCWs often receive minimal training, and their responsibilities and job descriptions may vary widely from one organization to another. This can lead to inconsistencies in data collection and reporting, making it difficult to compare and analyse data across different regions and organizations (Palermo & Peterman, 2009). Additionally, the lack of adequate supervision can lead to errors in data collection and reporting, as well as potential bias or subjectivity in decision-making (Darmstadt et al., 2013).

An added problem with CCWs is the potential for biases in data collection. CCWs may have their own biases, such as cultural or personal beliefs, which can affect their interpretation of data. For example, they are more likely to report cases of physical abuse rather than neglect or emotional abuse, depending on their cultural beliefs about what constitutes abuse. Plus, CCWs may not fully articulate the definitions of neglect and emotional abuse due to genuine technical limitations. Moreover, and naturally as people who belong to the community they operate from, they may have preconceived ideas about certain families or communities, which can also affect the quality of data collected.

The latter problems have been unanimously cited by the respondents of this study. It points to the fact that the DSD and key partners operate in full knowledge that they receive comprised data from CCWs and therefore this factor affects their appetite and motivation to used data. Data from CCWs is mostly characterised by incompleteness and inconsistencies. The NGOs spend quite significant investment cleaning this data. Due to resources constraints the DSD has limited to no capacity to clean the CCWs data. It is apparent from the above explained scenario that there are really factors that lead to limited data use in the child protection programming and implementation of ZOCP.

Respondant **07** with one organisation noted that absence of quality checks in most programming data and this creates opportunities for some officers to copy and paste qualitative

data. These days, with google search, in a space of a few seconds, key-word-search generates large volumes of responses that officers can copy from and misrepresent facts. This is a true testimony that programming teams are not using original data to make decisions, but are using data gathered elsewhere, for some purposes to make decisions that are not sync with that data.

One serious challenge reported by a significant number respondents is failure to respect deadlines by officers. By their nature, projects and programmes have specific timelines that inform reporting timelines. Failure to submit data and reports timely has a huge bearing on the quality of decisions made. In the absence of data and evidence, where people must make decisions in line with the programme timetable, *'thumb-sucked'* decisions are made without empirical backing. Challenges associated with quality factors revealed by this study clarifies issues noted by Mugendi (2015) who lamented that the extent of reliability of data used in M&E has not been well explored. This study clarified how the use of incomplete, inaccurate, and non-timeous data compromises the quality of decisions made. It must be noted that quality factors are not without their cause. Further inquiry was made to determine the driving forces of triple challenge of incompleteness, inaccuracy and non-timeous. Capacity limiting factors were noted as one of the major driving forces.

4.4 Capacity Limiting Factors

Following the policy pronouncement by the GoZ to make M&E mandatory for all DSD programmes, most officers without formal training in in this area started making strides to be certified in M&E. Some are only doing it to get promoted, or to remain relevant in their positions. At the time of compiling this report, only one university in Zimbabwe (Lupane State University) if offering a degree in M&E. Other colleges are only offering short courses in M&E. So, some officers are still undergoing M&E training following the policy pronouncement to make M&E mandatory. To date, most programming officers, including the assuming the role of M&E officers, are not yet qualified in that area. As such, they lack practical experience in M&E. Those with experience in M&E indicated that their superiors lack support because they do not have a full appreciation of M&E best practices. Some of the superiors perceive M&E as mere practice that consumes resources that are not compatible with its outcomes.

Arguably, one of the strategies used to impart knowledge is on-the-job mentorship. In most cases, superiors are believed to have a higher-level skill than their subordinates, and are, therefore, expected to mentor their juniors. In case of most implementing organisations, the superiors do not have skills in M&E. so, no mentoring is taking place to upskill the subordinates on the practicum of M&E.

Data use is as good its analyses, another reason for limited data use in child protection is a lack of data analysis. According to Lefevre and Thomas (2018), many child protection agencies have data systems in place but do not use them to their full potential. This is due to a lack of analytical skills among staff and limited resources to analyse data. In addition, some agencies may not have a culture of using data to inform decision-making, which can further limit the use of data (Lefevre & Thomas, 2018). In support of lack of capacity, one respondent **01** cited that:

> The capacity to interpret data is not there. MIS can analyse and visualise data for better understanding and use, but there is no capacity to use the system. No knowledge of how to use data to prevent cases and not just be responsive.

It was also revealed that Community Child Care Workers (CCCW) who normally collect data from beneficiaries are not trained to do. So, some of the data they generate will not be systematic and this makes it difficult to derive meaning from such data. There is an adage that says, *'garbage in, garbage out'*, which implies that if the data is of poor quality, then, the insights derived from it will not add value to decision making. So, the challenge of collecting usable M&E data is not peculiar to Zimbabwe. Similarly, USAID and Measure (2010) used case data from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and India to reveal the lack of technical skills in the collection of M&E data. The lesson here is that under optimum ideal conditions, M&E data must be structured for ease of derivation of meaning and must be collected routinely. For example, all programmes must have supporting baseline data, routine monitoring data, mid-term evaluation outcomes, and summative evaluation outcomes. Gathered data, revealed practices that are contrary to these best practices.

Coordination of Various ZOCP Policy Implementers is a very critical component of successful data utilisation. In the implementation of evidence-based policies, coordination of various

policy implementers is crucial. According to Cartwright (2008), effective policy implementation requires the participation of various stakeholders who have different roles and responsibilities. These stakeholders include policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and service providers. Cartwright notes that the involvement of these stakeholders in policy implementation is essential because they bring different perspectives and expertise to the table. However, coordination among these stakeholders can be challenging, and failure to do so can result in ineffective policies. One respondent **05** has this to say:

> Lack of coordination of various child protection players and too much fragmentation of even data.

Attempts that are being made to strengthen coordination of child protection in Harare province should be expedited to harness all data that informs the ZOCP. Capacity factors, to some extent, are shaped by institutional factors explored in the next section.

4.5 Institutional Limiting Factors

In general, functional institutions must create an enabling environment for organisations to make data-driven and evidence-based decisions. They are bedrock for best practices. In this case, quality of data is shaped by the capacity of implementing organisations and their representatives, and this capacity is partly shaped by formal and informal institutions. Gathered evidence revealed that there is general lack of data culture in the government. There is no deliberate effort by the government to fully operationalise the M&E structures it pronounced in 2019. Firstly, M&E best practices must be heavily funded for them to see light of the day. In the Zimbabwean case, no serious budgetary commitments are in place to fund fieldwork for needs assessments, baseline studies, routine monitoring, and summative evaluations. In practice, most decisions are made using people's opinions, and not data gathered through filed surveys.

Secondly, over and above the miniature support given to carrying out of fieldwork, some respondents cited low investments in Information Communication Technologies (ICT) infrastructure to smoothen collection and analysis of high-quality data. M&E system being used by the DSD do not have adequate equipment and resources such as data collection tablets and analytic software for qualitative, quantitative and spatial data sets. Furthermore, no deliberate effort is being made to invest in cloud computing for backing up data files. A similar

challenge was reported in India by Roy (2009) who argued that modern governments deliberately operate through *'unmapping'* instead of making use of technologies of enumeration and mapping.

Thirdly, it was also revealed that data sets deposited in different government departments are disjointed, making it difficult for different departments to share data files. Among the respondents, there are representatives from the MHC, MPSLSW and MPSE. They all echoed a similar sentiment that they all have data sets on child protection from different perspectives, but the data sets do not communicate to each other because they are not harmonised. Furthermore, the Zimbabwe Statistical Agency (ZIMSTAT), a responsible authority for collecting, analysing, and storing national statistical data, at times, do not share certain data sets upon request. This makes it difficult for certain decisions to made when there is no statistical backing. This living reality begs the question *'how can unified decisions be made when governments departments are using disjointed data sets to make decisions regarding one subject?'*

Fourthly, poor accountability was revealed as one of the challenges bedevilling M&E best practices. Challenges no-timeous reporting, incomplete and inconsistent reporting are a true testimony that there no accountability, making officers work as they deem necessary. As such, most decisions made are not informed by data and evidence, they are based on people' opinions, and no one is pinned to back their contribution with data.

Fifthly, the GoZ do not dearly remunerate qualified professional in M&E. Every now and then, qualified professional leave office for greener pastures. This is evident in high staff turnover among the SDOs. So, the government loses a lot of money hiring new members of staff and training them to the required level of competency. As soon as they are qualified, they leave for better opportunities. This leads to discontinuity and makes it difficult to operationalise M&E best practices. Further gravitating the matter, it was pointed out by one respondent **06** that:

> Most filed officers are overwhelmed with work because of inadequate staffing at the DSD. These officers serve as case managers, office managers, administrators, and they serve as drivers at the same time. So, at district level, SDOs officer is responsible for monthly consolidation of data in addition to their daily duties. Arguably, they do not double check the quality of data they submit for use in decision making.

