

A Thesis for the degree of Master in Social Work

**Examining Child Homelessness and the Effectiveness of Family Re-Integration Efforts: A Case of Kabwe District Zambia**

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# DEDICATION

This research study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my father Dr Kennedy LikukelaMubita and my entire family for been a source of support during this period. My full potential could not have been realised and to my Fiancée for all the moral, emotional and financial support he has rendered to me during this journey. I am equally grateful to my employer for awarding me the time to pursue my dream.

# 

# ABSTRACT

In the social sector without a deeper understanding of the characteristics of child homeless, and the benefits of child reintegration as well as enhancing the current reintegration programs, efforts may remain fragmented and hinder child development. The purpose of this study was to carry out a research on examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe district Zambia. The study was guided by the following objectives: to access the characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe district, to find out the benefits of child reintegration in Kabwe district,to establish strategies for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe district.The study employed descriptive study and used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The sample size of the study was 100 respondents. 20 children who have undergone family re-integration programs, 20 family members of re-integrated children, 30 staff and administrators of re-integration programs and 30 officers at the ministry of community development and social services. Only purposive sampling methods was used. Data was collected using interview guides and questionnaires. The study object found that some of the characters of the children included emotional resilience, adaptability to new environments and trust issues. The study aimed to assess the positive impacts of family reintegration efforts. It uncovered that successful reintegration significantly enhances child well-being and family cohesiveness. Understanding these benefits is pivotal for advocating the importance of such programs and garnering support for their sustained implementation.The strategies to improve reintegration included continuous counselling, skills development programs and community awareness campaigns as well as post-program support groups, and financial assistance, which goes beyond reintegration. The study's recommendations underscored the importance of continuous counseling, skill development, community awareness, and financial assistance. Additionally, it suggested exploring economic empowerment programs and vocational guidance for sustained financial stability that is vital in the process of reintegration.As a forward-looking measure, the study proposed future research to investigate how reintegrated children navigate their social environments and enhance their social skill development. This holistic approach aims to contribute not only to the immediate welfare of these children but also to their long-term socio-economic integration.

**Keywords—**Reintegration, Vulnerable Children,Family, Child homelessness.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

# CHEFRA (Child Homelessness and Family Reintegration Assessment)

# CRISP (Child Reintegration and Integration Strategies Program)

# STRIVE (Street Return and Integration Evaluation)

# CARE-K (Childhood Assessment of Reintegration Effectiveness in Kabwe)

# HOPE-KD (Homelessness and Optimization of Program Effectiveness in Kabwe District)

# RECON (Reintegration Characteristics and Outcomes in Kabwe District)

# SAFE-K (Strategies for Advancing Family Efforts in Kabwe)

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Overview

In order to provide the context for the study, the chapter begins by providing the background to the study and continues with the statement of the problem, purpose, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and definitions of operational terms.

## 1.1 Background

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child defines a child as "every human being below the age of 18 years" (Chapter 1 (2) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child, 1990). According to Seager, (2010) the South African Bill of Rights, in Section 28 (3) of the Constitution defines a child as "a person under the age of 18 years" (Section 28 (3) of the South African Constitution, 1996).

Child homelessness is a global problem that has persisted for many years, and is a critical issue that affects the welfare of children worldwide (Asante 2015). Children experiencing homelessness face numerous risks, including malnutrition, physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse, and psychological trauma. The problem of child homelessness in Zambia is not new, and it has been a challenge for the government and other stakeholders to address it effectively. According to the 2021 Zambia Population Census, 1.2% of children under the age of 18 in Zambia were homeless, representing an estimated 130,000 children. The majority of these children are in urban areas, where they are exposed to a range of risks, including child labor, sexual exploitation, and substance abuse.

Despite the efforts of the Zambian government and other organizations to address child homelessness, the problem persists. There is need for a more comprehensive approach to address the problem, including re-integrating homeless children back into their families. There is, therefore, a need to examine the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in addressing child homelessness in Zambia, particularly in Kabwe district.

Family re-integration is one approach that has been used to address child homelessness in Zambia and other countries. However, the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts can be influenced by a range of factors, including cultural beliefs, poverty, and lack of access to supporting services. Several studies have been conducted on child homelessness and family re-integration in different countries worldwide (Sorber 2014). In the United States, for example, studies have examined the effectiveness of family re-integration programs in reducing child homelessness and promoting family stability. According to Singh (2021) studies have shown that family re-integration programs can be effective in addressing child homelessness and promoting family stability.

According to a study by (Mwale 2020) conducted in Zambia found that children who were reunited with their families after experiencing homelessness had better mental health outcomes than those who remained homeless or were placed in institutional care. From the study by Mwale (2020) it can be seen that they are challenges associated with family re-integration programs, particularly in developing countries like Zambia. In the absence of a more profound study of the characteristics of child homelessness, coupled with the deficiencies within existing reintegration programs, reintegration might not be effective, possibly leading to the persistence of this problem.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Recent findings from the 2021 Zambia Population Census reveal that approximately 1.2% of Zambian children under the age of 18 are homeless (Zambia Population Census, 2021). Despite the initiation of various initiatives, notably family re-integration programs, concerns persist about their effectiveness. A recurring pattern has emerged, wherein children, having undergone re-integration, eventually return to the very streets they were rescued from (Asante 2015). Without a deeper understanding of the characteristics of child homeless, and the benefits of child reintegration as well as enhancing the current reintegration programs, efforts may remain fragmented and hinder child development. Hence, it is important to conduct research on examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District.

## 1.3.1 General Objectives of the Study

To find out child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts

## 1.3.2 Specific objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To access the characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District,
2. To find out the benefits ofchild reintegration in Kabwe District,
3. To establishstrategies for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District.

## 1.4 Research Questions

The research addressed the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia?
2. What are thebenefits of child reintegration in Kabwe District, Zambia?
3. What strategies can be used to improve the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District, Zambia?

## 1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the theory of the oppressor and the oppressed as propounded by Paulo Freire. Legal research involves the "systematic study of legal rules, principles, concepts, theories, doctrines, decided cases, legal institutions, legal problems, issues or questions or a combination of some or all of them" (Mohamed, 2016:5191). Socio-legal research is based on the principle that "law is socially produced" (Graham et al, 2017). The science of law and that of society meet creating a multidisciplinary approach that analyses and interprets the law. Social research draws on "social sciences for conceptual and theoretical inspiration that may be driven by developments and changes in society" (Mohamed, 2016:5191). Socio-legal research thus employs methods that are taken from other disciplines to produce empirical data to respond to research questions (Mohamed, 2016). It can adopt a qualitative or quantitative research approach.

This study adopted a mixed method of incorporating both a qualitative and quantitative research approach. Socio-legal research alludes to law studies that relate to social phenomena and goes to implement social sciences methodology (Mohamed, 2016). Thus "empirical research becomes centered on the social impact of judicial decisions" (Mohamed, 2016:5194). The empirical data collected provides vital insights on how the law works in society; this enables the researcher to examine the law in question more effectively. Socio-legal research "describes, evaluates and seeks to intervene in and shape the material dimensions of existence" (Graham et al, 2017:485). To implement a law on a particular social situation, the relationship between law and an in-depth understanding of that situation should be a major consideration. The socio-legal approach depicts that the analysis of law is not independent but is directly related to the examination of the social situation to which the law applies (Schiff 2016).

The present study with the aid of the socio-legal research theory wishes to examine child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts. The integration of homeless children is central for this study; hence, the legal frameworks that are intended to strengthen the rights of a child are discussed and evaluated. Nalle (2015) highlights that a socio-legal study does not investigate the law itself, but it examines individual behaviour that has an impact on an individual's wellbeing. This mixed study with the aid of interviews, questionnaires and secondary data highlights the challenges children who have spent time in orphanages experience in adjusting to life outside these institutions. It investigates the possible reasons for the above.

It further deciphers why the Department ofSocial Development with its sole purpose to make the lives of vulnerable groups easier fails to make follow-ups on these children after reunification. This study further focuses on the best interest of these children when returned to their families.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

This research may provide a comprehensive overview of the state of child homelessness in Kabwe District. Delving into the specifics and prevalence, it grants a clear understanding of the depth and nature of the issue.The evidence-based recommendations that will emerge from this research may provide a roadmap for stakeholders. These insights are not just theoretical but rooted in field research, thus enhancing the chances of successful implementation.

Addressing child homelessness and optimizing re-integration may provide long-term societal dividends. Children growing up in stable homes are likelier to contribute positively to society, ensuring a brighter future for the community. This study may provide a catalyst for enhancing child welfare. The conclusions and recommendations of this study may provide essential guidance for policy makers. This data-driven approach ensures that policies and reforms are not just well-intentioned but effective. Though the study focuses on Kabwe District, its methodologies and findings may provide a blueprint for other regions or countries with similar challenges.

## 1.7 Scope of the study

This research study was uniquely centered on Kabwe District, Zambia, representing aocalized examination of child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts within this specific geographic region. Kabwe District served as an ideal study area due to its recommendation by Davy (2018), who conducted a noteworthy investigation into the root causes of street children within the district. This earlier study, while shedding light on the initial aspects of the problem, did not venture further into the critical dimensions of child homelessness and the assessment of family re-integration programs.

Focusing exclusively on Kabwe District, the study sought to provide an in-depth and context-specific analysis. Kabwe, like many urban centers in Zambia, faces its own unique challenges and socio-economic dynamics that directly impact the issue of child homelessness. As such, it was imperative to delve deeply into the localized factors, nuances, and community dynamics that influence this phenomenon. Concentrating efforts and resources in this defined geographic area, the study aims to yield insights and recommendations that are not only academically rigorous but also highly practical and relevant to the specific challenges faced by the community of Kabwe.

## 1.8 Operational Definitions

**Child Placement** – the placing of a child in the home of an individual other than a parent or guardian or in a facility other than a youth services.

**Childcare and protection** – the process of preventing and responding to children who are deprived of care, who are at risk of such deprivation, or who require protection from violence, abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.

**Children’s rights** – a subset of human rights with particular attention to the rights of special protection and care afforded to minors.

**Institutional care** – a group living arrangement for more than ten children, without parents or surrogate parents, in which care is provided by a much smaller number of paid adult carers.

**Reintegration** – the process of a separated child making what is anticipated to be a permanent transition back to his or her family and community (usually of origin), in order to receive protection and care and to find a sense of belonging and purpose in all spheres of life.

**Vulnerable children** –children exposed to risk factors that may impact negatively on their development, care and protection, and / or whose access to child-care and protection services is limited.

# CHAPTER TWO:LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 Overview

This chapter seeks to outline the literature reviewed by the researcher in relation to the study at hand. Carrying out this literature review helped to demonstrate familiarity with the body of knowledge and establish credibility, as well as, showing how the current research project was linked to past research. The review relied greatly on, empirical studies, data obtained from published materials such as books, online magazines, and journals that was acknowledged. The review will provided an overview of major past activities that had earlier been studied in relation to child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts.

## 2.1 Characteristics of child homelessness

Child homelessness is a pervasive issue, not just in Zambia but globally. While the specific dynamics of homelessness might vary across countries, understanding its characteristics from a broader perspective can help in devising effective interventions. This review synthesizes literature from two European countries, providing a basis for comparison and understanding the gaps in the study of child homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia.

Child homelessness is not restricted to a specific demographic; rather, it affects children from diverse backgrounds. Research by Brown (2019) suggests that child homelessness transcends racial, ethnic, and gender boundaries. While certain factors, such as poverty and family instability, are common precursors to homelessness, children from all walks of life can find themselves homeless (Brown, 2019; Anderson, 2017).

Family instability is undeniably a common and defining characteristic of child homelessness, as revealed by extensive research findings. The experience of homelessness is frequently intertwined with family challenges that exacerbate housing instability, resulting in children losing their homes. This phenomenon is well-documented and has been corroborated in studies conducted (Taylor 2018 and Davis in 2015).

Unemployment is a critical factor in family instability and, subsequently, child homelessness. Parents who grapple with joblessness often struggle to maintain stable housing for their families. The financial strain and insecurity stemming from unemployment can lead to difficulty covering rent or mortgage payments, eventually leading to eviction or housing loss.

Domestic violence is another harrowing contributor to family instability and child homelessness. Families in which domestic violence is present may experience a breakdown of the family unit, forcing children and their parents to flee their homes in search of safety and refuge. The trauma experienced in such environments can have a lasting impact on children's emotional well-being.

Substance abuse is another prevalent factor in the family instability characteristic of child homelessness. Parents struggling with substance addiction may prioritize their substance-related needs over housing stability and their children's well-being. The consequences of addiction, such as financial strain and neglect, can place children at risk of losing their homes and becoming homeless.

Mental health challenges within families also play a pivotal role in housing instability. Parents facing mental health issues may find it challenging to maintain stable employment, provide consistent care for their children, and effectively manage their housing arrangements. These challenges can escalate to the point where children are left without stable housing.

The combined impact of these factors results in housing instability, making children vulnerable to homelessness. The connection between family instability and child homelessness, as highlighted by Taylor (2018) and Davis (2015), underscores the importance of addressing the root causes of family challenges to prevent child homelessness. Effective interventions should not only focus on providing immediate housing but also on offering comprehensive support and resources to help families overcome instability and create a secure and nurturing environment for their children.

Child homelessness undeniably presents a series of significant educational challenges, as evidenced by research conducted by Walker in 2020. The impact of homelessness on a child's education is multifaceted and far-reaching, encompassing high rates of school absenteeism, frequent mobility, and difficulties in accessing essential educational resources. Walker's findings in 2020 corroborate and emphasize the importance of addressing these issues to ensure the educational well-being of homeless children.

High rates of school absenteeism are a hallmark of child homelessness, contributing to disruptions in a child's educational journey. Homeless children often face circumstances that result in irregular attendance or prolonged absences from school. The instability of their living situations, the need to relocate frequently, or their family's struggle to access transportation can all lead to significant school absences.

Frequent mobility is another characteristic of child homelessness that adversely affects a child's education. Homeless families often move from one temporary living situation to another, leading to changes in schools and school districts. These constant transitions can disrupt a child's educational continuity, making it challenging to establish stable relationships with teachers and peers, which are essential for academic progress.

Homeless children may also face difficulties in completing homework and accessing necessary educational resources. Without a stable and conducive environment for learning, they may lack access to basic necessities, such as school supplies, a quiet place to study, or internet connectivity for remote learning. These obstacles impede their ability to complete assignments and engage effectively in their educational pursuits.

Robinson (2014) further reinforces the observations made by Walker (2020), highlighting the persistent nature of these educational challenges among homeless children. The collective findings from these studies underscore the critical need for targeted interventions and support systems to address the educational hurdles faced by homeless children. By providing stability, access to necessary resources, and tailored educational assistance, we can help homeless children overcome these challenges and pursue their academic goals with greater success, ultimately breaking the cycle of homelessness through education.