Sixthly, it is the duty of the government, through its representatives, to disseminate the M&E thought and practice to support the implementation of the ZOCP. Contrary to that, no deliberate effort has been made to disseminate it through coming up with a dissemination plan. So, to date, some members of the DSD do not have a full understanding of it and how to operationalise it. Further gravitating the matter, SDOs and other officials are overwhelmed with work and do not have time to learn more about the M&E best practices. This is partly explained by high staff turnover, and most officers assume dual roles leading to an overload of already over loaded officers.

Seventhly management DSD 's capacity and awareness on the importance of data and data usage is significantly limited. This finding is summed up in the responses provided by participants **01** and **03**.

> **01:** The major factor revolves around the issue of understanding the purpose of M&E and its relevance. Leadership needs to be capacitated on the significance of M&E and the role M&E plays.
>
> **03:** At the moment, DSD does not believe that data can be used to influence programs, the attitude is very negative, and there is deceptive data that is consolidated at the provincial level, resulting in data coming from Harare Province being of poor quality, no one is held accountable for the data that produced

There are several reasons why management in African countries may have negative attitudes towards the support of data usage in child protection. One reason is the lack of awareness of the benefits of data usage in child protection. According to Alemu *et al.* (2020), there is a lack of understanding of the importance of data collection, analysis, and utilisation in decision-making for child protection. To sum up institutional challenges, participant **07** said:

> … quality and capacity factors experienced by the DSD are partly explained by the institutional support we receive. Currently, we have about 26 components that we are driving at the same time. So, in order for us to really utilize data, we need adequate human resource, with the relevant technical skills, and ideal work tools. Institutional support must ensure that everything is place for the capacity to improve and quality of data to improve. Some districts have personnel without laptops; they are using traditional *'pen and paper'* approach to capture and record activities. At times, when in the field, officers' resort to the use of their cell phones in collecting data instead of using appropriate technology.

Sentiments lamented by most respondents and summed by the above quote is a true testimony that institutional support is lacking. So, challenges at the DSD range from human resources to

technical skills and widen to include work tools such as laptops and digital data collection devices.

In significant support of the above insights by the respondent, Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980) identified several challenges that can arise during each of the four stages of policy implementation. Institutionalization can be hindered by a lack of political support and insufficient funding for sustaining the policy decisions. Lastly, evaluation can be hindered by a lack of data, inadequate performance measures, and resistance from stakeholders. Furthering the point of the institutional capacity respondent **09** said;

> There are no reviews and evaluations of the programs it's just implementation continuous so at what stage can the people that sat down to review what the NAP is doing NAP OVC and use data from programme reviews to further review and update policies and programmes. If ever reviews and evaluations happens it will be donors who commission and fund and donors do evaluate certain aspects and not the entire program, this is in line with what one responded alluded.

4.6 Political Interference

The respondents were hesitant to comment on issues inclined to the role of politics in limited use of data and evidence in the implementation of the ZOCP. However, they gave some pointers that have been classified as politics of work and national politics. In this study, politics of work is used to describe activities involved in the running of the DSD, and national politics refers to the activities involving governing of the state. However, it could be inferred in the responses that they are aware of generally public policies in Zimbabwe are not very much informed by data as the progress in the implementation phases.

The slow adoption of data usage in public policy implementation has also been attributed to inadequate funding for data collection and management, lack of political will, and limited engagement with the private sector to leverage technological advancements in data collection and analysis (Kiringai, Mungai, & Muraya, 2019).

Data could be used only during development stages and lobbying for resources from treasury, and it ends there. The respondent who provided a quote below alludes to the use of data at planning stage and not in implementation. Respondent **10** was clear that there are no reviews that are government led on child protection action plans.

> we government agency in place, it's a way of influencing the use of data because of those structures that are in place. It is a demonstration that the government is willing to make use of, or to generate the data and make use of it in planning and development programmes.

4.6.1 Politics of Work

It is received wisdom that subordinates work using directives they get from their superiors and people working with the DSD are not an exception. One respondent reported that, in selected cases, they are told to selectively collect data and selectively report as well. So, certain issues are under reported or misreported. It has also been revealed that senior managers are sceptical to share the data they generate with other government departments. In fact, they, at times, direct their subordinates not to share data without their consent. This challenge makes it difficult to promote data culture prescriptions given by Bergin and Reilly (2005).

4.6.2 National Politics

At national level, acts of politics are invisible, yet are in existence. The DSD is a representative of the national government on child protection issues. One respondent lamented that some officers within the DSD are not appointed on merit. They are put in the system to censor data and influence the direction of decisions. So, there is some level secrecy and selective reporting driven by senior officers.

Furthermore, some statistics reported ministerial level are contrary to accessible files within the DSD. Most of the reported statistics are inflated to paint a picture of considerable success, especially when approaching elections. This revealed reality is similar to what was concluded in India by Roy (2009) who argued that reality is unknown to many but remains known to vote seeking politicians. One respondent from an implementing organisation lamented the challenge of invisible politics when one asks for data. Respondant **04** had this to say in her own words:

> There is too much control over the data that is collected. If I were to approach DSD now asking for the number orphaned children in Chiredzi with the view of provide empirical data supporting a proposal, I will not get that information. I will be asked to knock on this door and the next door and get frustrated, yet the data is deposited with the DSD. I don't know why this is so, but people must know that this data is supposed to be easily accessible. I am happy with the MPSE, for instance, they created a site which when you visit you get access to such like data. It is open to the public because they were assisted by UNICEF to come up with Education Management Information System (EMIS). I think this should be happening in terms of child protection

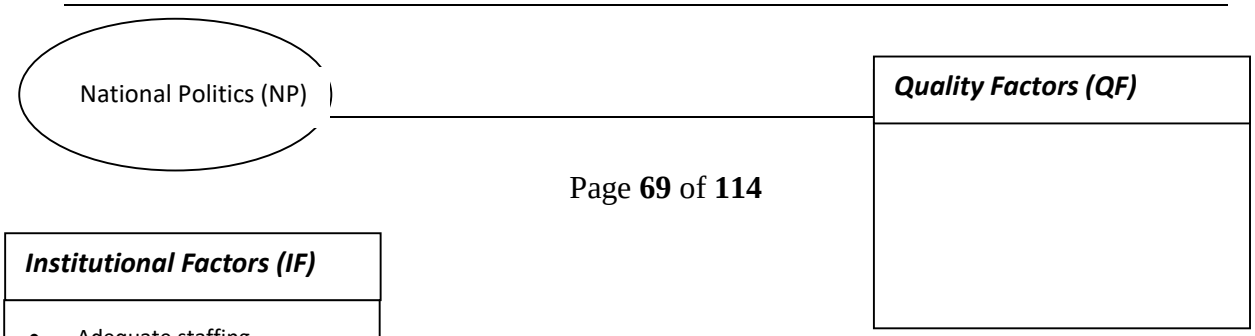
From the above quote, it can be deduced that either the data is not available or officers with those data files are somehow instructed not to disclose this data. The ZOCP acknowledges that child protection is collective effort of stakeholders who need data to inform their decisions. Contrary to this acknowledgement, data is not shared amongst the stakeholders, yet they are expected to share files and make informed decisions. It can therefore be concluded that there are limiting factors at play which contributed to data use in the implementation of the ZOCP and most child protection programmes.

4.7 Lessons Learnt and Implementation Challenges

1. Reasons behind limited data usage by the DSD in implementing child intervention programmes are multi-stage in nature. Quality factors feed from capacity factors, and capacity factors feed from institutional factors, and institutional factors are partly shaped by acts of politics.
2. There are numerous invisible threads that knit and weave together limited use of data and evidence in implementing public policies. These barriers are found at all levels of engagement, from the community workers to ministerial level.
3. Acts of politics shape data utilisation by the DSD, but these acts are invisible.
4. A lot must be done to make the recently introduced M&E system a succes

4.8 Unified Framework for Data Usage

Insights derived from foregoing analysis has shown that everything rises and falls with institutional factors. Institutional factors are largely driven by acts of politics (both work-related and national politics). Officers working with the DSD are guided on what data to gather and disseminate. Overall, this determines the operating conditions and selective application of the ZOCP. Set operating conditions and leadership style have huge bearing on the capacity recruitment and remuneration policy, budgetary allocations, and willingness of employees to upskill. Once the right capacity has been secured, arguably, the quality of decisions will improve indirectly. Alternatively, capacity factors translate into an improvement in the quality of data generated, subsequently leading to the improvement in the quality of decisions being made. This chain of reasoning is best described by the structural framework shown in Figure 4.1 using variables H1 to H5.



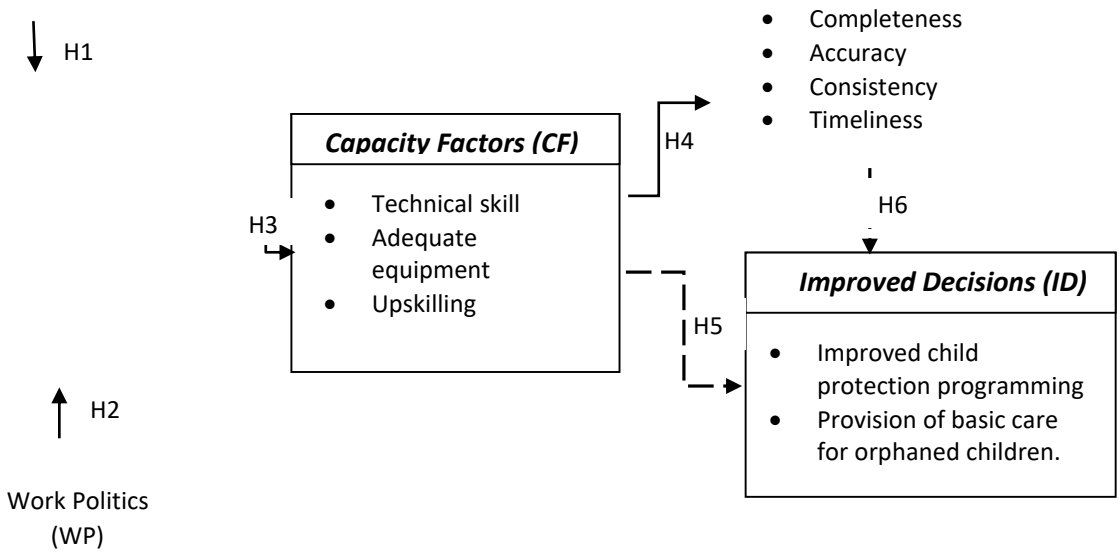


Figure 4.1: Unified Framework for Data Usage

Sources: Researcher's Compilation (2022)

H1 and H2 show that institutional factors are shaped by political factors, and institutional factors, in turn, influence the capacity of the DSD. Then, capacity factors can either directly feed into improved decision making or feed into quality factors that later feed into improved decision making. As such, it be concluded that key determinant of successful implementation of the ZOCP are institutional factors.

4.9 Chapter Summary

Foregoing paragraphs have discussed study findings in line with research questions set ahead in the study. It has been revealed that reasons behind limited use of data and evidence by the DSD is explained by plethora factors deeply rooted at senior level to community workers' level. These reasons span across quality, capacity, and institutional factors. The next chapter discusses the attainment of study purpose.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

It is essential to revisit the study purpose with the view of reflecting on what was set as task ahead of study. To this effect, this chapter gives a comprehensive summary of the research by drawing assumptions and recommendations based on study findings and their significance in relation to existing knowledge. Furthermore, this chapter lays out areas for future and further research. The discussion in this segment hinges on the main drive of the study; to establish reasons for limited data usage by the DSD in the implementation of the ZOCP. As such, this chapter is structured to first provide a discussion on attainment of the study's purpose, tailed by revisiting research questions. Then, recommendations will be drawn up and indications on areas for further research will be given.

5.2 Discussion on Attainment Study Purpose

It is believed that this study attained its purpose. It managed to describe, explain and classify reasons behind limited data usage by the DSD in the implementation of the ZOCP. The identified reasons fall loosely into quality, capacity and institutional factors, but they are all

shaped by acts of politics. The DSD is failing to meet its targets because some of the data is not submitted timeously, and it is incomplete in selected cases. Then, most M&E officers lack the required skills to carry out their tasks. As such, there is need for change at levels of engagement, from the community worker to the responsible minister. All the challenges reported in this report are brewed by general lack of data culture amongst members of the DSD. M&E's best practices such as conducting needs assessments, baseline studies, routine monitoring, and mid-term and summative evaluations are not adhered to.

5.3 Revisiting Research Questions

The main research question was concerned with *"what are some of the underlying factors behind limited use of robust data by the DSD in implementing the ZOCP in Harare province?"* Factors identified have been classified into quality, capacity and institutional factors.

It must be highlighted that the address to the main question was made easy by setting four specific sub-questions ahead of the study.The first question reads *"does the DSD use timely, complete, and reliable data in implementing the ZOCP interventions on child protection in Harare?"* there is consensus among the respondents that data used by the DSD is not reliable because it is incomplete and non-timeous. This, in turn, compromises the quality of decisions made use such data.

The second question reads *"what are the enablers and barriers of data utilisation for child protection programmes?"* The major barrier of data utilisation revealed by the study is the data culture in place at the DSD. M&E best practices are not adhered to, there is no accountability amongst DSD employees, and political interference is very high.

The third question reads "*does the DSD has adequate capacity to implement M&E best practices? In this study, capacity refers to skills, leadership, M&E systems, and technical support".* There is an M&E system that was adopted in 2019 but it is not respected or followed. This is coupled by the fact that most officers lack practical experience in M&E since most of them are still undergoing training in M&E. Since most employees are undergoing training, superiors lack technical skill to help their subordinates upskill in M&E.

The fourth question reads *"What is the government's degree of influence in the implemention of the ZOCP?"* To a very larger extent, GoZ appoints senior managers to assume influential

role so that ensure that they propound their interests. These managers are not appointed on merit, but on political affiliation. So, data is censored and reported as directed by the government. Section 4.7 outlined lessons learnt during the study. Furthermore, Section 5.4 provides recommendations pointing towards how best data culture can be promoted.

5.4 Recommendations

1. The GoZ must attract qualified professionals to lead their M&E arm. Over and above that, they must dearly remunerate them to reduces cases of hight staff turnover.
2. Once experienced professionals are part of the DSD, quality of gathered data and quality of decisions made will improve.
3. The newly adopted M&E systems must be cascaded down to all levels of engagement. This must be partly aided by crafting a dissemination plan.
4. National government must be objective in all its conduct and remove subjectivity regarding the type of data used in decision making.

5.5 Future and Further Research

Future studies could consider carrying out a similar study in other provinces to ascertain if issues noted in Harare similar to what other provinces are experiencing. This is important in tracing similarities, differences and congruencies in different programming regions. In addition, a comparative assessment of rural and urban environments can be done to ascertain if there are differences or not. Interestingly, a comparative study of child protection programmes rolled out in different countries has latent potential to generalise on the workability and effectiveness of development initiatives. Since this study is conceptually limited to the chain of data use (that is, data collection, collation, analysis, and interpreation), future study can investigate other determinants of evidence such as availability of resources, and political and cultural issues. Such studies can be used to augment findings of this study and provide more evidence for use in pushing the evidence use agenda.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has summarised and concluded all topics deliberated in this study. Much emphasis was placed on revisiting purpose statement and research questions. This chapter also recommended what is needed to enhance the appreciation of issues surrounding data culture.

These recommendations and other concerns deliberated in the report pointed towards the indication on future and further research.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure One: Participant Information Sheet

WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Eziwe Mutsikiwa, and **I am a Master of Management in Governance (Public and Development Sector Monitoring and Evaluation**) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As part of my studies, I have to undertake a research project. I am **Exploring Data Usage in Implementing the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy in Harare Province**
under the supervision of Professor **Robert Van Niekerk**. This research project aims to explore factors contributing to limit the data usage and implementation of the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy in response to child protection cases in Harare Province, Zimbabwe.

As part of this project, I would like to invite you to take part in an interview. This activity will involve a single interview of answering questions relating to the study and will take around 30 minutes. With your permission, I would also like to take notes and record the interview. These notes and recordings will be used for thematic analysis during the presentation of the research findings, and only the researcher will have access to this recording. They will later be used for reference as a secondary source by other researchers.