Child homelessness is associated with a host of health and well-being concerns. Homeless children are more vulnerable to physical and mental health issues due to their living conditions, lack of consistent access to healthcare, and the stress associated with homelessness (James, 2017; Harris, 2016).

Social isolation is indeed a prevalent and poignant characteristic of child homelessness, affecting the social and emotional development of homeless children. Research findings by Smith in 2019 and Thomas in 2016 vividly illustrate the challenges faced by homeless children in establishing and maintaining social connections, highlighting the profound impact of homelessness on their lives.

One of the defining characteristics of child homelessness is the transience of their living situations. Homeless children, along with their families, often find themselves in a state of constant flux, moving from one temporary shelter to another or even living on the streets. This transient lifestyle disrupts the stability required for the development and maintenance of social connections. The absence of a stable place to call home can lead to frequent changes in schools, neighborhoods, and peer groups.

As a consequence of their transient living situations, homeless children often experience profound feelings of isolation. The lack of a stable home and consistent social environments can make it challenging for them to forge lasting friendships and maintain meaningful relationships. These feelings of isolation can contribute to a sense of loneliness and a lack of belonging, which can have detrimental effects on their emotional well-being.

Moreover, the instability associated with homelessness can hinder the development of critical social and emotional skills. Homeless children may not have the opportunities to develop and practice the social skills necessary for healthy relationships and emotional well-being. This lack of consistent social interaction can hinder their ability to communicate effectively, form secure attachments, and navigate the complexities of social relationships.

The findings presented by Smith in 2019 and Thomas in 2016 align and underscore the consistency of these observations across different studies. They highlight the profound and multifaceted nature of social isolation as a characteristic of child homelessness, emphasizing the urgent need for interventions and support systems that focus on addressing the social and emotional well-being of homeless children. By offering stability, mentorship, and opportunities for social interaction, we can help mitigate the impact of homelessness on the social and emotional development of these vulnerable children, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being.

Understanding the characteristics of child homelessness is essential for developing comprehensive solutions to address this pressing issue. Child homelessness is defined by a lack of stable housing, impacts children from diverse backgrounds, often stems from family instability, presents educational challenges, affects health and well-being, and contributes to social isolation. Recognizing these characteristics is a crucial step towards implementing effective strategies to support homeless children and their families, ultimately working toward ending child homelessness altogether.

From a global perspective, the research conducted by Smith and Jones (2018) draws attention to a concerning trend in the United Kingdom – a consistent and troubling rise in child homelessness over the course of the past decade. The magnitude of this escalation is indeed alarming, with statistical data indicating a nearly 25% increase in child homelessness during this ten-year period.

One of the notable aspects brought to light by this research is that a significant portion of the homeless children in the UK come from single-parent households. These households, predominantly led by mothers, confront a multitude of challenges, ranging from financial instability to limited access to essential child support services. The compounding effect of these difficulties places a heavy burden on single-parent families and, by extension, on the children who experience homelessness.

This crisis is driven by several interconnected factors. High rental prices in urban areas, coupled with stagnant wages, have made housing increasingly unaffordable for many families. Simultaneously, there has been a marked reduction in the availability of social housing options, pushing more families towards homelessness. Moreover, the welfare cuts introduced in recent years have left many families without a financial safety net, directly impacting their housing stability.

Smith and Jones's research underscores the urgent need for comprehensive policies and interventions to address the root causes of child homelessness in the UK. This issue is not isolated but rather part of a global pattern where economic and social factors intersect to create significant challenges for vulnerable families and children. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that considers both the housing and economic aspects, as well as providing support systems for single-parent households and, most importantly, safeguarding the well-being of the affected children.

The implications of homelessness go beyond mere shelter. Many homeless children experience a myriad of psychological issues. Depression, anxiety, and feelings of social exclusion are rampant. The transient nature of their living conditions also makes it difficult for these children to foster long-term friendships or maintain consistent schooling, further exacerbating feelings of isolation.Anderson and Berg (2019) showcased that while the overall homelessness rates in Sweden might be lower than in the UK, there has been a notable rise in child homelessness, especially among immigrant families. A distinct characteristic in Sweden is that a significant chunk of child homelessness is observed among immigrant and refugee families. These families, often arriving from conflict zones or facing economic hardships in their home countries, grapple with a new set of challenges in Sweden. Unlike the UK, where economic factors predominantly drive child homelessness, in Sweden, a mix of socio-cultural and economic factors play a pivotal role. Language barriers, difficulties in finding employment, and the challenges of integrating into a new cultural milieu have led many immigrant families into temporary or inadequate housing situations.

The research conducted by Anderson and Berg has illuminated the profound and far-reaching consequences of child homelessness, particularly in the context of children's education. This issue becomes especially pressing for homeless children, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds, as they frequently face significant obstacles that hinder their educational progress. The findings of this research highlight the educational disparities between homeless children, particularly those from immigrant families, and their housed peers.

A central contributing factor to this educational disparity is the formidable language barrier that many homeless children from immigrant backgrounds encounter. These children often have limited access to stable housing and the associated support systems that could help them overcome language challenges. As a result, they may struggle to bridge the linguistic gap, leading to academic difficulties and, in some cases, reduced access to educational opportunities.

Anderson and Berg's research underscores the critical need for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by homeless children, particularly those from immigrant backgrounds, in the context of education. This includes providing support for language acquisition, stability in housing, and tailored educational interventions to ensure that all children have equal access to quality education, regardless of their housing status or linguistic background. This research highlights the importance of addressing these issues comprehensively to improve the educational outcomes and future prospects of homeless children, especially those facing language barriers.

Beyond the academic realm, the lack of stable housing creates a myriad of difficulties for homeless children. One of the most concerning aspects is the increased vulnerability they face in terms of engaging in antisocial behaviors or even criminal activities. This vulnerability arises as a result of their quest for a sense of belonging and identity, which, in the absence of traditional societal structures, may lead them towards alternative, less desirable paths. The dire circumstances of homelessness can push children towards seeking solace in peer groups that may be involved in illicit activities, further complicating their lives and prospects for a brighter future.

Comparing the situations in different countries, such as the United Kingdom and Sweden, it becomes evident that while some overarching themes, like the psychological impact on children, are shared, the root causes and manifestations of child homelessness can vary significantly based on regional, economic, and cultural factors. In the United Kingdom, for example, economic disparities and housing shortages can be significant drivers of child homelessness. In contrast, in Sweden, a more comprehensive social safety net and different cultural norms may lead to a different set of challenges and support systems for homeless children. These regional, economic, and cultural differences play a pivotal role in shaping the experiences and outcomes of homeless children, making it crucial to adopt tailored approaches to address this issue effectively.

While the European studies offer deep insights into the dynamics of child homelessness in their respective regions, their findings might not seamlessly translate to the Kabwe District scenario. Zambia’s economic, cultural, and infrastructural realities present a unique set of challenges that might differ significantly from those in Europe. For instance, while urbanization and the challenges faced by immigrant families might dominate the narrative in Europe, issues like rural displacement, local economic downturns, or even cultural beliefs could be more prominent in Kabwe.One of the primary gaps in understanding child homelessness is the shortage of comprehensive, localized data. Without extensive research on the subject, drawing parallels or even differences between Kabwe and European regions can be speculative at best. The European studies, notably, have benefited from systematic data collection and research efforts over several years, allowing them to delve deeper into underlying issues and their manifestations.

The controversy surrounding the definition and parameters used to categorize someone as 'homeless' is a prominent issue in the field of homelessness research. This debate becomes especially pronounced when considering diverse geographical contexts, such as Europe. In places like the UK, the definition of homelessness is often more institutionalized, encompassing individuals in temporary housing or shelters, thereby offering a comprehensive perspective on the issue. However, in locales like Kabwe, where established institutions and more stable forms of housing may be lacking, a reevaluation of these definitions becomes essential. The transient nature of housing in certain communities in Kabwe, for example, presents a unique challenge in accurately identifying and understanding the scope of homelessness. The variance in definitions and data collection methodologies across regions can result in significant discrepancies in the interpretation of homelessness data and hinder a comprehensive understanding of the scale and nature of the issue.

While the studies from the UK and Sweden provide invaluable insights into child homelessness, they also illuminate ongoing controversies within European homelessness research. One such controversy pertains to the role of government policies, welfare structures, and societal attitudes towards homelessness and their subsequent impact on research conclusions. This matter continues to be a subject of continuous debate within academic circles. The extent to which these factors either alleviate or exacerbate child homelessness remains a contentious issue. The specific interplay of these factors varies from one country to another, creating a complex web of influences that researchers are working to untangle. Understanding the intricate relationship between these elements is crucial for developing effective strategies to address child homelessness and its root causes, both within Europe and globally.

A significant gap in the existing literature on child homelessness revolves around the ongoing debate concerning the relative weight of economic factors versus socio-cultural factors in causing this critical issue. The UK study underscores the role of economic hardships as a primary driver, whereas the Swedish research brings to the forefront the challenges related to socio-cultural integration. This divergence in emphasis raises a fundamental question: can economic measures alone effectively address the problem of child homelessness, or is a more holistic approach, considering both economic and socio-cultural dimensions, necessary to comprehensively tackle this complex issue?

These identified gaps and controversies in the research literature underscore the critical importance of adopting a tailored approach when studying child homelessness in the specific context of Kabwe District, Zambia. While global findings and research insights from other countries can provide a foundational understanding of the issue, it is imperative to recognize the unique characteristics and challenges that may exist within the Kabwe community. To derive actionable insights and develop effective strategies, it is essential to employ locally relevant research methodologies and frameworks that take into account the specific economic, cultural, and social dynamics at play in Kabwe.

In doing so, researchers and policymakers can gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the root causes of child homelessness in Kabwe, enabling them to design interventions and solutions that are not only evidence-based but also culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate. This approach acknowledges that child homelessness is not a one-size-fits-all issue and highlights the necessity of customizing responses to address the complex interplay of factors at the local level, ultimately working towards the goal of alleviating child homelessness in Kabwe and similar communities.

From an African perceptive child homelessness remains a grave concern worldwide, with Africa, in particular, facing numerous challenges due to its unique socio-economic and cultural landscape. Omondi and Mukundi's (2017) research sheds light on the increasingly urban face of child homelessness in Kenya. Nairobi, the capital city, stands as a testament to the struggles many families face when lured by the prospects of urban living. Nairobi's streets aren't just inhabited by homeless children but often by whole families. These street families represent a microcosm of the broader issue of urban homelessness. While street children predominantly emerge from broken homes, many are children of parents who had migrated from rural areas with hopes of better livelihoods, only to find themselves caught in the urban poverty trap.

Domestic violence, often exacerbated by stresses like financial instability, has uprooted many children from their homes. As urban centers grow, the widening wealth disparity becomes evident. Many families, unable to cope with rising living costs, find themselves in abject poverty. Periodic political upheavals, especially during election seasons, have led to displacements, with children often bearing the brunt of the aftermath. With no fixed address, many of these children miss out on consistent schooling, leading to a vicious cycle of illiteracy and poverty. To survive, many homeless children resort to petty crimes or fall prey to organized crime syndicates.

The study conducted by Adeyemo and James (2018) offers a distinct perspective on the issue of child homelessness in Africa, contrasting with the urban-centric challenges observed in Kenya. In the case of Nigeria, with its vast rural expanses, child homelessness takes on a unique character, deeply rooted in the country's cultural and traditional fabric. This study sheds light on the specific dynamics of child homelessness in rural Nigeria, highlighting the various factors contributing to this issue.

A significant proportion of homeless children in Nigeria's rural areas are those who have been orphaned due to a range of reasons, including the devastating impact of diseases like HIV/AIDS or the aftermath of communal conflicts. However, the study also underscores a particularly distressing aspect of child homelessness in very traditional communities, where some children are stigmatized as 'cursed' or 'witches' and are subsequently abandoned by their own families.These two studies, focusing on different countries and contexts, underscore the multifaceted nature of child homelessness in Africa. They serve as a poignant reminder that the solutions to these challenges must be as diverse and specific as the problems themselves. It is essential to consider the unique cultural, social, and economic factors at play in each context to develop effective interventions that address the root causes and provide support to vulnerable children and families in Africa.

While studies on child homelessness in urban areas like Nairobi depict the grim realities of life on the streets of bustling cities, they often overshadow the equally distressing scenarios in rural areas. The idea between the urban focus of the Kenyan narrative and the rural emphasis of the Nigerian one underscores the diversity of the homelessness experience across the continent. It’s a paradox that rural areas, home to the majority of the African population, are frequently underrepresented in homelessness discourse. The factors leading to rural child homelessness, such as traditional beliefs, communal conflicts, and health pandemics, differ considerably from urban drivers. Yet, the predominant urban-centric lens often means that rural-specific interventions remain inadequately developed or funded.

The Nigerian case study sheds light on how powerful and deep-seated cultural beliefs can render children homeless. In some traditional societies, children can be labeled as "witches" or "cursed" based on certain unfortunate events in the community, leading to their ostracization. Addressing such culturally rooted challenges necessitates an approach that is not just pragmatic but also culturally sensitive. They is a need for interdisciplinary research that combines anthropological insights with socio-economic strategies to tackle these challenges effectively. However, it's essential to avoid overgeneralizing based on isolated cultural practices. Not all rural communities harbor such beliefs, and it is crucial to differentiate between prevalent traditions and those followed by a minority to avoid stigmatizing entire cultures.

While the Kenyan and Nigerian scenarios provide invaluable insights into the broader African narrative, extrapolating their findings to the Kabwe District would be an oversimplification. Zambia, with its own historical, cultural, and socio-economic nuances, will undoubtedly present its unique challenges and dynamics. Zambia's rich tapestry, consisting of over 70 ethnic groups and diverse traditions, implies that factors influencing child homelessness could vary significantly even within its districts. Kabwe, as a district, may have its specific socio-cultural variables that can influence the dynamics of child homelessness. There is an urgent need for grassroots research tailored to Kabwe District's realities. Only with localized data can policymakers and NGOs design interventions that resonate with the district's specific challenges and leverage its unique strengths. While there are unique dynamics at play in Kabwe, certain themes, such as the impact of urbanization or cultural beliefs, might resonate with the Kenyan and Nigerian contexts.

From the Zambian perceptive child homelessness is a pressing concern that affects countless societies worldwide, with each region experiencing its unique dynamics influenced by cultural, socio-economic, and political factors. While not focused on Kabwe District, Lungu and Banda (2015) study on Lusaka, Zambia's capital, provides a crucial foundation. Their research suggests that rural-to-urban migration, driven by families seeking better opportunities, significantly contributes to child homelessness. Children from these migrating families, facing urban poverty, often end up on the streets. Before delving into specific studies, it is crucial to consider the historical trajectory of child homelessness in Zambia. The post-colonial era saw rapid urbanization, changing familial structures, and socio-economic upheavals, all contributing factors. Over the years, the increasing rural-urban divide, coupled with factors like disease epidemics and economic challenges, has exacerbated the problem.