There will be no personal costs to you if you participate in this project, you will not receive any direct benefits from participation, but there are no disadvantages or penalties if you do not choose to participate or withdraw from the study. You may withdraw at any time or not answer any question if you do not want to. The physical interview will be completely confidential and anonymous as I will not be asking for your name or any identifying information. The information you give me will be held securely and not disclosed to anyone else. I will use a pseudonym (false name) to represent your participation in my final research report. If you experience any distress or discomfort during this process, we will stop the interview or resume another time.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research, feel free to contact me at the details listed below. If you wish to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you (optional). The data collected from this research project will be stored in the university library as a secondary source and will be kept for an indefinite period. With your permission, other researchers in an anonymized format may use the data collected from this research project. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the ethical procedures of this study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0) 11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za

Yours sincerely,
Eziwe Mutsikiwa

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Annexure Two: Interview Guide

The study is on: Exploring Data Usage in Implementing the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy in Harare Province. You are therefore kindly requested to share your opinion by completing the following questionnaire, which will likely take 20-25 minutes of your time.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. **Organisation: ……**
2. **Programme Area: …….**
3. **Position Held: ……**
4. **Gender: ……..**

MAIN QUESTIONS

Intro: This section of the interview explores the underlying factors associated with the use of data by implementers of the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy (ZOCP) and child protection programmes in Harare Province.

1. Could you firstly provide your views on the quality of data being utilised to develop and implement child protection interventions in Harare? [In this case, quality is viewed through the lens of accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of data.]
2. What is your assessment of the quality of the child protection data that comes through the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system?
3. What in your view, what reasons account for the effective use of data for child protection programmes? [For the purposes of this study, effectiveness refers to the degree to which data is used to successfully produce desired results.]
4. What is your view, what reasons account for the poor use of data for child protection programmes?
5. Please provide your observations on the capacity of the DSD to implement an M&E system. [By capacity I mean issues related to leadership, skills, and technical support.]
6. Can you provide your views on the current state of data usage in relation to the implementation of the ZOCP framework? [I am interested in the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data utilised.]
7. Can you offer your view on the extent to which the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) influences the use of data by civil servants and non-civil service implementers in implementing the ZOCP framework as it relates to child protection programmes?

Intro: I would now like to ask you questions concerning the data management system if that is fine?

8. Could you briefly describe your organisation's data management systems?
9. What in your view, what are the primary data quality challenges of the M&E System?
10. What are your views on the institutional support the M&E system is receiving from your superiors? [Institutional factors revolve around data usage policy, values upheld senior management at the DSD, and their attitude towards use of data in making decisions.]
11. How in your view can the institutional support be improved to make the data collection more robust?

Intro: Finally, with your consent, I would like to ask you your views on the child protection data system.

12. Could you please explain what human resource and technical skills capacities exist in the child protection data and management information and retrieval systems?
13. Could you provide an indication of the hardware and software equipment which the organisation has put in place to support the IT and M&E system?
14. What are the major capacity challenge that impacts data utilisation by your organisation? [Capacity covers issues such as M&E processes used by the DSD, development programmes availed to M&E team members, and style of leadership used by management.]

THE END

Annexure Three: Consent Form

Title of project**: Exploring Data Usage in Implementing the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy in Harare Province**

Name of researcher: Eziwe Mutsikiwa

I, ……., agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me, and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous.	YES	NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his / her research report.	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio-recorded.	YES	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.	YES	NO

…… (Signature)
…… (Name of participant)
…… (Date)

…… (Signature)
Eziwe Mutsikiwa……... (Name of person seeking consent)
…… (Date

Annexure Four: Transcribed Audio File 03

1. QSTN Data Quality Being Used to Develop and Implement Child Protection Interventions in Harare Province Looking at Parameters Like the Accuracy Completeness in Timeliness

- Accuracy not watertight right from the collection point
- Data gathering is subjective and not scientific
- Data sources are numerous
- Lack of coordination of various child protection players and too much fragmentation of even data
- No commitment to providing accurate data

2. QSTN: What Is Your Assessment of The Quality of Child Protection Data That Comes Through the Monitoring and Evaluation System

- Data is of poor quality.
- Most rely on quantitative data, but this quantitative is not being verified as there are no verification mechanisms in place in the DSD.

Quote: ” **For example, you find that districts can report very huge numbers of child protection case types like 800 children from food insecure households, this is just taken as is, and no one follows to check and verify on the underlying factors for having such figures to improve the response plans. Verification capacities will also improve the quality and the reliability”**

- Data inconsistency such that trends cannot be tracked and no comparative analysis can happen
- Qualitative data is copied and pasted only dates are changed the data has just become symbolic and not serving any purpose.
- Child protection data is incomplete.
- Serious inconsistency of data for one indicator from the districts within one for the province, for example …
- Community cadres who collect data from the community level where child protection cases happen have no capacity.

Quote***: There is data mortality and lots of incapacitation***

This state of data may not meaningfully inform the policy framework and programmes

. QSTN: What Reasons Account for The Effective Use of Data for Child Protection for Programs for Effective Data 3 Means the Degree to Which Data Is Usable What Factors Should Be In This For Data To Be Effectively Used

- Quality IT Infrastructure at the provincial level will lead to the use of data
- Ability to analyse and interpret data at the provincial level
- Capacities to consolidate data

- Implementation of the feedback mechanism between province and district and head office

As it is, there is no complete cycle of data flow

4. QSTN: What Reasons Account for The Limited Use of Data for Child Protection Programs

- The traditional attitude of implementation of programmes being informed by data
- Need for more training and improvement of the infrastructure
- SDOs are programme implementers who have very limited capacity to collect data and seek for empirical evidence of the data
- Data that comes to the province is incomplete, yet the response to child protection issues is better informed by trend analysis and establishment of trends but it is difficult to do trend analysis with incomplete data

Quote**: '*At the moment, DSD does not believe that data can be used to influence programs, the attitude is very negative, and there is deceptive data that is consolidated at the provincial level, resulting in data coming from Harare Province being of poor quality, no one is held accountable for the data that produced"***

This means the ZOCP, and programs are ill-informed and may not understand the situation of the children in Zimbabwe, and the children whose lives are supposed to be impacted will continue to suffer.

5. QSTN: Can You Provide Your Views on The Current State of Data Usage About the Implementation of The Child Protection Programs This Means that In Terms of Accuracy and Completeness, The Data That Is Being Utilized

The data that is being used is too anecdotal.

The various stakeholders in the child protection programming operate in silos, and there is a serious poor linkage between each report on whatever figure they think.

For example, you hear the key departments on child protection, which are the Ministry of Health and Child Care, Min of Primary and Secondary Education and the National AIDS Council, arbitrarily reporting different figures on child marriage. Each department is protective of its work, and response on the ground is enforced.

6. QSTN: Can You Offer Your View on The Extent to Which the Government of Zimbabwe Influences the Use of Data by Civil Servants

- The government is promoting learning curricula, for example, there are state institutes that offer Monitoring and evaluation causes, which is a positive step
- However, there are limited research capacities in the civil service those who do research are, international consultants who bring practices from other countries, the Govt of Zimbabwe does not make an effort to customise and improve local
- Govt does not use the current local available data to shape the program

Quote: I think there is very minimal absorption of essential information to influence policies I don't even know what influences policy design right question it this is actually a trend to assist the government stance in terms of using data to both its own department and also to the development because it is the government that should even direct the development partners to use data not the other way around right number please organisations we use isolated systems for

7. QSTN: Can You Briefly Describe Your Organization's Data Management System (Your District/Province)?

The data management system is still in the development stage

The systems that are being developed are very isolated, yet they all speak to child protection issues

The majority of data in the province is paper-based, about 70—80% and difficult to manage, this means it will be difficult to use

Quote: "**Paper-based data is difficult to consolidate and analyse** "

9.QSTN: **What Are the Primary Data Quality Challenges of the M&E System?**

10.QSTN**: Institutional Support The M&E Is Receiving from Superiors (Data Usage Policy, Values Upheld by Senior Management at DSD, Attitude Towards Use of Data in Making Decisions)**

- Support to provinces is still very limited and centralised to head office
- The head office does all the planning and decisions; provinces do not have the freedom to use data
  Implementation is done in districts and provinces; child protection cases emanate at these levels the government 's system of centralisation of decisions is very detrimental to the policy and programming.
- Most of the infrastructure comes from donors, and Govt of Zimbabwe does not make an effort to support and prioritize data gadgets, there is too much reluctance

QSTN: 11. I**n your view, can the Institutional Support Be Improved to Make the Data Collection More Robust**

- Increase staff and capacitate them
- Invest more in resources
- Improve the ICT Infrastructure
- Connectivity should be made more robust

12. QSTN: Explain What Human Resources and Technical Skill Capacities that Exist in The Child Protection and Data Management Information Retrieval System

- Staff are overwhelmed, there are too many programs running

- Staff do not have adequate skills to collect, analyse and interpret and use data for child protection programming
- There is a need to e
- ploy M&E Officers at the district level
- The current and new M&E Officers coming to the province are incapacitated to handle the job, they need to be trained and appreciate the fundamentals of M&E

13. QSTN: Provide an Indication of The Hardware and Software Equipment Which Your Organisation Has Put in Place to Support the IT and M&E System

- Hardware is not enough.
- There is a need to have a solar backup for electricity
- The Management Information System should be used across all the sixty-five districts of the DSD, the current scenario of having it only in 2o districts shows that child protection data usage is not universal and therefore impact, negatively on informing the ZOCP

14. QSTN: Major Capacity Challenges That Impact Data Utilisation by Your Organisation (M&E processes used by DSD, development programmes availed to M&E Team Members, Style of Leadership by Management)

- Skills of the SDOs are not fully developed they need more capacity enhancement programmes.
- Lack of a decentralised system
- There is no research and data usage attitude
- There is slow progress in systems development
- Quote: The National Case Management System (NCM a system which is meant to be used to collect real-time child protection data, is still in the pilot phase since 2015 and small segments in the

The challenges described above tell a story regarding the data usage for implementing ZOCP and child protection programmes are concerned.

Annexure Five: Transcribed Audio File 04

1. Number One Could You First Provide Your Views on The Quality of Data Being Utilized to Develop and Implement Child Protection Interventions?

The is still a number of data quality issues that exist regarding child protection.

Data collected at ward level has tended to be incomplete on occasion.

there is missing data up to national level worth the purposes of reporting as well as follow up of cases.

On the positive though, the place of the M&E personnel at provincial level is a step towards addressing data quality issues although there is still need for personnel at district level as well seeing the scope of what needs to be done may be a lot for one provincial M&E person placed within the DSD such a big department.

2.What Is Your Assessment of The Quality of Child Protection Data That Comes Through The M&E System.

Data is fragmented the child protection sector is not very much coordinated each player do their own activities known to themselves only

Quote: **There are certain camps so for example, the Child Protection Fund (CPF), funded partners the USAID funded partners, Spotlight and other funders. So they will have their own consortiums that are all collecting child protection data, so whilst there are partners such as CPF who work directly with the DSD, there are other partners who are working within the communities that need to then to feed into the national statistics for child protection to depict a national picture and coordination is to be done by the DSD which will then depict a national picture and compel feeding data back into ZOCP and programmes**

With this prevailing scenario it is apparent that there cannot be use of robust data in the implementation of ZOCP and child protection programmes

- Need to harmonise data so that the quality of child protection information that comes through the M&E system is comprehensive and informs policy direction and programming

- Another point is on the main foot soldiers who collect data on child protection in the communities and residential areas where cases are happening, the Child Care Workers (CCWs) are always faced with challenges of connectivity and transport for them to report their data into the DSD offices. As has been observed, the DSD, as the department of social development, doesn't have robust mechanisms for ensuring that all of the data that lies within that districts are collected and submitted.
- There is also a lack of data cleaning and verification. So, the information is coming in and is only interrogated at the national level.
- Child Protection data cleaning then verification is not comprehensive, so it brings into question the validity and reliability of the data that we are putting together.

Hence, this calls for questioning whether this poor-quality data can inform a policy that changes the lives of children for the better.

3.In Your View, What Reasons Account for The Effective Use of Data for Child Protection Programmes?

Implementation of a robust national case management (MIS) is a tool that is being used to address the issue and bring effective use of data through easier quicker way of collecting data and stored at the same place where it can be analysed and organized. That will contribute to more effective use of this data,

However, there is need for the child protection programmers to also take lessons from other advanced MIS systems, for example, within the health sector where partners have permission through letters from the ministry to access monthly data reports which they can now utilize to inform them in programming. (The NGOs voice is appealing to Govt to have a system where they can also view and take data from the DSD and use it for programming, currently there isn't. NGOs always struggle to get data on child protection from the DSD.)

- As NGOs, we should also incorporate our data into the Information Management System (MIS) for the Govt/DSD and everyone in the child protection area to use it.

  Scaling up of such initiatives as the placement of MIS Graduate Interns who are now capturing data from paper base onto an online database and with that initiative, we are now having more real time reporting in Harare,

The MIS Graduate Intern programme which is recent development (June 2022), covers only 20 districts out of the 65. Still, this speaks to the data fragmentation and data which is n drips and pieces cannot meaningfully inform policy and programmes for child protection.

4.In Your View, What Reasons Account for Poor or Limited Use of Data for Child Protection Programmes.

- The first point is that for data be useable it has to be there in the system and accessible but in the cases of child protection there is scanty data and not accessible by anybody.
- All programmers should be able to feed into the M&E system, but this is not what is happening
- If programmers request for data from Govt, there is no feedback, if feedback comes there is no aggregated data for them to actually then utilize it.

Quote*: In M&E terms this is a one-way flow whereas it should also have that feedback function for them to get feedback on what does the aggregated data look like after all of the partners have fed into the M&E system. This point speaks to the one on whether Govt influences data use by both civil and none civil servants.*

- There used to be an M&E steering committee that operated at national level which consisted of DSD M&E and most other child protection units within the DSD as well as partners. But due to its dysfunctionality over time it has immensely affected the limited data use in the sector
- Recommendation Resuscitation of this platform could result in better use of data for child protection programmes as well as encouraging other partners that are not with outside the consortium of the Child Protection Steering Committee
- If all players participate, data be utilizing data in a meaningful way will improve child protection programming.
- Little attention is given to the Results Based Management (RBM) concept, so whilst the programmes themselves are detailed at length in policy documents, in intervention documents there is little to no demand for results and accountability. Therefore, no evidence use in the policy and programmes

- M&E has less to resourcing M&E. so there is this, whilst these things have been developed and then we have a poorly resourced M&E section not really functional

the M&E structure is there, and it is written out for example for the National Action Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (NAP for OVC) there is a lack of follow up on the set targets and progress.

- There are no reviews of the programs it's just implementation continuous so at what stage can the people that sat down to review what the NAP is doing NAP OVC and use data from programme reviews to further review and update policies and programmes.
- If ever reviews and evaluations happens it will be donors who commission and fund and donors do evaluate certain aspects and not the entire program, this is in line with what one responded alluded.

Quote: "**the ministry's appetite to use data and have evidence to demonstrate progress or lack of progress is diminished and less, there is serious lack of accountability on the indicators and on the set targets to answer questions like where we are and why that a lacking. So, you will find that with these critical pieces missing in the child protection programming."**

In the absence of evaluations and major studies, poor resourced M&E and data management systems what then will DSD use to inform the ZOCP and make a change to the lives of children, may be this can explain better the reason for keeps for child protection cases that keep rising.

5.Please provide your observations on the capacity of the DSD to implement an M&E system.

Quote: **The DSD has a robust M&E framework in place for the National Action Plan for Orphans Vulnerable Children (NAP for OVC) which includes the programming and child protection. They lack M&E personnel at district level. This means there are no drivers to push for the interrogation of M&E systems to ensure data quality, verification analysis, reporting and the architecture of data. This is impossible to do for an M&E team that is currently at national level. The main recommendation would be for the ministry to consider a stand-alone M&E department with its own director who will be obligated to report on the M&E framework developed for Child Protection (CP), child protection interventions and the ministry to also integrate results-based management into its work and**

improve on its accountability to the public and for its own internal progression of child protection programmes and its M&E system.

- Resuscitation of the national M&E steering committee will also improve on the DSD's capacity to implement its M&E system.

6.Can You Provide Your Views on The Current State of Data Usage in Relation to The Implementation of The Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy Framework or Child Protection?