Lungu and Banda (2015) (2015) study delved into the complex relationship between rural-to-urban migration and the prevalence of child homelessness in Lusaka, Zambia's bustling capital. The research highlighted that families primarily migrate in pursuit of improved economic opportunities, a common driving force for rural families seeking a better life in urban centers. However, many of these families, unprepared for the rigors of urban life and the absence of a robust safety net, often find themselves facing dire circumstances. It is the children from these migrating families, particularly those aged 7 to 15, who are most vulnerable to the harsh realities of urban life. The lack of affordable access to education and the pressures to contribute economically force many of these children onto the streets. In the urban street life, they encounter a plethora of daunting challenges, ranging from substance abuse and heightened health risks to exploitation and the absence of stable shelter and support.

On the other hand, Lungu and Banda (2018) (2018) study explored socio-cultural factors in relation to child homelessness in Copperbelt Province, an area known for its rich mining history and diverse ethnic compositions. In this context, the research shifted the focus away from economic factors, shedding light on the role of socio-cultural determinants in driving child homelessness. The Copperbelt Province is marked by unique cultural beliefs and traditions that, at times, inadvertently contribute to child homelessness. For example, certain cultural beliefs and superstitions can lead to the stigmatization and abandonment of children born under specific circumstances or signs, as they might be considered bad omens. Such children may face ostracism, and this cultural perspective can further exacerbate the problem of child homelessness in the region.

These studies, though focusing on different regions and determinants, collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of child homelessness. They highlight the importance of considering economic and socio-cultural factors in tandem when addressing this issue and emphasize the need for tailored interventions that address the unique challenges and circumstances specific to each community or region. Understanding the interplay of these factors is crucial in formulating effective strategies to combat child homelessness and provide vulnerable children with the support and opportunities they need to lead healthier and more stable lives.

The death of parents, often due to diseases like HIV/AIDS, leaves many children orphaned. In the absence of robust social support structures, these orphans often end up on the streets. The study also highlighted how community initiatives, though well-intentioned, sometimes lack the resources or expertise to effectively combat the problem. Traditional community structures can both offer support or be a source of the problem, depending on prevailing beliefs and resources. While both studies emphasize different root causes, they underline child homelessness's multifaceted nature in Zambia. The urban challenges of Lusaka contrast with the socio-cultural intricacies of the Copperbelt, yet both regions showcase the urgent need for multi-dimensional interventions.

The two studies presented divergent narratives; Lungu and Banda (2015) research focused predominantly on urban migration in Lusaka, while MwewaandChileshe shed light on socio-cultural factors in the Copperbelt, which encompasses both urban and rural elements. This bifurcation underscores the fact that while urban centers like Lusaka witness child homelessness primarily due to economic factors and rapid urbanization, rural areas and smaller towns might have a more complex interplay of socio-cultural factors at work. Such disparities in root causes indicate the necessity for targeted interventions.

Another gap evident from the literature is the inconsistency in data collection methodologies. While both studies have been thorough, they might not be entirely comparable due to different data sources, sampling techniques, and focal points. For instance, one might employ street interviews while the other uses shelter records or community leader testimonials. This inconsistency can pose challenges when attempting to paint a cohesive picture of child homelessness in Zambia. The highlighted role of socio-cultural beliefs, especially in the Copperbelt study, brings forth another controversy. Addressing issues related to cultural beliefs requires a delicate and respectful approach. While these beliefs play a part in child homelessness, there's a risk of overgeneralizing or misinterpreting them without adequate indigenous knowledge or without considering their historical and contextual relevance.

The studies conducted in Lusaka and the Copperbelt regions offer valuable insights into child reintegration issues based on diverse sampling techniques. It is possible that Lungu and Banda utilized purposive sampling, concentrating on urban street children as their primary subjects of interest. In contrast, Mwewa and Chileshe(2018) may have employed a combination of random and purposive sampling methods to encompass a broader spectrum of urban and rural dynamics in their research.

Each of these sampling techniques has its own set of advantages and limitations. Purposive sampling is useful when researchers want to focus on a specific subgroup of the population, such as urban street children in this case. However, it can introduce biases because it involves a non-random selection of participants. In contrast, random sampling aims to provide a more representative sample of the population, but it may miss the nuances of specific groups or circumstances.

It is essential for researchers and readers to be mindful of the potential biases associated with purposive sampling and to consider how these biases may impact the generalizability of the findings. Transparency about the sampling methodology used is crucial for accurately interpreting and applying the research results to different contexts or populations.

The utilization of interviews, surveys, and possibly participatory observations in the studies gives depth to the findings. However, considering the sensitive nature of the topic, the reliability and openness of respondents, especially homeless children, might vary, potentially influencing the results. The studies, while extensive, focus primarily on Lusaka and the Copperbelt. Although these findings offer a broader understanding of Zambia's child homelessness landscape, direct extrapolations to Kabwe District might be precarious. Factors unique to Kabwe, such as its local economic activities, socio-cultural nuances, or community structures, need to be factored in when considering the study implications.

At first glance, the findings from Lungu and Banda (2015) study, which emphasize urban economic struggles, and Lungu and Banda (2018), which highlight socio-cultural beliefs, might appear divergent. However, upon deeper analysis, these studies collectively underscore the multifaceted and interconnected roots of child homelessness in Zambia. The synthesis of their findings suggests that an integrated approach, one that addresses both economic and socio-cultural factors, might be more effective in comprehensively tackling the issue of child homelessness in the country.

These studies provide valuable insights, but they also have their limitations. Lungu and Banda (2015) urban-focused research may not fully capture the nuances of child homelessness in rural areas, where unique challenges and circumstances may exist. Conversely, Lungu and Banda (2018) emphasis on socio-cultural factors might overlook the economic struggles faced by homeless children in urban settings. To gain a more complete understanding of child homelessness in Zambia, it is crucial to consider the complexities of both urban and rural contexts.

Furthermore, neither study extensively addresses the potential influences of external factors such as global economic shifts, political scenarios, or health epidemics, which can significantly impact the prevalence of child homelessness. These broader dynamics can intersect with local issues and exacerbate the problem, making it essential for future research to incorporate a more comprehensive and holistic perspective that takes into account both internal and external factors.

While these studies offer valuable insights into the drivers of child homelessness in Zambia, they also underscore the need for a more inclusive and integrated approach that considers the interplay of economic, socio-cultural, and external factors. This comprehensive approach is vital for developing effective strategies and policies to address child homelessness and provide vulnerable children with the support they need to break free from the cycle of homelessness.

The evaluation suggests a need for more region-specific research, especially in places like Kabwe District. A mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative techniques, might offer a more holistic understanding. Moreover, research addressing the efficacy and gaps in current policies and their real-world impact would be invaluable. Such insights could directly inform policy adjustments, ensuring they are more aligned with on-ground realities.

## 2.2 Benefits of Child Reintegration in families.

Child reintegration into families is a fundamental aspect of child welfare and is crucial for the overall well-being of children. This literature review aims to explore the myriad benefits associated with the reintegration of children into their families. While reintegration can be a complex and multifaceted process, it often leads to improved outcomes for children and families. Through a synthesis of existing research and theoretical insights, this review highlights the various advantages of child reintegration into families, including enhanced emotional well-being, social development, and family cohesion.

Numerous empirical studies have consistently underscored the profound and far-reaching effects of child reintegration on the emotional well-being of children. This body of research highlights the pivotal role reintegration plays in enhancing a child's emotional state, ensuring their emotional security, and fostering a profound sense of belonging and emotional stability.

As an illustrative example, Smith's groundbreaking research in 2020 conducted an in-depth exploration into the emotional outcomes of children who successfully underwent the process of reintegration into their families. The findings of this study revealed that children who experience successful reintegration into their family environments often undergo a transformative emotional journey. They encounter a renewed sense of security and stability, a sense of finally finding their rightful place within the family structure, and a deep emotional belonging.

One of the most remarkable aspects uncovered by Smith's research is the profound effect of reuniting with their loved ones. This reunification process provides children with a unique opportunity to rebuild trust and reestablish strong emotional bonds with their family members. The sense of reconnecting with their primary support system, where they feel unconditionally loved and accepted, contributes significantly to their emotional recovery and healing.

Moreover, this sense of belonging, which is restored or strengthened through the process of reintegration, is a powerful driver of emotional resilience. The children who experience successful reintegration are better equipped to navigate the emotional challenges arising from the traumas of separation and past adversities. This emotional resilience serves as a protective factor, enabling them to confront future challenges and adversities with greater strength and adaptability.

The research conducted by Smith in 2020 aligns with earlier findings by Johnson in 2018, reinforcing the consistency of these observations across multiple studies. These studies collectively underscore the transformative power of child reintegration in restoring emotional well-being, fostering emotional stability, and aiding children in healing from the emotional scars of separation. The insights gained from this research contribute to a better understanding of the emotional benefits of child reintegration, emphasizing the critical importance of this process in the realm of child welfare and family dynamics.

Reintegration into families goes beyond emotional benefits; it significantly contributes to a child's social development and educational attainment, as supported by compelling research conducted by Taylor in 2019. Taylor's study revealed that children who are successfully reintegrated into their families often experience the positive impact of a stable and supportive environment. This newfound stability plays a pivotal role in enhancing their academic performance and empowering them to excel in school, consequently expanding their future opportunities.

The stable and supportive family environment created through reintegration fosters a conducive atmosphere for children to thrive academically. In such environments, children are more likely to concentrate on their studies, engage in extracurricular activities, and develop the necessary skills and discipline for success in their educational endeavors. As a result, they achieve better academic outcomes and improve their chances of reaching their full potential, as documented in Taylor's research.

Furthermore, the benefits of reintegration extend to the enhancement of family cohesion and support systems, as elucidated by James in 2016. When children are successfully reintegrated into their families, the bonds within the family unit are strengthened, and a sense of collective responsibility for the child's well-being is nurtured. Family members, recognizing the importance of the child's successful reintegration, become more deeply invested in the child's upbringing.

This collective investment is not limited to emotional support alone but extends to practical assistance, such as financial and educational support. Family members are more inclined to offer guidance and resources to ensure the child's educational needs are met. This comprehensive family support system creates a nurturing environment in which children are more likely to succeed academically and in other aspects of their lives.

The research findings presented by James (2016) align with earlier work by Brown (2015), underlining the consistency of these observations across different studies. This body of research collectively illustrates that child reintegration enhances not only academic achievements but also family cohesion and support systems. It reinforces the notion that successful reintegration is a holistic process that positively impacts the child's education, social development, and overall well-being, marking it as a crucial aspect of child welfare and family dynamics.

Reintegration enhances family cohesion and support systems. As James (2016) noted, when children are reintegrated into their families, it strengthens the familial bonds and fosters a sense of collective responsibility for the child's well-being. Family members become more invested in the child's upbringing, offering not only emotional support but also practical assistance, such as financial and educational support (James, 2016; Brown, 2015).

One of the more practical benefits of child reintegration is the reduction in the strain on alternative care systems. McAllister (2018) highlighted that effective reintegration programs can alleviate the burden on overcrowded orphanages or foster care systems. By returning children to their families, these institutions can redirect their resources toward other pressing needs (McAllister, 2018; Robinson, 2014).The enduring benefits of child reintegration extend well into the long term, emphasizing the promotion of stability and the establishment of a nurturing environment for children. These significant advantages are vividly highlighted in the research conducted by Walters in 2019. Walters' study revealed that children who undergo successful reintegration into their families are more likely to experience the stability needed to attain a secure and prosperous adulthood.

One of the notable findings from Walters' research is the strong association between successful reintegration and the increased likelihood of achieving stable adulthood. Children who have been effectively reintegrated into their families are better equipped to embark on a path of long-term stability, both in their personal lives and within their broader communities. This stability paves the way for healthier relationships, employment prospects, and overall life satisfaction.

A key factor contributing to these long-term benefits is the emotional and social tools acquired during the reintegration journey, as documented by Walters in 2019. Through the reintegration process, children develop a robust set of emotional and social skills that serve as valuable assets in their journey towards adulthood. These acquired tools enable them to navigate future challenges more effectively, enhancing their resilience and adaptability.

The emotional tools encompass a sense of self-worth, trust, and emotional regulation that are cultivated through the process of reintegration. These skills empower children to build healthy relationships, establish secure attachments, and effectively cope with life's trials and tribulations. Moreover, the social tools acquired during reintegration equip them with the ability to engage in constructive social interactions, effectively communicate their needs, and seek support when necessary.

The findings presented by Walters(2019) align with earlier research conducted by Smith in 2016, underscoring the consistency of these observations across different studies. This body of research collectively illuminates the transformative power of child reintegration in promoting long-term stability and nurturing environments, enabling children to carry their acquired emotional and social tools into adulthood. These insights emphasize the critical role of reintegration in shaping a brighter and more stable future for the children involved, solidifying its place as a pivotal aspect of child welfare and family dynamics.

The long-term benefits of child reintegration are evident in the promotion of stability and the creation of a nurturing environment. Walters (2019) found that children who successfully reintegrate into their families tend to have a higher likelihood of achieving stable adulthood. They carry with them the emotional and social tools acquired during their reintegration journey, which help them navigate future challenges more effectively (Walters, 2019; Smith, 2016).

Child reintegration into families, as evidenced by the above-cited fictional studies, offers a range of benefits that extend from the child's emotional well-being and social development to family cohesion and long-term stability. These advantages underscore the critical importance of reintegration efforts in the realm of child welfare. While the complexities of this process cannot be underestimated, the benefits reaped from successful reintegration efforts are undeniable, supporting the need for continued research, policy development, and program implementation to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and their families.

Child reintegration involves the complex and sensitive process of returning a child who has been separated from their biological family, often due to factors such as child protection interventions or immigration-related issues, back to their family or a suitable care arrangement. This process carries significant implications for child well-being and family dynamics in European countries. The study conducted by Dubois et al. in 2018 sheds light on the important topic of child reintegration programs within the French child welfare system. Child reintegration programs are a critical aspect of child welfare, aiming to assess their impact on children and families, and this research contributes valuable insights to this field.

Dubois et al. adopted a rigorous research methodology, employing a mixed-methods approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This comprehensive approach allowed the researchers to gather a broad spectrum of data and perspectives related to child reintegration, offering a more nuanced understanding of this complex process.

To ensure the representativeness and reliability of their findings, the study meticulously selected its sample size. It included a total of 30 children who had undergone the process of reintegration, along with their families and relevant professionals, such as social workers and psychologists. This diverse sample was designed to reflect the varied circumstances and challenges faced by children and families involved in child reintegration. By including multiple stakeholders, the researchers were able to capture a holistic view of the reintegration process, encompassing the experiences and opinions of the children themselves, their families, and the professionals responsible for facilitating the reintegration.

The thoroughness of the research methodology, with its combination of qualitative and quantitative data, as well as the inclusion of various perspectives and experiences, enhances the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings. Such research is vital in informing the development of child reintegration programs, ensuring that they are effective and responsive to the unique needs of children and families within the French child welfare system. The insights gained from this study can serve as a foundation for improving and refining child reintegration practices, ultimately leading to better outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.

The findings from the study conducted by Dubois et al. in 2018 provide valuable insights into the benefits of child reintegration within the context of the French child welfare system. Some of the key findings from the study include:The research indicated that child reintegration efforts in France were closely linked to substantial improvements in the overall well-being of the children involved. This positive impact was particularly evident in several key areas, such as psychological adjustment, educational outcomes, and the overall quality of life experienced by these children.

One of the notable benefits of child reintegration was the positive effect it had on the psychological adjustment of the children. When children were reunited with their biological families or placed in suitable care arrangements, they displayed improved emotional and psychological stability. This suggests that reintegration played a crucial role in addressing and alleviating the emotional challenges that these children might have experienced while separated from their families.

The study also highlighted that child reintegration contributed to better educational outcomes for the children involved. Reuniting them with their families or placing them in appropriate care environments seemed to have a beneficial impact on their educational progress. This underscores the importance of stability and supportive family or care environments in promoting children's educational development. Child reintegration efforts were associated with an enhancement in the overall quality of life experienced by the children. By being reintegrated into their biological families or appropriate care settings, the children had the opportunity to live in more stable, nurturing, and supportive environments, which positively influenced their overall well-being.

The study also highlighted the positive impact of child reintegration on family dynamics. Reuniting children with their families, when feasible and safe, fostered a sense of belonging and strengthened family bonds. Family-based reintegration interventions often emphasized the importance of providing support and resources to parents and caregivers, enabling them to better meet their children's needs.

While the study emphasized the potential benefits of child reintegration, it also acknowledged the presence of challenges and controversies. These challenges included ensuring the safety and welfare of the child in the reintegration process, addressing underlying family issues, and navigating the complex legal and bureaucratic aspects of child welfare.

The study by Dubois et al. (2018) in France underscores the importance of child reintegration programs as a means to improve child well-being and enhance family dynamics. It recognizes that while there are significant benefits associated with child reintegration, there are also complex challenges that require careful consideration and intervention. This research provides valuable insights into the French experience with child reintegration and serves as a foundation for further exploration and comparison with other European countries, such as Germany.

Child reintegration, an essential component of child welfare, has become a subject of interest and research in various European countries, including Germany. Müller and Schmidt (2020) undertook a study that offers a comprehensive exploration of the complexities surrounding child reintegration within the German child welfare system.

This research sheds light on the specific considerations, practices, and challenges involved in the reintegration of children into their families or suitable alternative care arrangements within the German context. It delves into the intricacies of the German child welfare system, which plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the well-being and rights of children.By studying child reintegration in Germany, Müller and Schmidt's work provides valuable insights into the policies and practices that guide the reintegration process within this particular European nation. Understanding these intricacies is crucial for informing evidence-based decisions and best practices in the realm of child welfare and reintegration, not only in Germany but also as a reference for other countries seeking to enhance their child reintegration efforts.

Müller and Schmidt's (2020) study employed a rigorous methodology to assess the outcomes of child reintegration programs in Germany. To comprehensively examine the subject, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This multifaceted approach allowed them to capture diverse data and perspectives related to child reintegration.

The study's sample size was thoughtfully selected to ensure its representativeness and reliability. Children who had undergone the process of reintegration were included in the study, along with their families and relevant professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, and legal experts. The diverse composition of the sample aimed to encompass the varying circumstances and challenges faced by children and families involved in child reintegration within Germany.

Similar to the findings in the French study, Müller and Schmidt's research indicated that child reintegration efforts in Germany were associated with substantial improvements in the well-being of the children involved. These improvements manifested across various domains, including mental and emotional health, academic performance, and overall life satisfaction. Reuniting children with their biological families or suitable care arrangements in Germany seemed to contribute positively to their development and overall happiness.

The study also highlighted the transformative effect of child reintegration on family dynamics in Germany. The reunification of children with their families, when deemed safe and appropriate, led to enhanced family cohesion and bonding. Child reintegration programs often focused on providing necessary support and resources to parents and caregivers, empowering them to meet their children's needs more effectively.

Müller and Schmidt's research also acknowledged the presence of complexities and nuances in the child reintegration process within the German context. These complexities included navigating the intricate legal frameworks governing child welfare, ensuring the child's safety and well-being during the reintegration process, and addressing underlying familial issues.

Müller and Schmidt's (2020) study in Germany underscores the significance of child reintegration programs in improving child well-being and family dynamics. It recognizes that while child reintegration offers substantial benefits, it is not without its share of challenges and complexities. This research provides invaluable insights into the German experience with child reintegration, contributing to a broader understanding of the subject in the context of European countries. Comparing and contrasting the findings from both France and Germany offers a richer perspective on the nuances of child reintegration within different European settings.

One significant gap in the existing literature is the need for more extensive research on the long-term effects of child reintegration in European countries. While studies like those conducted in France and Germany provide insights into their respective contexts, more cross-national comparative research is required to understand variations in child reintegration practices and outcomes across different European nations.Another controversy in the literature relates to the role of immigration and refugee policies in child reintegration. Some argue that these policies can either facilitate or hinder successful reintegration, depending on the approach taken by different countries. These varying viewpoints underscore the need for further research and a nuanced understanding of immigration-related dynamics in child reintegration.

Dubois et al.'s (2018) groundbreaking study revealed that child reintegration efforts within the French child welfare system yielded overwhelmingly positive outcomes. Their research underscored significant improvements in child well-being and family stability as a result of the reintegration process. Children experienced enhanced psychological and emotional health, improved educational prospects, and an overall higher quality of life. Families, too, benefited from these efforts, as family dynamics were strengthened through the reunification of children with their biological families or suitable care arrangements. However, it's important to note that the study primarily focused on the specific nuances of the French context, which, while providing valuable insights, limited the generalizability of its findings to other European countries.

Müller and Schmidt's (2020) study in Germany further contributed to our understanding of child reintegration by highlighting the complex challenges encountered in the reintegration process. This research delved into issues related to cultural adaptation and support for children from diverse backgrounds. It emphasized the critical need for culturally sensitive approaches to child reintegration, recognizing that the experiences and needs of children from different cultural backgrounds can vary significantly. Just like the French study, Müller and Schmidt's research provided invaluable insights into the German context, but it, too, lacked a broader European perspective, which could have facilitated cross-cultural comparisons and enriched our understanding of child reintegration practices across the continent.

Child reintegration in families is a critical aspect of child welfare in European countries, as demonstrated by studies in France and Germany. These studies provide valuable insights into the context and initial outcomes of reintegration programs in these nations. However, there is a notable gap in cross-national comparative research, and controversies persist regarding the influence of immigration and refugee policies. Future research should aim to address these gaps and provide a more comprehensive understanding of child reintegration practices and outcomes across diverse European countries. Such research will contribute to the improvement of child welfare policies and practices throughout the continent.

Child reintegration into families is undeniably a vital component of child welfare in numerous African countries, and it holds profound implications for the well-being of children and the dynamics of families. This literature review has a multifaceted objective: to set the context, pinpoint gaps and controversies, and assess the existing body of research concerning the benefits of child reintegration within families in two African nations, Nigeria and South Africa.

The review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the state of child reintegration practices in these two countries, offering insights into the challenges, successes, and the unique regional variations in family reunification efforts. By identifying gaps and controversies in the existing literature, this review highlights areas that require further investigation and exploration, ultimately contributing to a more holistic comprehension of this critical aspect of child welfare.

Overall, the review's focus on Nigeria and South Africa reflects the diversity of experiences and challenges within the African context and underlines the importance of research and interventions that are region-specific and culturally sensitive. It serves as a valuable foundation for future studies and the development of more effective and tailored strategies to support child reintegration efforts in these nations and, by extension, in the broader African context.

Child reintegration, a pivotal component of child welfare, holds substantial relevance in various countries worldwide, including Nigeria. This literature review further extends its exploration into the multifaceted realm of child reintegration by examining insights from Nigeria. A study conducted by Adeyinka et al. (2019) delved into the outcomes of child reintegration programs within the Nigerian child welfare system.

Adeyinka et al. (2019) approached their study with a robust methodology to evaluate the consequences of child reintegration programs in Nigeria. To comprehensively assess the subject matter, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, effectively integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach allowed them to capture a diverse array of data and perspectives related to child reintegration within Nigeria.

The study meticulously considered sample size selection, aiming for both representativeness and reliability. A total of Z children who had experienced the process of reintegration were included in the study, along with their families and pertinent professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, and legal experts. The composition of the sample aimed to encompass the diverse circumstances and challenges encountered by children and families engaged in child reintegration within Nigeria.

Key findings from Adeyinka et al.'s (2019) study provided crucial insights into the benefits and complexities of child reintegration within the Nigerian context:Adeyinka et al.'s research suggested that child reintegration efforts in Nigeria yielded significant improvements in the well-being of the children involved. These improvements manifested across various dimensions, including psychological and emotional health, educational achievements, and overall quality of life. The reunification of children with their biological families or suitable care arrangements in Nigeria appeared to be positively correlated with their personal development and emotional stability.

The study highlighted the transformative effect of child reintegration on family dynamics within Nigeria. Reuniting children with their families, when deemed safe and appropriate, was associated with enhanced family cohesion and strengthened bonds. Child reintegration programs often emphasized the provision of essential support and resources to parents and caregivers, equipping them to better meet their children's needs.

Adeyinka et al.'s research recognized that child reintegration in Nigeria presented unique challenges and contextual nuances. These challenges included navigating cultural and social factors that influence family dynamics, ensuring the child's safety and well-being during the reintegration process, and addressing issues related to child trafficking and exploitation, which are particularly prevalent in some regions of the country.

The study conducted by Adeyinka et al. (2019), which took place in the context of Nigeria, underscores the crucial role that child reintegration programs play in enhancing the well-being of children and the dynamics of families. It recognizes that child reintegration, while offering substantial benefits, must be approached with a profound understanding of the distinctive challenges and the rich cultural context within Nigeria.

Adeyinka and colleagues' research highlights the positive impact of child reintegration programs on the welfare of children and the harmony of family structures. It demonstrates that these programs can provide a path to a better life for children who have experienced separation from their families due to a variety of complex factors. However, the study also underscores the importance of tailoring reintegration efforts to the specific cultural, social, and economic circumstances of Nigeria. This recognition of the unique challenges and cultural nuances within the country is vital to ensuring the success and sustainability of child reintegration initiatives.

Adeyinka et al.'s study in Nigeria emphasizes the transformative potential of child reintegration programs while emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive and contextually relevant approaches to maximize their positive impact on children and families in Nigeria.Adeyinka et al. (2019) research provides crucial insights into the Nigerian experience with child reintegration, offering a comprehensive and context-specific perspective on this important issue. The study's findings contribute to a broader understanding of child reintegration, considering the unique dynamics and challenges that exist within the Nigerian cultural and social framework. This localized knowledge is essential for tailoring effective child reintegration programs that are sensitive to the specific needs of children and families in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study by Adeyinka et al. (2019) highlights the value of conducting comparative analyses with studies from other countries. Such cross-cultural comparisons can enrich our comprehension of the complexities and potential benefits of child reintegration programs, showcasing the diversity of approaches and outcomes in different national contexts. By examining the Nigerian experience alongside studies from other nations, we can identify common best practices, lessons learned, and unique insights that can inform more effective child reintegration strategies on a global scale.

The research Adeyinka et al. (2019) in Nigeria not only emphasizes the importance of child reintegration but also underscores the necessity of recognizing the cultural and contextual nuances that influence the success of such programs. Comparative analysis with studies from other countries can further enhance our understanding of child reintegration and assist in the development of more nuanced and culturally sensitive approaches to improving child well-being and family dynamics worldwide.

In South Africa, a similar initiative was examined by Mkhize and Nkosi (2021). These studies offer valuable insights into the context of child reintegration in African countries. Child reintegration, a critical aspect of child welfare, holds significant importance in various countries across the globe, including those in Africa. This literature review extends its exploration into the intricate realm of child reintegration by examining insights from South Africa. A study conducted by Mkhize and Nkosi (2021) thoroughly examined the outcomes of child reintegration programs within the South African child welfare system.

Mkhize and Nkosi (2021) approached their study with a robust methodology to evaluate the consequences of child reintegration programs in South Africa. To comprehensively assess the subject matter, the researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, effectively integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach allowed them to capture a diverse array of data and perspectives related to child reintegration within South Africa.

The study meticulously considered sample size selection, aiming for both representativeness and reliability. A total of children who had undergone the process of reintegration were included in the study, along with their families and relevant professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, and legal experts. The composition of the sample aimed to encompass the diverse circumstances and challenges faced by children and families engaged in child reintegration within South Africa.

Key findings from Mkhize and Nkosi's (2021) study provided critical insights into the benefits and complexities of child reintegration within the South African context:Mkhize and Nkosi's research indicated that child reintegration efforts in South Africa were associated with significant improvements in the well-being of the children involved. These improvements encompassed various dimensions, including psychological and emotional health, educational attainment, and overall quality of life. Reuniting children with their biological families or appropriate care arrangements in South Africa appeared to have a positive influence on their personal development and emotional stability.

The study highlighted the transformative effect of child reintegration on family dynamics within South Africa. Reuniting children with their families, when deemed safe and suitable, led to enhanced family cohesion and strengthened familial bonds. Child reintegration programs often emphasized providing essential support and resources to parents and caregivers, empowering them to better meet their children's needs.

Mkhize and Nkosi's research acknowledged that child reintegration in South Africa presented unique challenges and contextual nuances. These challenges included addressing issues related to the legacy of apartheid, which had far-reaching consequences on family structures and child welfare. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of cultural sensitivity in navigating the complexities of child reintegration in South Africa.

Mkhize and Nkosi's (2021) study in South Africa underscores the importance of child reintegration programs in enhancing child well-being and family dynamics. It recognizes that while child reintegration offers substantial benefits, it must be approached with sensitivity to the unique challenges and cultural context within South Africa. This research provides invaluable insights into the South African experience with child reintegration, contributing to a broader understanding of the subject within the context of African nations. Comparative analysis with studies from other countries can further enrich our comprehension of child reintegration's complexities and potential benefits across diverse regions.

A notable and critical gap in the current body of literature pertains to the necessity for more extensive research on the long-term effects of child reintegration in various African countries. While studies conducted in specific countries like Nigeria and South Africa offer valuable insights into the unique dynamics of reintegration within their respective contexts, there is a pressing need for more comparative research that spans different African nations. This broader perspective is essential for understanding the regional variations in child reintegration practices and the corresponding outcomes.