- Interventions that are being implemented particularly on the Child Protection Fund (CPF) supported by DFID, SWEEDISH SIDA, Switzerland and USAID for child protection initiatives as dreams and spotlight they have been making use of data particularly in the targeting of districts of need and wards who are most in need that would be determined by data.
- The data that has been collected through the above programmes have been reaching national level and there was learning through programmes through use of the evidence that was used to steer the interventions discovered missing and are relevant.
- Through the same support of donors' data has been used to drive evolution of interventions, for example, it influenced the emergency of child protection, child friendly courts, advocacy around action as opposed to awareness in the GBV space as well as strengthening post care systems just to mention a few.
- So, with regards to that it shows that to some extent within some quarters of in the broad child protection sector, data is driving and informing the revolution of these interventions.
- If this is looked at closely the non-civil service are taking own initiatives to use data, yet Government should be the force behind data use and directing the non-civil services sector with policy mandates and national framework/plans that robustly respond to child protection issues informed by evidence. It further shows that evidence is of child cases is apparently there but it not being acted upon by Govt and it explains why cases like sexual abuse, child marriage keeps rising. Data shows **5%** of girls are married before the age of **15**, **1/3** of women were married before the age of 18**1/3** of maternal deaths are among adolescent girls (UNICEF 2022). There Need to find statistics that are lesser in the previous years for the same variables to use to justify that cases keep raising

- But more areas need improvement regarding the usage of data to influence decision making,
- discussion around child protection and resourcing for child protection need improvement and use of evidence can strengthen this case.
- There still need for social protection programmes which usually target those who are vulnerable and those who are likely to be victims of gender-based violence and other child protection violations these extensions can be influenced by use of data

Offer Your View on The Extent to Which That Government of Zimbabwe Influences the Use of Data by Civil Servants and Non-Civil Service Implementers Implementing the Zimbabwe Orphan Care Policy Framework as It Relates To Child Protection Programmes.

While the government of Zimbabwe has made strides to prioritise M&E, the drive in the child protection space, but not necessarily in all ministries

The extent to which the government of Zimbabwe is influencing the use of data by civil servants and non-civil service implementors is still limited, it's still at that primary stage of focusing particularly when child protection focusing on the data collection and the entry.

The broader and depth analysis piece is still missing save for some little at national level.

To show that Govt influence of data use is still very low the districts which are the critical level within the Government system and that is where data is primarily produced and collected is still do not have M&E structures at the district level. Currently the major work of data collection and management is done by the district social development officers who already have high case load with regard to case management and overseeing social protection programmes within the district. So, this is the same cadre that is being expected as well to perform the M&E function. It is to the degree that districts may never in any given year conduct training and analysis using that data but mostly rely on qualitative data due to their day-to-day experience managing cases and running social protection programme but it's not bad quantitatively.

Quote: "**If one asks about certain things that emerge from the qualitative data that comes from the districts, they don't have the quantitative data at hand and then we must now start interrogating further to get that information. So, it shows that the government is not particularly influencing the use of data by civil servants but rather they are generators of data and not necessarily seeing or are not capacitated to then think about how to process the data after that collection and use it for policy and programming enhancement.''**

- That data is most useful for reporting at district level as opposed to analyse to interrogate processes, identify hot spots and all the functions that data can serve, only results based management model can influence the use of data as data will be used to monitor progress, assess performance, produce evidence for resource mobilization and advocacy as well as allow feedback to the public on the status of child and social protection programmes in the country. So only when that model is implemented will government then influence the use of that data by civil servants because results-based management as a key principle is driven by evidence, so that is what will bring out that culture of the utilisation of evidence and the interrogation of data that comes in through the district.

8.Could you fully describe the organization's data management systems.

- Child Protection Society (CPS) has an M&E plan in place, the plan informs how data is collected, cleaned, collected, analysed, reported, feedback and how to encourage uptake of this data. It is applied to the child protection programmes. This is applied to child protection programmes where data is collected from ward level.
- CPS disaggregate data by ward, district, province as well as by sex, disability and other disaggregation such as children living with HIV.
- Age bands are that are used depending on requirements, but typically we use below one, one to four, five to nine, ten to fourteen, fifteen to seventeen and then eighteen plus.
- We also have an online database and store paper-based data and this is allowable to destroy after five years. And then in terms of data utilisation there is reporting by field personnel on a weekly basis and the M&E consolidates and report to management
- There are periodic meetings that CPS conduct where discussions on what is happening on the programme and visa vi what it looks like regarding project indicators and targets and the reports that have been coming in take place
- The M&E team also verifies information that is reported

Quote: "**As CPS we want our interventions to be driven by the data and not necessarily by other outside factors such as donor interests as thus where the money is, but we need to always evidence in supporting the interventions that we are**

implementing. We also use the data to inform our interventions so if there are particular areas that we need to beef up on we use the data to show us which are the areas that we need to improve, or which are the imaging needs that were not previously addressed by the project but may be in advocacy issue for us to rally resources around."

If Govt carrying such an attitude data use for the ZOCP and child protection programmes could be at highest level. The researcher believes that such an attitude to data use as depicted by CPS could compel Govt to invest in curbing child protection cases that keep soaring but if there is no attention to data Govt may not even realise the extent to which the cases are escalating or damaging. This may be exacerbated by the fact that Government is not accountable and does not answer to anyone regarding the child protection cases. The worst is that more cases could be going unreported to the poor data collection management and reporting systems of Govt as some respondents have indicated "Literature from African Parliamentarian reading can provide some literature on Govt vis vi data use"

9. What in Your View Are the Primary Data Quality Challenges Of M&E System.

From point of view of the CPS and DSD.

- CPS
- Supporting 29 districts for us as CPS it is not feasible to conduct in-depth verifications for all reported data, that is the first challenge having limited resources for an adequate M&E team.
- CPS has also started utilizing ICTs for data collection in other programmes and would like to scale this to child protection to improve on the data quality as well as the timely submission of the data which then means there is a critical turnaround time in the analysis of the data and addressing any issues that need to recourse
- For DSD and CCWs need to be capacitated on data quality issues

Quote: **Reliving and trying to remember I do not recall CCWs and SDOs being trained in M&E training for them in the past five years and there has already been a lot of staff attrition, new people coming in and they are coming in and not knowing some**

of these M&E functions. It is strongly believing that to improve on child protection data quality there is strong need to capacity built the personnel within the DSD.

10.What Are Your Views on the Institutional Support The M&E System Has Received from Your Superiors in Particular and the DSD.

Internally we have a supportive management, that is allowing us to grow and allowed investment into the department. Resources permitting, we would want to expand this time but there is a political will within the leadership and then the organization is also a learning organization so leadership constantly refers to evidence which drives the M&E system to perform.

Regarding the DSD, I believe that leadership has an interest in strengthening the department within the resources that it has, evidenced by, as we previously spoke about the M&E personnel who have just been posted at provincial level(Post filled as from August 2022, to only five provinces so far) to address the gaps noted in the system the placement of MIS interns to enter data into the national case management MIS, through wholly covering the department so those small developments that show that there is a level of commitment to support the M&E system albeit other critical areas that need to be further addressed.

11.How in your view can the institutional support be improved to make data collecting more robust?

Investing in online data collection tools from ward level, so this is for the community CCWs themselves and other cadres that collect information at ward level and investing in M&E personnel down to district level,

to have a standalone M&E department that has its own director who reports on issues child protection issues for the Department of Social Development in that way it makes data collection more robust and improves accountability.

Capacity building of the workforce as well on M&E issues including data quality, reliability, validity, and so on, and more frequency reference to data and influencing uptake of data.

Quote: "**When you know that the data that you are collecting is influencing some sort of decision making or you are making it to make reference to the data and account for the data that you are reporting, you are more likely to put in quality data because there is need the data that is reliable, that is valid and that is accurate and complete. So, I believe that in this way we can also improve on to make our data collection more robust and have more quality data.'**

12. Could You Please Explain What Human Resources and Technical Skill Capacities Exist in The Child Protection Data and Management Information Retrieval System?

- In terms of human resources, we have been alluding to this before we have CCWs, we have our partners, we have the SDOs at district level and provincial level we also have an M&E team or section or person or focal person at the national office and we have our MIS interns who enter data at provincial level as well as the M&E personnel who have recently been placed at provincial level.
- With regard to the technical capacity the ones with the technical capacities that are meaningful would be the MIS interns, the M&E personnel at provincial level although its yet to be seen as they are still very new so we are not yet able to really speak to the evidence of the technical skills of the imparted and the national office as well as capacitated they are led by a trained qualified by an M&E person as well as our partners but with regards to our district and provincial social development officers and our CCWs I think it's only to be work in their capacity building but part of me also feels like it may not be their function, well for the CCWs it is their function they need the capacity building because they are the ones who generating the data from the communities and Harare residential areas,

- On the usage of data that they also need to be resourcing of research around child protection even from the ministry as well to generate the data that will then be used. I think that's something that has been stopping the utilisation of data, just lack of evidence on a scale of a peer reviewed research that has really gone through all the steps for it to be concrete evidence that we are using. We are mostly relying on the periodic surveys or research pieces such as the ZimVac and other related research but in between I do believe that there is need to be the same level of research that is being done on

other various aspects of child protection that will also bring forward tested data that government can use, that partners can use and policy makers and so on.