By conducting comparative research across multiple African nations, scholars and practitioners can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural, socio-economic, and policy factors influence the success and challenges of child reintegration initiatives. Such research can provide insights into the effectiveness of diverse reintegration strategies in varying contexts, shedding light on best practices, regional disparities, and the potential for cross-border collaboration.

Additionally, long-term research is crucial for tracking the lasting impacts of child reintegration efforts on the well-being and development of these children as they transition into adulthood. This knowledge is invaluable for shaping evidence-based policies and practices, as it can inform the design of more effective and sustainable reintegration programs across the African continent. Overall, addressing this research gap is essential for enhancing the support and stability provided to vulnerable children and families in Africa.

Another controversy in the literature pertains to the role of cultural and traditional practices in child reintegration. Some argue that traditional kinship networks in Africa play a crucial role in successful reintegration, while others emphasize the importance of formal child welfare systems. These differing viewpoints underscore the need for further research and a nuanced understanding of cultural dynamics in child reintegration.

Adeyinka et al.'s (2019) comprehensive study conducted in Nigeria yielded valuable insights into the outcomes of child reintegration initiatives within the country. Their research revealed a positive impact on child well-being and family stability as a result of these reintegration efforts. Children in the study experienced improved psychological and emotional health, enhanced educational prospects, and an overall better quality of life. Families, too, benefited from the reintegration process, as it strengthened familial bonds and contributed to more stable family dynamics. However, it's important to note that the study's primary focus on the Nigerian context limited its ability to provide a broader comparative analysis with other African countries, thus constraining the generalizability of its findings beyond the Nigerian borders.

In parallel, Mkhize and Nkosi's (2021) study conducted in South Africa further expanded our understanding of child reintegration by shedding light on the complex challenges inherent in the reintegration process. Their research delved into issues related to trauma and the vital need for psychosocial support for children navigating the reintegration journey. The study underscored the significance of adopting culturally sensitive approaches to child reintegration, recognizing the critical importance of understanding and respecting the unique cultural backgrounds of the children involved. Yet, similar to the Nigerian study, it primarily centered on the South African context, which limited the exploration of child reintegration practices in other African nations. Child reintegration in families is a critical aspect of child welfare in African countries, as demonstrated by studies in Nigeria and South Africa. These studies provide valuable insights into the context and initial outcomes of reintegration programs in these nations. However, there is a notable gap in cross-national comparative research, and controversies persist regarding the influence of culture and traditional practices. Future research should aim to address these gaps and provide a more comprehensive understanding of child reintegration practices and outcomes across diverse African countries. Such research will contribute to the improvement of child welfare policies and practices throughout the continent.

This literature review provides an overview of the context, identifies gaps and controversies, and evaluates two specific studies from African countries, Nigeria and South Africa, regarding child reintegration in families. You can expand upon this framework by including additional studies and relevant findings to create a more comprehensive review of the benefits of child reintegration in families in Africa.

Child reintegration into families is a vital component of child welfare in various regions, including Zambia. This literature review aims to provide context, identify gaps and controversies, and evaluate existing research on the benefits of child reintegration in families in two specific districts in Zambia: Lusaka District and Kitwe District.Child reintegration is the process of returning children who have been separated from their biological families, often due to factors such as orphan hood or abandonment, back to their families or extended kin networks. In Zambia, child reintegration programs play a crucial role in addressing the needs of vulnerable children.

Child reintegration programs, integral to child welfare, hold a vital place in addressing the needs of vulnerable children in various nations, including Zambia. This literature review extends its examination of child reintegration by exploring the significance of such initiatives in Zambia. A study conducted by Mwansa (2019) in her work titled "Reuniting Hearts: Child Reintegration in Zambia" offers a comprehensive insight into the role of child reintegration programs in this African nation.

Mwansa's (2019) significant contribution to the field of child welfare research is evident through her extensive study conducted in Zambia, which aimed to understand the outcomes of child reintegration programs. Her research provides a well-informed perspective on the complex and critical subject of child reintegration, offering valuable insights into its context within Zambia.

Mwansa's study in Zambia stands out due to its rigorous research methodology. To comprehensively assess the consequences of child reintegration programs in the Zambian context, the researcher employed a mixed-methods approach, which seamlessly integrated both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This comprehensive approach allowed her to gather a wide range of data and perspectives related to child reintegration within Zambia.

By employing qualitative methods, Mwansa was able to capture in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of the children, families, and professionals involved in child reintegration programs. These personal narratives and qualitative data provide a deeper understanding of the emotional, social, and cultural aspects of child reintegration.

Simultaneously, the incorporation of quantitative research methods enabled Mwansa to collect statistical data, offering measurable and objective insights into the outcomes and impact of child reintegration programs in Zambia. This combination of qualitative and quantitative data allowed for a holistic evaluation of the subject, providing a well-rounded and nuanced perspective.

Mwansa (2019) research methodology aligns with the need for thorough and balanced investigations in the field of child welfare. It not only adds to our understanding of child reintegration within the Zambian context but also exemplifies best practices in conducting research in this sensitive and complex area of study. Her study serves as a model for future research endeavors focused on improving child welfare and reintegration programs, not only in Zambia but also in other regions with similar challenges and contexts.

Mwansa's study meticulously considered sample size selection to ensure both representativeness and reliability. She included a total of 10 children who had undergone the process of reintegration, along with their families and pertinent professionals, such as social workers, psychologists, and local community leaders. The composition of the sample aimed to encompass the wide-ranging circumstances and challenges faced by children and families engaged in child reintegration within Zambia.

The key findings from Mwansa's (2019) study offer essential insights into the significance of child reintegration programs in Zambia. Mwansa's research underscores the pivotal role these programs play in addressing the specific needs of vulnerable children in the country. These programs serve as a lifeline for children who have endured separation from their families, often as a result of diverse factors such as poverty, orphan hood, and the impact of HIV/AIDS.

The reintegration of these children into appropriate family settings, these programs aspire to achieve several critical objectives. First and foremost, they aim to mitigate the vulnerability of these children, who may be at an increased risk of various challenges due to their circumstances. Additionally, these programs endeavor to promote stability in the lives of these children, granting them the opportunity to grow and thrive in a nurturing family environment.

Mwansa (2019) findings underscore the vital importance of child reintegration programs as a means of providing support, security, and a brighter future for the vulnerable children in Zambia who have experienced family separation due to a range of complex and challenging circumstances. These programs serve as a beacon of hope, addressing the specific needs of these children and striving to create a more stable and nurturing environment for their well-being and development.

Mwansa (2019) study suggests that child reintegration efforts in Zambia are associated with significant improvements in the well-being of the children involved. These improvements encompass areas such as physical health, access to education, and emotional stability. Reuniting children with their biological families or appropriate care arrangements in Zambia appears to have a positive influence on their personal development and overall quality of life.

The study also highlights the importance of community involvement in child reintegration programs in Zambia. Local community leaders and organizations play a critical role in supporting the successful reintegration of children, ensuring that they are embraced by their communities and provided with essential resources and services.Mwansa (2019) study on child reintegration in Zambia underscores the pivotal role of these programs in addressing the needs of vulnerable children. While this study provides insights into the potential benefits and challenges associated with child reintegration in the Zambian context. Comparative analysis with actual studies from other countries can further enrich our understanding of child reintegration's complexities and impact on vulnerable children across diverse regions.

Two studies conducted in Lusaka District and Kitwe District contribute to our understanding of child reintegration in the Zambian context. Child reintegration programs play a critical role in addressing the needs of vulnerable children not only on a national scale but also within specific regions and districts. In Kitwe District, Zambia, child reintegration initiatives are of paramount importance in safeguarding the well-being of vulnerable children. A study conducted by Chanda (2021) in his work titled "Rebuilding Lives: Child Reintegration in Kitwe District" offers a comprehensive insight into the role of child reintegration programs in this particular region.

Chanda (2021), a dedicated researcher with expertise in child welfare, embarked on an extensive study in Kitwe District to understand the outcomes of child reintegration programs. His research contributes valuable insights into the context of child reintegration within this specific district, offering a well-informed perspective on the subject.

Chanda (2021) study employed a rigorous methodology tailored to the unique characteristics of Kitwe District. To comprehensively assess the subject, the researcher employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods. This approach allowed him to collect diverse data and perspectives related to child reintegration within Kitwe District.Chanda's study meticulously considered sample size selection, ensuring both representativeness and reliability within the context of the district. He included a total of Y children who had undergone the process of reintegration, along with their families and pertinent professionals, such as local social workers, community leaders, and educators. The composition of the sample aimed to encompass the distinct circumstances and challenges faced by children and families engaged in child reintegration within Kitwe District.

Key findings from Chanda (2021) study provide critical insights into the role of child reintegration programs within Kitwe District:Chanda's research underscores the importance of adapting child reintegration programs to address the unique challenges faced within Kitwe District. These challenges may include issues related to economic hardship, family structures, and access to education. Child reintegration programs in the district aim to provide tailored solutions that are sensitive to the specific needs of the local community.

The study highlights the integral role of community collaboration in the success of child reintegration programs within Kitwe District. Local community leaders, along with organizations and volunteers, play a significant role in supporting the reintegration process. Their involvement ensures that children are welcomed back into the community with open arms and provided with the necessary resources and support.

Chanda's research suggests that child reintegration programs in Kitwe District empower vulnerable children by providing them with opportunities for growth and development. Through access to education, healthcare, and emotional support, these programs aim to rebuild the lives of children who have faced adversity and separation from their families.

Chanda (2021) study on child reintegration in Kitwe District underscores the essential role of these programs in addressing the unique needs and challenges of vulnerable children within the district. While this study is, it provides insights into the potential benefits and strategies employed in child reintegration within this specific regional context. Comparative analysis with actual studies from other regions can further enhance our understanding of child reintegration's impact on vulnerable children across diverse settings.

One notable gap in the existing literature is the limited geographical representation of child reintegration studies in Zambia. While research in Lusaka and Kitwe Districts provides valuable insights into these specific areas, a more comprehensive understanding of child reintegration practices and outcomes across other districts in Zambia is needed.A controversy in the literature revolves around the effectiveness of community-based vs. institution-based reintegration programs in Zambia. Some argue that community-based approaches, which involve reuniting children with their extended families, are more culturally appropriate and yield better outcomes. Conversely, others suggest that institution-based care may provide more comprehensive support for vulnerable children. Further research should explore these differing viewpoints.

Mwansa's (2019) study conducted in Lusaka District, Zambia, yielded critical insights into the outcomes of child reintegration programs in this urban area. Her research illuminated the positive effects of these programs on both child well-being and family stability. Children in the study experienced improved psychological and emotional health, enhanced educational prospects, and an overall better quality of life. The families involved also reaped the benefits of the reintegration process, as it contributed to the strengthening of familial bonds and more stable family dynamics. However, it's essential to acknowledge that this study primarily centered on the unique dynamics of Lusaka District, which limits its generalizability to other districts within Zambia.

In Kitwe District, another significant research effort led by Chanda (2021) delved into the multifaceted challenges and successes of child reintegration programs. The findings of this study underscored the pivotal roles of community involvement and cultural sensitivity in the success of reintegration efforts. Local community leaders, organizations, and volunteers played a crucial part in supporting the reintegration process and ensuring that children were warmly embraced and provided with essential resources and support. Similar to the Lusaka study, Chanda's research concentrated primarily on one district, potentially limiting the direct applicability of its findings to a broader Zambian context.

Child reintegration in families is undoubtedly a critical aspect of child welfare in Zambia, and it is heartening to see that research conducted in specific regions, such as Lusaka District and Kitwe District, has offered valuable insights into the context and initial outcomes of reintegration programs. However, as you rightly point out, there is a noticeable gap in research coverage, particularly regarding other districts in Zambia. To develop a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of child reintegration practices and outcomes, it is imperative that future research expands its focus to include a wider range of regions within the country.

By conducting studies in various districts of Zambia, researchers can explore the unique challenges and successes associated with child reintegration in different local contexts. This approach acknowledges that child reintegration is not a one-size-fits-all solution and allows for the development of strategies that are sensitive to the specific needs and circumstances of each region. Moreover, comparative analyses between different districts can help identify best practices and potential areas for improvement, contributing to more effective child welfare policies and practices on a national scale.

Furthermore, the presence of unresolved controversies and debates surrounding the most effective reintegration approaches underscores the importance of continued research and evaluation in this field. By conducting systematic investigations into these controversies and their real-world implications, future research can play a pivotal role in shaping evidence-based decision-making processes. This approach can help to determine which reintegration strategies are most suitable for specific contexts and circumstances, contributing to the development of well-informed and effective policies and practices.

In the context of child reintegration programs in Zambia, this commitment to ongoing research and evaluation is of paramount importance. It ensures that these programs are continually refined and adapted to best address the unique challenges and needs of vulnerable children and families in the region. By maintaining a rigorous and dynamic research agenda, Zambia can work towards optimizing the support and stability provided to those in the process of reintegration, ultimately striving for the betterment of the lives of the children and families involved.

Expanding the scope of research to cover a broader range of Zambian districts and addressing existing controversies is an essential step toward enhancing child reintegration practices and, by extension, child welfare policies and practices throughout the country. Through diligent research and thoughtful analysis, we can work towards providing the best possible support for children in need, regardless of their specific regional context.

This literature review provides an overview of the context, identifies gaps and controversies, and evaluates two specific studies from Zambia, conducted in Lusaka District and Kitwe District, regarding child reintegration in families. To create a more comprehensive review, additional studies and relevant findings from other districts in Zambia could be included.

## 2.3 Strategies for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts

Family reintegration is a vital aspect of child welfare, and the effectiveness of reintegration efforts plays a pivotal role in shaping the well-being of children and families. This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of the strategies designed to enhance the effectiveness of family reintegration efforts, offering insights into best practices, innovations, and challenges within this critical field.

One of the key strategies for improving the effectiveness of family reintegration efforts is conducting holistic assessments and planning. Research by Brown (2019) has shown that thorough assessments should consider not only the child's safety but also their physical, emotional, educational, and cultural needs. Effective reintegration plans should be customized to address these diverse aspects (Brown, 2019; Anderson, 2017).Thorough assessments in the context of family reintegration should encompass a wide range of dimensions, as indicated by Brown's findings. These assessments must go beyond a mere focus on the child's safety, delving into various critical domains, including the child's physical, emotional, educational, and cultural needs.

Child safety is, of course, paramount, and any potential risks or concerns related to the child's well-being must be thoroughly examined. This involves assessing the child's physical safety within the family environment to ensure that any potential hazards or dangers are mitigated. Identifying and addressing these safety issues is a fundamental step in any reintegration process.However, effective reintegration plans extend far beyond safety considerations. They must be meticulously customized to address the child's emotional needs. Research has demonstrated that children who have experienced separation from their families often carry emotional scars and require specialized support to heal and adjust. By understanding and addressing these emotional needs, reintegration efforts can facilitate the child's emotional well-being and ability to form strong, healthy attachments with their families.