- So am sorry for that I just thought about it, and I had not thought about it at the point that we were discussing, but I hope you can pin it.

13.Could you provide an indication of the hardware and software equipment which the organization has put in place to support the IT and M&E system.

- Our organization has put in place the Cobo2 for data collection at ward level we also have phones and tablets for the primary data collectors as well as those who oversee them and

- CPS has also invested in packages such as power Bi for us to be able to see, to have data visualisations on using online software
- we have influenced for the organization to prioritise in its upcoming budget to invest in a larger server to accommodate all the data that we are collecting a
- There is ongoing capacity building around the use of the things that I have just mentioned, and we have also invested in an IT intern with the intention to continue to resource the IT department.

The above are some of the things that the organization has done to invest within hardware and software to support IT and the M&E system.

14 What Are the Major Capacity Challenges That Impact Data Utilisation By Your Organization?

- The first one is access to the national level data, so well as I said before feeding into the M&E framework were not being getting that consolidated data on what it looks like.
- the partners and various actors within child protection have contributed what the national picture looks like, so that one has been lacking for us in using data in a meaningful way.
- Capacity building around advance excel so we are always trying to find ways in which we can interrogate our data and have what we need to do and part of that is just having that expertise on how to manipulate that data.

- So, our team does take online courses in their own time and own capacity, there still needs to be capacities that built around advanced excel to have meaningfully in house capacity strengthening

- being resources to implement concept notes of interventions informed by data. While we get the data, we see the needs and gaps and conceptualize in order fully utilize the means that we the data that we would have received.
- The resources to implement and put those ideas into reality into actual development work and into implementation that piece is still work in progress.

THE END

Annexure Six: Control Group Audio File 11

CHILD PROTECTION BACKGROUND AND FAMILIAR WITH DSD CHILD PROTECTION

1. **The Quality of Data Being Utilised to Develop and Implement Child Protection Interventions?**

Quote: "**There is good quality data in the USAID-supported districts, but with a compromised dimension regarding community-level data from Child Care Wards (CCWs) where it originates from the residential and communities where children stay".**

This citation resonates with other respondents who cited incapacitation from the CCWs who plays the role of collecting of raw data

Quote**: "There is serious fragmentation of data, it is only in some districts that are supported by donors that produce better quality data and they constitute a small fraction of the entire DSD constituency of the three Harare districts, only 1 is donor-supported, one wonders what happens to the rest that are not even supported in view of contributing to evidence thus is supposed to be used to inform ZOCP and child protection programming."**

Is the only respondent who have already confined the response to Harare, as a case study isn't the responses should truly show that it was Harare Province whose lack of use of robust data was research and not the entire country-level DSD?

What it means is that if you have other districts which have better quality data you can now extrapolate, to may be considering data that you have, how the level of quality which means if you have an over-reporting and under-reporting you can graduate or you can try to extrapolate may be after that it reflects the whole data segment that you have even in non-USAID supported. The problem is that the non-supported districts may not even have quality data and if you try to generalize and assume that all the districts in non-supported category have quality data yet thus not the case it might be an over-generalized picture per say or over estimation of our data, yet it is of compromised quality.

The respondent is providing a suggestion of how quality data might arrive but there is no balance between the volume of data from the non-supported and supported

district. Non-supported districts are many and cover a larger constituency as compared to the supported. Again, the quality of data from non-supported is of poor quality, and there is no verification or quality check as Govt is not invested in data verification in its supported areas.

Further Explanation of Extrapolation.

Quote: **It's a generalisation to say we use the mathematical calculation to say may be if a district, let's say if a district in rural areas are under reporting by 10% or a factor between 10 – 20% we can imply that to say all rural districts despite they are supported or they are not supported, they are over reporting by the same variation whilst if those who are in urban areas are may be under reporting by 2-5% we can imply that all the urban area districts they are over reporting by 2-5%.**

Given this explanation of the concept, can it be used to measure quality of Harare province data which has 1 supported with few wards covered against 2 non supported with very large constituencies (many wards and catchment areas where most child protection cases come from)

What Is Your Assessment of The Quality of Child Protection Data That

- In some indicators like economic strengthening of households of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) issues that have to do with costs that were implied, it will be difficult to get comprehensive data on that one.
- Timeliness of data and quality in terms of validity may only be achieved in the donor-supported districts or other districts which are not supported the quality is compromised for such and related indicators
- There is a need to strengthen the system so the DSD –Harare province has timely data by the end of each year for the yearly performance at the provincial
- There is a need to improve awareness of the child protection results framework, the monitoring and evaluation framework and monitoring tools and planning tools so that people are aware of what they are supposed to be collecting.

What Reasons Account for the Effective Use of Data for Child Protection Programmes?

planning, routine review of programmes and joint analysis with stakeholders. We are also supposed to have an analysis with all stakeholders that are actually involved, including in child protection under the provincial child protection committees those supporting you, those who are like civil rights organisations, organisations that are dealing with those who are vulnerable, Establish and operationalise an M&E group for data you analysis together as stakeholders on various child protection indicators, where you analyse data together and share with other partners and to that regard, NAC will be grateful to be part of the M&E group. l because we are talking of pure qualities, I will also be grateful to be part of that.

What reasons account for poor or limited data use for child protection programmes.

R. **Its limited data sharing platforms and limited culture for advocacy and communication based on evidence. If there was a culture to say whatever policy and programming decision that need to be done are supposed to be evidence based that are going to increase data use. So, because of that limited culture data use is also a bit a challenge. It should be a strong and established culture …**

Quote: **Data sharing should be happening like the following if there is a comprehensive Child Protection Cases Review hosted by DSD meeting a comprehensive review at sector level, key stakeholders are invited come and present on child protection social services and achievements and challenges, for advisory while other organisations like NAC biomedical achievements, but those platforms are limited. So, with limited platforms like that it might be difficult to prepare for us to use data because most of the time the data they all actually overlap. So, if that is not in place it would be difficult for us to talk of data use and utilisation， and we should have deliberate data dissemination plans for the data that you collect there should be a deliberate data dissemination plan. When we talk of data dissemination plan, it spans across the whole organization, at the district level how are you going to disseminate even if they are compiling their annual reports, are going to put them in press, then you have a dissemination meeting, are you going to have a stakeholder's meeting, what is it that you are going to do you guys for**

you to say you have disseminated your report, you have shared your report with the relevant stakeholders.

Human Resource

Quote**: My recommendation as a stakeholder is that is there was supposed to be a director for M&E within and then we have some programmes M&E officers who were supposed to deal with data in a better way. Then there were supposed to be officer's s at the provincial and district level. Am grateful that you are highlighting that they have actually recruited now M&E officers in some provinces although nothing yet for Harare. The ideal that I have explained is the structure at NAC and data use is quite high in NAC**

Leadership Capacity and Resources

- NAC leadership supports M&E 10-15% is allocated to monitoring and evaluation, but if you look at DSD M&E, it is partner supported most of the trainings that NAC attended have been supported by partners which means there was no deliberate effort from government to say for the fiscus for social protection 10% of the budget is going for M&E. so that should be deliberate for strengthening capacity of the M&E.
- In terms of capacity in NAC's assessment of personnel at Harare Province are overwhelmed, everything is supposed to happen at provincial
- resources are meek and because they are meek and the allocation is also a challenge and normally it negatively impacts on evidence that we want to have and use for programming
- Notice that US government they invest in evidence, that is why they have CDCs in all countries, they have data platforms in all areas. So, if you invest in, evidence you have created power. If you don't have evidence which means ultimately you are going to have weaker plans in return hence policies and programmes that do speak to any evidence

Quote: "**I believe that in limited research evidence and limited evidence resource settings the policies will also ill-informed because they are not supported by evidence, they**

are supposed to be evidence-based policies as a dimension of a good quality policy".

What Is Your View on The Extent to Which the Government of Zimbabwe Influences the Use of Data by Civil Servants and Non-Civil Servants In The Implementation Of The Child Protection Programmes?