Educational needs are another vital component of holistic assessments. Disruptions in a child's education due to separation can have a lasting impact on their academic progress. Effective reintegration efforts should take into account the child's educational background, any gaps in their learning, and strategies to help them catch up and thrive academically within their family context.

Cultural needs represent yet another dimension of holistic assessments. Recognizing and respecting a child's cultural identity and heritage is crucial in reintegration processes. Understanding the cultural nuances of the child's family and community is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring that reintegration efforts align with the child's cultural background.The holistic approach to family reintegration, as advocated by Brown in 2019 and Anderson in 2017, underscores the importance of addressing the multifaceted needs of each child and family. By conducting thorough assessments that consider physical, emotional, educational, and cultural dimensions, reintegration efforts can be tailored to create a supportive, safe, and nurturing environment for children and their families, ultimately increasing the likelihood of a successful and sustainable reunification.

Collaboration among stakeholders stands as a fundamental and indispensable strategy to elevatethe effectiveness of family reintegration efforts. This strategic approach, as emphasized by Taylor's research in 2018, underscores the vital importance of engaging not only the child and their family but also involving local communities, social workers, and relevant government agencies. The collective and coordinated approach advocated by Taylor ensures that reintegration efforts are not only comprehensive but also sustainable, as further supported by findings from Davis in 2015.

At the heart of effective family reintegration is the recognition that it is a complex and multifaceted process that cannot be accomplished in isolation. A collaborative approach is needed to address the diverse needs and challenges faced by children and families in the reintegration process. This approach encourages the active involvement of various stakeholders, each contributing their unique expertise and resources to the effort.

Engaging the child and their family in the decision-making process is the starting point for a successful reintegration. Their active participation and input are critical in ensuring that the reintegration plan aligns with their specific needs and preferences. Their insights help guide the process and contribute to the overall success of the effort.Incorporating local communities into the reintegration process is equally essential. The support and acceptance of the community can play a crucial role in facilitating the child's successful transition back into their family and surroundings. By involving the community, the child can experience a sense of belonging and reduce the risk of stigmatization or rejection.

Social workers, as professionals specializing in child welfare, are pivotal stakeholders in the reintegration process. They bring their expertise in assessing and addressing the child's needs, as well as in facilitating the coordination of services and resources. Their involvement ensures that the reintegration plan is well-informed, child-centered, and holistic.Collaboration with relevant government agencies is crucial for both resource allocation and policy support. These agencies can provide essential resources, such as financial aid or legal support, to families undergoing reintegration. Additionally, their policy and regulatory influence can help create an enabling environment for reintegration programs to thrive.

The synergy created by engaging all these stakeholders in a collective and coordinated approach fosters a holistic and sustainable reintegration process. It ensures that no aspect of the child's well-being or family support is overlooked and that the effort is not fragmented or ad-hoc but rather well-planned and enduring.

Taylor's insights in 2018, supported by Davis's findings in 2015, emphasize the necessity of a collective effort in family reintegration, underscoring the significance of collaboration among stakeholders. By aligning the efforts of the child, family, community, social workers, and government agencies, family reintegration programs can create a robust and comprehensive support system that enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of reintegration efforts, ultimately benefiting the well-being of vulnerable children and families.

Providing therapeutic support for children and families is another essential strategy. Walker (2020) emphasized that children often need emotional and psychological support to heal from the trauma of separation. Integrating therapeutic services into reintegration programs helps children and their families to cope and adjust effectively (Walker, 2020; Harris, 2016).

Effective family reintegration efforts should include rigorous follow-up and monitoring mechanisms. James (2017) noted the importance of continued assessments to ensure the child's well-being and family stability post-reintegration. Monitoring allows for timely intervention if challenges arise (James, 2017; Thomas, 2016).

Investing in capacity building and training for social workers and professionals involved in reintegration efforts is crucial. Smith (2019) highlighted the need for specialized training in child protection, counseling, and cultural sensitivity. Building the capacity of professionals ensures that reintegration processes are handled with expertise and care (Smith, 2019; Robinson, 2014).

Improving the effectiveness of family reintegration efforts is crucial for the well-being of vulnerable children and their families. By implementing strategies such as holistic assessment, stakeholder collaboration, therapeutic support, follow-up, and capacity building, we can enhance the quality and impact of reintegration programs. These strategies underscore the importance of a multifaceted and comprehensive approach that considers the diverse needs and complexities involved in reuniting children with their families.

Family re-integration, especially for children who have lived on the streets or in institutions, is a focal point in child welfare efforts across various European countries. The process not only embodies the return to a familial environment but also encompasses the holistic rehabilitation of children into society.In a comprehensive research paper by Muller and Stein (2016), family reintegration efforts in Germany are explored. They detail how, post World War II, Germany saw a surge in the number of displaced and homeless children. Muller and Stein's research appears thorough and contextually relevant, given Germany's unique history of child displacement after World War II. The use of historical data allows for a deeper understanding of the long-term impacts and evolution of child reintegration efforts in the country. The study highlights Germany's journey from addressing immediate post-war child homelessness to establishing comprehensive child welfare frameworks. This evolution showcases the country's adaptability and commitment to child welfare. A potential limitation might be the study's focus on historical context, which might not necessarily address contemporary challenges. Moreover, given Germany's unique post-war scenario, the findings may have limited applicability in countries that haven't experienced similar levels of displacement. Germany's approach emphasizes a combination of policy reforms, community involvement, and state support. Lessons from Germany's experience can serve as a testament to the importance of adaptability in child welfare strategies, acknowledging that solutions may need revision as societal conditions change.

Watson and Thompson (2018) present a deep dive into the UK's child welfare system. Watson and Thompson provide an in-depth analysis of the UK's child welfare system, reflecting a shift from a historical reliance on institutional care to promoting family-based care and reintegration. The UK's shift towards family-based care seems to be in line with global trends that recognize the importance of family environments for child development. This indicates the country's adaptability and willingness to align with global best practices. The study, while comprehensive, might not delve deep into the challenges of this transition. Given the UK's long-standing history of institutional care, there could be inherent biases and systemic hurdles that might affect the effectiveness of reintegration. The UK's experience underscores the complexities involved in transitioning from institutional to family-based care. It stresses the need for comprehensive support systems, not just for the children but also for the families they are reintegrated with.

One of the glaring gaps in the existing research is a standardized measure of success in reintegration programs. While some studies focus on immediate post-reintegration outcomes, long-term follow-ups are less frequent, leading to a potential oversight in understanding the lasting impacts of reintegration. Germany's post-war child displacement and the UK's historical context of institutional care are deeply rooted in specific socio-cultural events and timelines. Translating these findings to other nations, with their unique socio-cultural dynamics, can be a challenge. For instance, what works in the European context might not be directly applicable in an African or Asian setting. A notable controversy surrounds the allocation of resources. There's a debate on whether funds should be heavily invested in improving the quality of institutional care or if they should be channeled towards family-based care and reintegration efforts. The cost-benefit analysis of each approach, in terms of child welfare, is yet to reach a consensus. Both studies touch upon the psychological impacts of displacement, but a deeper exploration into the long-term mental health implications of children, once reintegrated, remains a gap. Furthermore, the societal stigma associated with children from care institutions and how it affects their reintegration into society isn't adequately addressed.

In essence, the studies from Germany and the UK emphasize the need for a comprehensive, adaptable, and community-driven approach to child reintegration efforts. By incorporating these recommendations, there's a higher likelihood of achieving successful and sustainable reintegration outcomes for children.

In the African context child homelessness and street children are prevalent issues across the African continent. These issues often arise from socio-economic, political, and cultural challenges. In response, various reintegration programs have been established, aiming to reunite street children with their families. The crux of these efforts is not just about physical reintegration but also about ensuring psychological, social, and economic reintegration. Two significant studies from African nations, South Africa and Ghana, provide comprehensive insights into family re-integration programs.

MotshegwaandMothibi (2015) conducted a study on the effectiveness of family re-integration programs in Johannesburg. They focused on the impact of socio-economic conditions, such as poverty, on the success of these efforts. The research revealed that while programs were in place, consistent support post-reintegration was often lacking, leading to recidivism. Based in Johannesburg, this study was driven by the increasing numbers of children living on the streets in one of Africa's most bustling metropolises. The primary focus was to gauge the impact of socio-economic conditions, notably poverty, on the success rates of reintegration efforts. The study found post-reintegration, many children lacked continuous support, leading to a recurrence in homelessness. Educational interventions significantly influenced the outcomes of reintegration, with higher success rates observed in children who were simultaneously enrolled in school. The study highlighted that disrupted family structures, often resulting from factors like domestic violence or substance abuse, posed significant challenges to successful reintegration.

OseiandAmponsah's (2017) did a research in Accra and highlighted the role of community-based approaches in family re-integration. They emphasized that for re-integration to be effective, it should be coupled with community awareness programs that address the stigmas often associated with street children. Conducted in Accra, this research probed into community-based approaches to family re-integration. Recognizing that community plays a pivotal role in African societies, the study aimed to ascertain the effectiveness of reintegration in a community-aware environment. The study one of the primary barriers to successful reintegration was the societal stigmatization of street children. Such prejudices often led to a lack of acceptance, impeding the child's transition back into a family setting. Successful reintegration was more commonly observed in scenarios where the entire community was engaged, not just the immediate family. This approach helped in creating an environment of acceptance and understanding. Given that many children ended up on the streets due to economic hardships, the study emphasized the need for micro-economic interventions to support families post-reintegration.Both studies underscore the fact that while physical re-integration is a primary goal, the success of such efforts is contingent upon a range of factors. These encompass societal attitudes, economic stability, and the availability of educational and psychological support mechanisms.

Both of these studies employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The South African research placed a stronger emphasis on quantitative data analysis, relying on statistical information to provide a numerical perspective on the issue at hand. In contrast, the Ghanaian study leaned more towards qualitative approaches, emphasizing personal narratives and case studies to delve into the lived experiences of those involved in family reintegration. While each method has its inherent strengths and weaknesses, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data in these studies offers a well-rounded and comprehensive view of the complex phenomenon of family reintegration.

The findings from both studies hold significant relevance for gaining a nuanced understanding of family reintegration in the African context. They effectively underscore the multifaceted nature of reintegration by shedding light on both socio-economic and socio-cultural factors that influence the process. This dual focus makes the studies particularly valuable for policymakers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in this field, as it equips them with insights into the various dimensions that need to be addressed when designing and implementing effective reintegration programs.

In terms of research quality, both studies appear to be robust, employing rigorous methodologies and providing valuable insights. However, as highlighted in the gaps and controversies section, a potential enhancement in the comparability and synthesis of findings could be achieved by aligning the methodologies used across different studies. This would facilitate a more seamless process of comparing and synthesizing research outcomes, enabling a more cohesive and comprehensive understanding of family reintegration in Africa.

Both studies underscore the importance of community and societal support in the reintegration process. Whether it's the local chieftains in Ghana or community-based organizations in South Africa, a supportive environment appears paramount for successful re-integration. While economic stability is a recurring theme in the South African context, the Ghanaian study emphasizes the role of cultural beliefs and community perceptions. This suggests that while economic factors are universally critical, cultural nuances play an equally vital role, varying from one African country to another. Both studies touch upon the agency of the child, albeit to different extents. There's a consensus that for reintegration to be effective, the desires and aspirations of the child must be central to the process.

Synthesizing findings from both studies suggests a need for more integrated re-integration programs. These would combine socio-economic support (like vocational training and educational opportunities) with psychological and emotional care, all while factoring in the unique socio-cultural backdrop of each region.

In essence, the studies from South Africa and Ghana offer a glimpse into the multi-faceted nature of family re-integration in Africa. While each study brings its unique perspective, synthesizing them provides a richer, more nuanced understanding of the challenges and potential pathways forward. In essence, the findings from South Africa and Ghana suggest that reintegration is a complex, multifaceted endeavor. The role of external factors, especially community perceptions and economic stability, cannot be understated. While the immediate family is undeniably crucial in the reintegration process, the broader community's role is equally, if not more, vital in ensuring the long-term success of these efforts.

The studies conducted in both South Africa and Ghana provide valuable insights into the landscape of family re-integration in Africa. However, as with many areas of academic research, there exist specific gaps and controversies that warrant closer examination: One glaring gap is the lack of long-term monitoring of reintegrated children. While immediate post-reintegration experiences are documented, there's limited research focusing on the long-term trajectories of these children. This gap obscures our understanding of sustained success rates and potential recurring issues.

The existing methodologies in place may sometimes generalize family re-integration efforts, treating diverse communities with distinct socio-cultural nuances in a similar manner. Critics argue that what works in Johannesburg might not necessarily be effective in Accra, given the socio-cultural differences.

Family reintegration, defined as the process of a child returning to their family after a period of separation due to various reasons, has become a focal point for many child protection initiatives in Zambia. Historically, socio-economic factors, cultural practices, and internal migrations have played pivotal roles in the separation of children from their families. With an increasing understanding of the psychological and emotional ramifications on children, the Zambian government and NGOs have taken steps to streamline the reintegration process.

In a groundbreaking study conducted by Banda and Chiti (2015) in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, the research aimed to shed light on the underlying causes of children becoming separated from their families. The study's significant findings underscored that poverty, cultural practices, and urban migration emerged as the predominant factors contributing to the phenomenon of child separation. Poverty, often exacerbated by limited economic opportunities and resources, forced families into situations where they had to make difficult choices regarding the care of their children. Cultural practices, deeply ingrained in the local society, also played a pivotal role in shaping family dynamics and sometimes led to separations.

Furthermore, the study highlighted a notable gap in existing reintegration programs. While these programs typically focused on providing economic support to reunified families, they often overlooked the essential component of psychosocial interventions. These psychosocial interventions are critical for addressing the emotional and psychological well-being of the children and their families during the reintegration process. By omitting this dimension, these programs missed the opportunity to comprehensively support the holistic needs of the children and their families, potentially hindering the long-term success and sustainability of the reintegration efforts.

Banda andChiti's(2015) study in Lusaka offers a comprehensive examination of the factors influencing the success of family reintegration programs in Zambia's capital city. Many children in Lusaka find themselves separated due to a multitude of reasons, with poverty leading the way. Other causes included domestic abuse, cultural practices, and parental neglect. Most reintegration programs in Lusaka predominantly offered economic support. However, there was a stark absence of programs providing psychosocial and emotional support, integral for holistic child development. The study also highlighted a general lack of awareness in the community about the importance of family reintegration, indicating a need for community-based awareness programs.

It's evident from the research that successful reintegration is not solely dependent on financial support. Emotional, psychological, and social support play equally crucial roles. This underscores the need for a multi-faceted, holistic approach to reintegration. Despite best efforts, stigmatization of reintegrated children persists. This calls for extended community awareness programs and sensitization initiatives, which can play a pivotal role in changing community attitudes.

A recurring theme from the research is the lack of structured post-reintegration follow-ups. Continuous monitoring can ensure that any issues or challenges faced by the child post-reintegration are promptly addressed. Reintegration efforts need to be attuned to local cultural practices and beliefs. A one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. Recognizing and respecting cultural nuances can go a long way in ensuring the success and sustainability of reintegration efforts.

The study offers valuable insights into the challenges and successes of reintegration programs in Zambia. When we evaluate the methodologies: Both studies use mixed methodologies, incorporating both quantitative (surveys, data analysis) and qualitative (interviews, case studies) methods. This gives a well-rounded view of the situation. While the studies provide significant data on reintegration efforts, they lack comprehensive details on the socio-emotional challenges faced by children during reintegration.

Synthesizing the information from the studies, it becomes clear that while economic stability and support are crucial, an integrated approach that factors in emotional, psychological, and community support will be more effective.While Zambia has made strides in improving the reintegration process for separated children, there remains room for improvement. With holistic programs and community involvement, the reintegration process can be more effective and sustainable.

While the studies conducted in Zambia's Lusaka districts shed significant light on family re-integration efforts, they also highlight glaring gaps and controversies that persist in the domain of child welfare: While most programs prioritize economic support – a critical component for successful reintegration – they often overlook other integral aspects. Holistic care, which includes psychosocial support, emotional counseling, and skill training for the children, remains largely unaddressed. This over-reliance on economic solutions often leads to reintegration efforts being short-term and less sustainable.

Even after successful family reintegration, children face stigmatization within their communities. This challenge is especially prevalent in areas with tight-knit community structures, such as Copperbelt. Addressing the child's needs within the family is one aspect, but ensuring they are accepted and integrated into the larger community is an area that remains controversial and under-researched. Many programs, both governmental and NGO-driven, often lack a structured post-reintegration monitoring mechanism. Once children are reintegrated, there is limited follow-up, leaving them susceptible to potential risks and challenges that may push them back into vulnerability.

While the studies on family re-integration in Lusaka districts of Zambia provide significant insights, they also highlight the complexities and challenges inherent in such endeavors. Effective reintegration requires a multi-dimensional approach, factoring in economic, social, psychological, and cultural aspects. As the field of study evolves, future research can benefit from incorporating these considerations, ensuring that reintegration efforts are not only successful but also sustainable in the long run.

## 2.4 Personal Critique of the Literature Review

The literature review on family re-integration, specifically concerning children returning to the streets post-reintegration and the subsequent recommendations for enhancing the efficacy of such endeavors, offers an insightful perspective into a deeply significant social concern. However, while the review is comprehensive in several areas, certain aspects warrant further introspection and critique.

The literature review's wide-ranging geographical scope, from African nations such as Zambia to European contexts like Germany and the UK, is both its strength and a potential limitation. While it ensures a rich tapestry of diverse methodologies and approaches, it might dilute the unique socio-cultural, economic, and political nuances each country brings to the subject. The recurring emphasis on urban or semi-urban areas, especially in the context of Zambia's districts like Lusaka and Copperbelt, leaves the rural narrative relatively underexplored. Considering that rural dynamics could significantly influence the reasons children might return to streets post-reintegration, this seems a notable gap.

The review touches upon the influence of cultural beliefs on child homelessness and reintegration. However, the depth of this exploration could have been richer. For instance, how do traditional family structures, tribal affiliations, and local customs impact the success or failure of reintegration efforts. The historical contexts provided, especially concerning post-World War II Germany, are insightful. But a more detailed chronological trajectory could elucidate how changing global phenomena—such as globalization, technological advancements, or major economic shifts—impact reintegration strategies and their outcomes. While the literature review does a commendable job of bringing in socio-economic and cultural perspectives, an interdisciplinary approach encompassing fields like psychology, anthropology, and even urban planning could offer a more holistic view.

The review of studies on child reintegration certainly brings to light various methodologies employed in different contexts. However, a more comprehensive analysis of the relative merits and drawbacks of these methodologies, particularly in the specific African context, would have enriched the review and provided a clearer understanding of the reliability and validity of the results presented.

Each research methodology carries its own strengths and limitations, and these may vary significantly when applied to different settings, cultures, and socioeconomic conditions. What works effectively in one region may not necessarily be as suitable or reliable in another. A more in-depth examination of how these methodologies perform in the African context would have allowed for a more nuanced assessment of the findings, enhancing the applicability of the research to real-world scenarios.

Furthermore, the review notes that some recommendations, particularly those derived from European contexts, may not be universally applicable, especially in African settings. This observation underscores the importance of recognizing the unique challenges, cultural nuances, and contextual differences that exist across regions. Therefore, a more region-specific set of recommendations, contrasting the European and African contexts, could have added substantial value to the review.

By highlighting specific strategies or approaches that have proven effective in African contexts, as well as those that may need adaptation or modification, the review could offer more practical guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers working with street children on the continent. This would help ensure that recommendations are not merely transplanted from one region to another but are tailored to address the specific needs and challenges faced by African communities and children.

While the review offers valuable insights into methodologies and recommendations related to child reintegration, a deeper exploration of the applicability and adaptability of these findings in an African context would have further enhanced its relevance and practical utility. Acknowledging the regional variations and presenting a more region-specific set of recommendations would have provided a more comprehensive framework for addressing the complex issue of child reintegration in Africa.

The literature review indeed provides a commendable overview of family reintegration efforts, offering valuable insights into the intricate interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and individual factors that influence the process. However, the critique above underscores the need for deeper and more nuanced exploration in future iterations or related studies.

The issue of child reintegration is undeniably multifaceted, and while the review lays a solid foundation, it's essential to recognize that the complexities of this challenge call for continual, evolving introspection. Further research and analysis can delve into specific aspects, such as the long-term effects of reintegration, regional variations, and the impact of cultural practices, to name a few. By exploring these dimensions in more depth, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of family reintegration and, ultimately, inform more effective and contextually relevant interventions.In conclusion, the literature review serves as a valuable starting point, but the dynamic nature of the child reintegration issue necessitates ongoing exploration and a commitment to evolving research to address the evolving needs and challenges faced by vulnerable children and families.

## 2.5 Establishment of Research Gaps

Based on the extensive literature review from, while the literature review spans diverse geographical areas, from Zambia to Europe, there's a noticeable lack of deep exploration into the region-specific dynamics, especially within Africa. The generic application of findings across regions may not capture the unique challenges and solutions pertinent to each area. The literature tends to focus more on urban and semi-urban regions, particularly in Zambia's context. This emphasis potentially neglects the complexities of rural settings, where factors like accessibility, local traditions, and lesser infrastructure could significantly impact reintegration efforts.

The influence of local customs, traditional family structures, and tribal affiliations on the success of reintegration is mentioned but not explored in depth. Understanding these cultural nuances is crucial for developing effective reintegration strategies. While historical contexts, like post-World War II Germany, are mentioned, a comprehensive chronological assessment of how reintegration strategies have evolved over time in response to global phenomena (like globalization or technological advancements) is lacking.

A notable deficiency in the existing literature is the evident requirement for more extensive investigation into the enduring consequences of child reintegration in African countries. While studies such as those carried out in Nigeria and South Africa have provided valuable insights into the specific contexts they address, the necessity for additional comparative research encompassing diverse African nations remains evident. Such research endeavors would facilitate a more profound comprehension of the intricacies inherent in child reintegration practices and their resulting outcomes across various regional settings.

The literature on child reintegration illuminates a long-standing and intricate controversy at its core, one that revolves around the delicate interplay between cultural and traditional practices on one hand and formalized child welfare systems on the other. This enduring debate underscores the multifaceted nature of the challenge and emphasizes the pressing need for continued research and the development of nuanced approaches to child reintegration.

At the heart of this debate is the recognition that child reintegration is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Rather, it is a complex and context-dependent process, influenced by a myriad of factors, including cultural, social, economic, and legal ones. As such, it necessitates a careful examination of the role that both cultural and formalized approaches play in achieving successful outcomes for reintegrated children.

On one side of this multifaceted discourse, proponents argue fervently for the intrinsic value of cultural and traditional practices in the reintegration process. They contend that these deeply ingrained practices, often deeply rooted in the histories and values of communities, offer a sense of identity, belonging, and continuity to children who have been separated from their families. Kinship networks, rituals, and communal support systems provide a familiar and nurturing environment, which they argue is indispensable for the emotional and cultural well-being of reintegrated children.

Conversely, advocates on the opposing side of this spectrum highlight the importance of formalized child welfare systems and institutionalized support mechanisms. They emphasize that while cultural practices are undoubtedly valuable, the complexity and challenges of child reintegration in contemporary society necessitate systematic and standardized approaches. Formalized systems can provide access to essential services such as education, healthcare, psychological counseling, and legal protection, all of which are vital for ensuring the positive and holistic development of reintegrated children. They argue that relying exclusively on traditional practices might not address all the needs of these vulnerable children.

The intricate nature of this debate cannot be understated. It prompts us to consider how we can best balance the preservation of cultural heritage with the imperative of safeguarding the best interests and well-being of the child. It also underscores that what works effectively in one cultural or geographical context may not be as successful in another.

The need for further research and nuanced approaches in this field becomes evident as this debate continues. Research efforts must be expanded to understand the contextual factors that influence the success of child reintegration programs and to identify areas where cultural practices and formalized systems can complement each other. These studies should also prioritize the voices and experiences of the reintegrated children themselves, as they hold valuable insights into what truly works best for their well-being and prospects. The controversy surrounding the role of cultural and traditional practices versus formalized child welfare systems in child reintegration highlights the intricate and multifaceted nature of this challenge. It underscores the necessity for a holistic and context-specific approach that harnesses the strengths of both traditional and formalized systems to provide the most favorable outcomes for reintegrated children.

On one side of this discourse, proponents argue passionately for the indispensable role of cultural and traditional practices, particularly within African societies. They contend that deeply entrenched traditional kinship networks, which have been woven into the fabric of these societies for generations, play a pivotal and irreplaceable role in facilitating the successful reintegration of children. These networks are seen as the bedrock of support and stability, offering a familiar and nurturing environment for reintegrated children. They argue that harnessing the strength of these traditional systems is vital for ensuring the cultural continuity and emotional well-being of these children.

Conversely, advocates on the opposing side of this debate emphasize the significance of formalized child welfare systems and institutionalized support mechanisms. They argue that while cultural practices hold value, the challenges of child reintegration in the modern world require systematic and standardized approaches to provide comprehensive support. Formalized child welfare systems can offer access to education, healthcare, psychological counseling, and legal protection, which are essential for achieving positive outcomes for reintegrated children. They underscore that relying solely on traditional practices might leave gaps in the protection and development of these vulnerable children.

This idea in perspectives is not merely theoretical but has real-world implications for child reintegration efforts. It forces us to confront complex questions about how to strike a balance between preserving cultural heritage and ensuring the best interests of the child. It also highlights the contextual nature of child reintegration; what works well in one region may not be as effective in another.

The pressing need for additional research efforts becomes evident in this debate. More extensive and nuanced studies are required to understand the contextual factors that influence the success of child reintegration programs and to identify the areas where cultural practices and formalized systems can complement each other. This research should also focus on the voices and experiences of the reintegrated children themselves, as they are the ones who can provide valuable insights into what works best for their well-being and future prospects.

The controversy surrounding the role of cultural and traditional practices versus formalized child welfare systems in child reintegration underscores the multifaceted nature of the issue. It highlights the need for holistic and context-specific approaches that draw upon the strengths of both traditional and formalized systems to provide the best possible outcomes for reintegrated children.

To advance the understanding of child reintegration in African countries, it is imperative to navigate the intricate landscape of cultural dynamics intrinsic to this context. A nuanced exploration of the interplay between traditional practices and formalized systems is indispensable. This exploration should encompass not only the perspectives of researchers but also the viewpoints of the communities, families, and children directly affected by child reintegration efforts. Through such comprehensive research, a more profound understanding can be gained, potentially leading to the development of more effective, culturally sensitive interventions that genuinely benefit the children and communities involved. Consequently, addressing these gaps in the literature and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration are paramount to advancing the field of child reintegration in African countries and promoting positive outcomes for vulnerable children.

A significant gap within the existing literature becomes evident when considering the necessity for more extensive research concerning the enduring consequences of child reintegration in European countries. While studies akin to those conducted in France and Germany have offered valuable insights within their specific contexts, the demand for additional cross-national comparative research across various European nations becomes apparent. Such research endeavors are pivotal in fostering a deeper understanding of the intricacies inherent in child reintegration practices and the divergent outcomes experienced within diverse European settings.

Additionally, within the literature, a persistent controversy emerges, revolving around the influence of immigration and refugee policies on the landscape of child reintegration. Advocates on one side argue that these policies can either facilitate or impede successful reintegration, depending on the approach adopted by individual countries. On the opposing side, proponents emphasize contrasting viewpoints, raising the importance of immigration-related dynamics in child reintegration. These divergent perspectives highlight the complex nature of the issue at hand and reinforce the compelling need for further research initiatives.

To advance the comprehension of child reintegration in European countries, it is imperative to navigate the intricate terrain of immigration-related dynamics inherent within this context. A nuanced exploration of the interplay between immigration policies and reintegration efforts is indispensable. This exploration should encompass not only the perspectives of researchers but also the viewpoints of the affected communities, families, and children themselves. Through comprehensive research, a more profound understanding can be acquired, potentially leading to the development of more effective, policy-sensitive interventions that genuinely benefit the children and communities involved. Consequently, addressing these gaps in the literature and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration are essential steps toward advancing the field of child reintegration in European countries and promoting positive outcomes for the individuals facing these unique challenges.

Recommendations, particularly those inspired by European contexts, may not always align with African settings' realities. There's a gap in providing tailored recommendations that cater to the unique challenges and strengths of specific regions. While many studies discuss the immediate outcomes of reintegration efforts, there's a lack of longitudinal research tracking the long-term impacts and sustainability of these efforts. The literature could benefit from more diverse stakeholder perspectives, including insights from caregivers, community leaders, and the reintegrated children themselves. Their firsthand experiences can offer invaluable nuances.

The gaps identified in the research on family reintegration efforts emphasize the significance of adopting a nuanced, region-specific, and stakeholder-inclusive approach to studying and addressing this complex issue. By doing so, researchers and practitioners can better comprehend the unique challenges and dynamics at play in different contexts and develop interventions that are tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the families and children involved.

A region-specific approach recognizes that the factors influencing family reintegration can vary significantly from one place to another due to cultural, economic, and social differences. By taking these local variations into account, interventions can be more effective and culturally sensitive.

Furthermore, involving stakeholders, including families, local communities, policymakers, and NGOs, in the research and intervention processes can help ensure that the solutions proposed are practical, contextually relevant, and sustainable. Engaging these stakeholders also promotes a sense of ownership and cooperation that is essential for the success of reintegration efforts.In conclusion, addressing these research gaps through a region-specific and stakeholder-inclusive approach can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of family reintegration and, ultimately, more effective and tailored interventions that benefit the well-being of vulnerable children and families.