Quote: **To be sincere, I think the government did well in developing the M&E policy. But the challenge is the monitoring of that M&E policy is limited and the performance monitoring that the Government is doing is based at the Office of President and Cabinet (OPC), but the challenge is it needs those who are qualified in M&E to make sure that the M&E policy is put into practice. There were supposed to be standards on each government line ministry, every province, the Ministry of Social Services is supposed to be asked to say produce M&E frameworks, submit that to the Government and tell us how all stakeholders are the targets disaggregated by province, by district, targets arrived, but that is lacking it's only a policy document that is there.**

- When the OPC comes for performance reviews, it is just performance review not linked to the strategic document. So, there should be a clear link between the target and the strategic plan, the responsible the department who is responsible cascading the provinces.

Quote: "**The government drive the initiative of coming up with the blueprint the document but implementing that is still a challenge that has not been haven't realized."**

Quote: "**That platform I haven't come across that platform where Govt goes to the people to consult to speak about the prevalent child protection cases for the purposes of adjusting the ZOPC and child protection programming. NAC supports child protection component of Education but there is no data given back to NAC to**

enable improvement of this child protection activity. Government must improve on that, it's really critical that it also share the data effectively"

Quote "T**he only platform that on the statistical agents, ZIMSTATS. Whenever it conducts surveys on behalf of the government it does disseminate findings, but when it comes to social protection, what is happening to say maybe we are having so much vulnerable people, it does not. Maybe it might be a security issue, in this province, the food and security situation because ZIMSTAT has recorded the food and security situation would be like this therefore we are estimating that there so many children who are vulnerable therefore we are calling for implementing partners, those with food aid, food agencies to support this programme or for example Hare province because of such data but we have limited information on that. Even when politician talk, they are supposed to highlight issues using data for example like "these are the issues that we have in this area, so we are bound to address this because there is data we got from our vulnerability assessment. It was found out that the poverty rate is like this. We need to strengthen agriculture so let's move to this for the development. With development we need to ****, but no one is using to say maybe what is the accident rate but the state of the nature of our roads to say maybe *** the roads are so bad we are having so many accidents and we are having so casualties so, therefore, lets construct this road. It should be evidence based. So, in general across the board there is evidence use in Government policies implementation"**

Quote: **"M&E it actually exposes, not only exposes it's a very good management tool that if managers implement it, will actually get results, it will generate results so the challenge is people want to hide their underperforming therefore most of us we don't like M&E because it will be clear that we are not performing up to standard."**

Could You Briefly Describe Your Organisation (NAC)'S Data Management System? NAC At Provincial Level. Data Management System at Provincial Level.

- At provincial level we collect data from implementing partners after we have collected them from implementing partners and including Govt key line ministry and departments like the DSD.
- We analyse that data, and we have M&E technical working group at the provincial level that discuss the quality of data before it is transformed into a report and
- when the data is shared it will be analysed into a report where they attach meaning to that data and after they have attached meaning to that data it would be reported to the next level for further aggregation at national level and thereby also writing a report at that level and at national level
- we have advisory group meetings that we rode to share the data and have a thematic meeting, at advisory we share policy issues, but we have thematic focal persons who was working on OVC and is given that data and works with the constituency to inform the decision on that data.
- At provincial we have group meetings and the data is also stored under lock and key and in computers that are also protected with password every time you might see that you know the issue of vulnerability, issue of orphans ****, issue of cause of orphan hood, the HIV issues, so the data is also stored and sharing purposes that better establish to the approval of the print those that may include the line ministry and also the **National Aids Council** authorities.

  NAC is an independent body which has managed to lead the country in using true evidence in the implementation of the AIDS Policy and HIV programmes. Recommendation, If Government could take a leaf from such parastal as NAC the ZOCP could also use robust data to bring change to the lives of the OVC in Zimbabwe and cases of child protection could not be raised like it currently is…

  However, it should be noted that NAC 's programmes are funded by development partners, and it could be the reason why it performs far better than other completely Government departments

What In Your View, Are the Primary Data Quality Challenges of the M&E System? Just Any M&E System. What In Your View, Are the Data Quality Challenges of an M&E System?

Timeliness is the most prevalent issue that affects NAC Harare, and it has been countered by implementing a policy of grace period which should not be exceeded by any district

What are your views on the institutional support that the M&E system is receiving from your Management?

Quote: "NAC does not have much don't have a challenge because most of the evidence/ M&E programmes are funded, and its M&E for HIV, there is greater commitment and also its policy there is support from our superiors. In NAC the data is used to mobilize resources and for Global Fund applications and resources mobilisation from USAID therefore data is supposed to be of good quality because these agencies look at the data and ask if it does it represent what is on the ground, therefore its of better quality compared to other Government department. NAC management is bound to fully support M&E in all components."

Could You Please Explain What Human Resources and Technical Skills Capacity Exist in Child Protection Data and Management Information and Retrieval Systems.

At NAC Harare Province human resources is okay but, that requires continuous training as you know M&E and issues of data keep upgrading hardware and software equipment are improved time and again

What are your recommendations so that there is improvement in data usage, as the last question.

- Hire qualified people,
- have advocacy so that we have high political support, high organizational, and political support in M&E so that there is an M&E culture.
- Have the database in all the districts and grow the databases
- Implement data quality practices across the system but note, it might be difficult to implement it if there are limited personnel. Strengthen the technical group where you share your data platforms, your data different platforms with others.

Annexure Seven: Data Coding And Data Quality Matrix

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	**Participant**	**Name**	**Location**	**District**	**Questions**	Referance	**Code 0/Subcode**	**Code 1/Subcode**	**Code 2/Subcode**	**Code 3/Subcode**
2							**Data Variences**	**Timeliness**	**Inaccuratcy**	**Monitoring and Evaluation Systems**
3	**DSD Management**				Provide Your Views On Data Quality Being Used To Develop And Implement Child Protection Interventions	The mechanism for collecting data they're sound, which actually gives some risks like under-reporting. Real data on the ground and what is reported are always at variance. There are inaccuracies	Underreporting		Inaccurate data	
4	**DSD Management**				Provide Your Views On Data Quality Being Used To Develop And Implement Child Protection Interventions	Timeliness is poor; rarely meets deadlines. There is too much lagging		Deadlines		
5	**DSD Management**				Provide Your Views On Data Quality Being Used To Develop And Implement Child Protection Interventions	No adequate supervision is given to data collection management and reporting. There is thumb-sucking of statistics and data				Poor Supervision
6	**DSD Management**				Provide Your Views On Data Quality Being Used To Develop And Implement Child Protection Interventions	75% of the child protection data submitted is not complete				
7	**DSD Management**				QSTN: What Is Your Assessment Of The Quality Of Child Protection Data That Comes Through The Monitoring And Evaluation System	Quality is poor, and this starts from the collection up to the consolidation.				
8	**DSD Management**					When data is submitted at the national office, it is not disseminated for use by various stakeholders the district offices and provinces where data comes from are not provided with feedback on the quality of data that they receive by us management, therefore the cycle of poor quality data continues.				
9	**DSD Management**					We don't have a data use culture, and even if I try as one person in management, I don't see others picking that up.				No Data Use Culture
10	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Effective Use Of Data The Ta For Child Protection For Programs	Having a well-oiled data management system in place and being able to use it Therefore, need to improve the NCM MIS systems. Revive the old way of capturing data through the use of comprehensive data sources and tallying system.				Data Management
11	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Effective Use Of Data The Ta For Child Protection For Programs	Need for adequate computers and other hardware so that capturing of data is continuous and not cut, as the computer which is shared is used interchangeably will be used for other things				
12	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Effective Use Of Data The Ta For Child Protection For Programs	Back-up systems to be strengthened, for example, electricity and data for the internet				
13	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Limited Use Of Data For Child Protection Programs	Capacity is seriously limited as SDOs are not well-versed in data use. Even for they to understand the raw data, they cannot, and there is a glaring capacity gap in the staff that is supposed to be using data.				
14	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Limited Use Of Data For Child Protection Programs	The capacity to interpret data is not there. MIS can analyse and visualise data for better understanding and use, but the capacity to use the system No knowledge of how to use data to prevent cases and not just be responsive.				
15	**DSD Management**				What Reasons Account For The Limited Use Of Data For Child Protection Programs	SDOs are overwhelmed in Harare province, and they don't have time to invest in looking at data How the DSD is structured does not allow investment of time into data management.				Data Management
16	**[redacted]D Management**				Can You Provide Your Views On The Current State Of Data Usage About The Implementation Of The Child Protection Programs This Means that In Terms Of Accuracy and Completeness, The Data That Is Being Utilized	Most of us in the leadership team is t very different levels of understanding M&E of the use of evidence in the programming and implementation of ZOCP. There is a need for knowledge and interest from management in order to supervise provinces and districts. Skills for leadership need to be built and enhanced for some management				Incompetence