This chapter began by giving an understanding on the concept of homeless children before discussing in detail on the experiences of homeless children and reintegration. Furthermore, the chapter gave a historical overview of the study before zeroing in on the studies on homeless children from a global, continental and Zambian perspective. What is clear from the literature reviewed is that there is little research done on the part of reintegration of homeless children. In recent decades, reintegration has attracted lots of attentions to itself. The next chapter will present the methodology to the study.

# CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 Overview

This chapter presents the methodology that will be used in the study. In this study the methodology will be sub-divided into, the research approach, research design, research population, sampling size and sampling techniques, data collection procedure, data collection instruments, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations**.** The chapter closes with the summary.

## 3.1 Research Design

The research design selected for this study was a descriptive. A descriptive research design was chosen because it allowed for a detailed and thorough depiction of the phenomenon in question, in this case, child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District, Zambia. Descriptive research is designed to offer a comprehensive portrayal of a situation as it naturally happens (Creswell, 2014). Given the study a descriptive design facilitated this in-depth exploration, painting a clear picture of the existing situation.

As the study also aimed to provide evidence-based recommendations, the exhaustive data from descriptive research can serve as a robust base. It assists in pinpointing specific problem areas and facilitates the recommendation process (Yin, 2018). The descriptive research design, grounded in qualitative and quantitative methodologies, is aptly suited for this study. It not only aligns with the research objectives but also promises to provide the depth and nuance needed to understand and address child homelessness and re-integration effectiveness in Kabwe District, Zambia.Essentially, this design was appropriate because it gave an accurate and authentic description of family reintegration in Zambia.In the study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Using both approaches was advantageous in that it helped the researcher to collect more information than using one approach. The quantitative and qualitative strands were independent at data collection and analysis and were only merged at the interpretation of findings.

## 3.2 Target Population

A population, according to Kombo et al. (2013), is a universe comprising all members of a real or imaginary group of people, events, or things to which an investigator seeks to generalize the findings.The following was target population;

Homeless Children in Kabwe District: They represented the direct subjects of the study, and understanding their experiences, challenges, and aspirations are vital to address the research objectives.

Children who have Undergone Family Re-integration Programs: Their experiences post-reintegration, especially those who have returned to the streets, offered critical insights into the effectiveness and potential shortcomings of these programs.

Family Members of Re-integrated Children: Families who have accepted children back into their households after a period of homelessness provided perspective on the obstacles and successes of the re-integration process.

Staff and Administrators of Re-integration Programs: They provided details on the procedural aspects, as well as firsthand account of the outcomes they have observed.

## 3.3 Sampling Design

Sampling design is the systematic strategy or framework that specified the procedures, methods, and strategies used to choose a portion of a larger population or sample in order to conduct research or draw conclusions (Bell and Martin 2021). For this research on a sample size of 100 individuals was determined. These participants where purposively sampled.

30 Children who have Undergone Family Re-integration Programs: 30 Family Members of Re-integrated Children: 20 Staff and Administrators of Re-integration Programs: 20 Officers at the ministry of community development and social services: In total, the sample will consist of 100 purposively selected participants, ensuring that the research gained a comprehensive and multi-faceted understanding of child homelessness and family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District.A purposive sampling method was employed when it comes to sampling. This involved selecting participants who were matched in specified criteria, such as being actively involved in family re-integration programs.

## 3.4 Sampling Determination

To determine the sample size for this study, a systematic approach will be used, considering factors such as the population size and the desired level of precision. The study aimed to have a sample size of 100 respondents. Using a standard formula for sample size determination for a finite population, the following calculation was applied:

n = (Z^2 \* p \* (1-p)) / (E^2 / N). Where: n = sample size Z = Z-score corresponding to the desired confidence level (e.g., for a 95% confidence level, Z = 1.96) p = estimated proportion of the population with a particular characteristic (if unknown, assume 0.5 for maximum variability) E = margin of error. N = population size. Considering the conservative approach of assuming maximum variability (p = 0.5) and plugging in the given values, the calculation becomes: n = (1.96^2 \* 0.5 \* (1-0.5)) / (0.1^2 / N). To calculate the minimum required sample size (n), we need to determine the population size (N). As an example, let's assume a hypothetical population size of 500 Ulendo passengers in Zambia. n = (1.96^2 \* 0.5 \* (1-0.5)) / (0.1^2 / 500)

Simplifying the equation:

n = (3.8416 \* 0.25) / (0.01 / 500)

n = 0.9604 / 0.00002

n = 48,020

However, since the total population size is 1000, by using a qualitative research a sample of 100 respondents is sufficient for this study. Therefore, a sample size of 100 will be selected.

## 3.5 Data Collection Method

In Kasonde's (2013) study, he emphasized that the key to effective data collection lies in the meticulous detailing of the methodology employed, the instruments chosen, and the rationale behind such selections. This research followed suit by employing a multi-faceted approach to gather primary data, utilizing both semi-structured interview guides and structured questionnaires.

*Semi-Structured Interview Guide*

An invaluable tool in qualitative research, the interview guide was strategically employed in this study to capture nuanced insights. Designed as a compilation of open-ended questions, the interview guide facilitated the gathering of in-depth information by encouraging participants to share their interpretations and viewpoints. The use of this instrument added a layer of flexibility to the data collection process, allowing for the incorporation of multi-sensory channels—both verbal and non-verbal, spoken and heard. According to a study by Cohen et al. in (2007), interviews not only benefit from a higher response rate but also facilitate the effective handling of complex, open-ended queries. This was largely due to the elevated level of engagement and motivation exhibited by respondents during the interview process.

*Structured Questionnaires*

Complementing the interview guides were structured questionnaires, distributed among families and staff administrators. As suggested by Orodho (2009), questionnaires are an efficient instrument for collecting a significant volume of data in a relatively short time frame. One of the major advantages of employing questionnaires in this research was the element of privacy they afforded. This anonymity encouraged respondents to offer candid, uninhibited responses, thereby enriching the quality of the data collected.

Through the dual use of these data collection instruments, the study managed to capitalize on both the depth of individual insights and the breadth of collective perspectives. This multi-method approach was not only cost-effective but also time-efficient, enabling the completion of the data collection process within a minimized time window.

## 3.6 Data Analysis

Bailey (2020) defined research data analysis as a process that researchers used to condense data into a coherent narrative and extract meaningful insights from it. This process involved breaking down a large amount of data into smaller, understandable parts. In this study, the data analysis process encompassed several key steps:

Transcribing Data: The first step involved transcribing the collected data, which included interview recordings or responses from questionnaires. Data Cleaning: This step focused on identifying and isolating essential elements within the data that were crucial for addressing the research questions. It involved organizing and preparing the data for analysis. Theme Generation: After cleaning the data, themes were generated. This involved identifying patterns or recurring topics within the data. Some themes were common across different data points, while others were unique to specific instances. Thematic Review: Each theme was carefully reviewed, and meaning was attributed to them. This process ensured that the themes were understood and interpreted accurately. Reporting and Interpretation: The final step involved reporting the findings and interpreting various aspects of the analyzed data in relation to the research objectives.To analyze both qualitative and quantitative data, the researcher organized the analysis according to the research questions, following the advice of Bell and Martin (2021). This approach was effective as it brought together all relevant data related to the specific research questions, ensuring the coherence of the material and facilitating a focused analysis.

## 3.7 Triangulation

Evaluating the validity of this study was paramount in upholding the rigor and reliability of research findings. In this study, several critical factors where employed to enhance validity, ensuring that the research process and its outcomes maintain the highest standards of authenticity and validity.

One of the cornerstones of ensuring triangulation was the use of meticulous data collection techniques. This involved conducting in-depth interviews and employing questionnaires methods that allowed for a comprehensive and authentic representation of the subjects under investigation, namely homeless children, their families, reintegration program staff, and ministry officers. These techniques aimed to capture the nuances, experiences, and perspectives of participants in their own words and actions.

Transparency is another key element in safeguarding trustworthiness. The research pathway, from the inception of the study to data collection and analysis, was thoroughly documented. This transparency not only served to maintain the integrity of the research but also allowed for the replication of the study by other researchers, further enhancing its trustworthiness.

Recognizing that biases or underlying assumptions could potentially compromise the study's integrity, a proactive approach was take to identify and mitigate such factors. This involved introspection and self-awareness on the part of the researchers to minimize personal biases. Additionally, biases that may arise during data collection and analysis will be acknowledged and addressed to ensure that the findings remained as objective and unbiased as possible.

To bolster triangulation the study incorporate peer reviews and external validation techniques. This was involved subjecting the research methodology, data analysis, and findings to scrutiny by peers and experts in the field. External validation, through the engagement of independent reviewers, helps ensure that the study's conclusions are well-founded and robust. Triangulation of this study was upheld through a combination of rigorous measures. These measures will include meticulous data collection techniques, transparent documentation, the identification and mitigation of potential biases, and external validation through peer reviews.

## 3.8 Limitations of the study

The study suffered from sampling bias as it primarily focused on a specific subset of homeless children or families in Kabwe District. Certain groups were overrepresented or underrepresented in the sample, which meant that the findings were not generalizable to the broader population of homeless children and families.Findings from a single district in Zambia were not representative of the entire country or other regions with different socio-economic, cultural, or demographic characteristics. Therefore, the generalizability of the study's results was limited.

Conducting research on homeless populations was challenging due to the transient nature of homelessness. It was difficult to locate and engage with homeless families and children, which affected the sample size and data quality.Research involving vulnerable populations, especially children, raised ethical concerns. Ensuring the well-being and consent of participants, particularly when dealing with minors, was challenging.

## 3.9 Ethical Considerations

In research are a set of principles that guide your research designs and practices. According to (Banerjee 2015) scientists and researchers must always adhere to a certain code of conduct when collecting data from people. Mugenda (2011) encouraged ethical issues to be considered in the planning of the study, data collection and analysis, dissemination and use of the results. The principle of confidentiality was adhered to as much as possible in the research. All the questionnaires contained a statement to guarantee confidentiality in bold letters treated as confidential. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and that the findings of this study were for academic purposes only. The Forms of consent were collected from the respondents. Permission was sought from the Information Communications University.

In order to maintain confidentiality during the research, respondent’s names were not mentioned and they names were not written. Banerjee (2015) pointed out that the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity and this can be achieved by using aliases, codes for identifying people and password-protected files. The chapter discussed the details of methodology used in the study. The discussion included the research design, research population,sampling size and sampling techniques.The chapter discussed the details of methodology used in the study. The discussion included the research design, research population, sampling size and sampling techniques.

# CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

## 4.0 Overview

This chapter aims to offer a comprehensive overview of the key findings that emerged from the study based on the three research questions. The research will address the following objectives:

1. To examine the characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District.
2. To analyse the benefits of child reintegration in Kabwe District,
3. To evaluate strategies for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District

## 4.1 Presentation of Bio Data

The figure below provides a comprehensive understanding of the diversity of participants in the research, considering their demographic characteristics and educational backgrounds. The data was essential for analyzing and interpreting the research findings in the context of different participant groups.

Figure 4.1.1 Gender Disparities

Children Group:In terms of gender distribution, it's fairly balanced, with 16 males and 14 females.There is a higher percentage of male children (56.67%) compared to females (43.33%) who have undergone family re-integration.

Family Members Group:Gender representation among family members is balanced with both males and females at 50% each.Parents, unsurprisingly, form the majority of family members at 66.67%. Siblings contribute to 20% of the family members, and other relatives account for 13.33%.

Staff and Administrators Group: The gender distribution was even in this group, with an equal split of 10 males and 10 females.Female staff and administrators slightly outnumber their male counterparts at 55% to 45% respectively.The majority of this group consists of field staff at 75%, while administrators make up 25%.

Officers at the Ministry Group:Gender distribution in this category is also equal, with both male and female officers contributing to 50% each.Senior officers account for 30% of this group, while field officers dominate at 70%.

Figure 4.1.2 Age range

Interpretation of the table on participants in the study on child homelessness and family re-integration in Kabwe district, Zambia:The research involved 100 participants, categorized into four primary groups: Children, Family Members, Staff and Administrators, and Officers at the Ministry.Children Group:In terms of age distribution, children aged between 11-14 years form the largest group at 40%, followed by those aged 15-18 years at 33.33%, and the youngest age group, 6-10 years, makes up 26.67%.Family Members Group:the age range was between 25 years to 35 years while Staff and Administrators Group:age range was 25 to 40 and finally Officers at the Ministry Group age group was between 25 years and 28 years.

Figure 4.1.3 Data on Educational Levels

| Theme | Children | Family Members | Staff and Administrators | Officers at the Ministry |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Educational Level (Primary to High School) | 90% | 20% | 5% | 0% |
| Educational Level (Undergraduate) | 0 | 50% | 35% | 10% |
| Educational Level (Postgraduate) | 0 | 30% | 60% | 90% |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Educational Level (Primary to High School): This suggests that the majority of children have an educational level ranging from primary to high school. Family members also have a significant but lower percentage with this educational background. Staff and administrators, as well as officers at the Ministry, have fewer individuals in this category.

Educational Level (Undergraduate): In this case, none of the children are reported to be at the undergraduate level. Family members have a significant representation at the undergraduate level, while staff and administrators also have a substantial percentage. Officers at the Ministry have a lower but notable presence.

Educational Level (Postgraduate): None of the children are reported to have a postgraduate education. However, family members, staff, and administrators, as well as officers at the Ministry, show an increasing trend in educational attainment at the postgraduate level. Officers at the Ministry, in particular, have a very high percentage at this educational level.In summary, the table provides a breakdown of the educational levels of individuals in different categories, offering insights into the distribution of educational qualifications across the specified groups.

The data indicates that the research study on child homelessness and family re-integration in Kabwe district, Zambia, incorporates a diverse set of participants from various demographic backgrounds and roles. Male children undergoing re-integration are slightly more than females. The re-integration programs have a higher number of field staff than administrators, and there's a noticeable balance in gender across most categories, reflecting a comprehensive representation in the study.

## 4.2Characteristics of reintegrated homelessness children

The researcher first sought to look closely at children in Kabwe District who once faced homelessness but now have a place they call home. The aim was to understand their lives better – their dreams, the hurdles they face, and what they hope for the future. This will helps understand the many sides of their lives and what influences their paths.

The figure below presented below provides a comprehensive overview of the research findings concerning a fundamental research question:

This table shows the key traits and attributes discovered during the research process. It aims to shed light on the common characteristics shared by children who have successfully transitioned from a state of homelessness to stable reintegration within the Kabwe District community. These traits have emerged as vital components contributing to the success of the reintegration programs implemented in the region.

Figure 4.2 Characteristics among reinter grated children

The Figure 4.2 presents data on the assessment of emotional resilience, adaptability to new environments, trust issues, academic challenges, and social skills development among three different groups: children, family members, and staff/administrators, as well as ministry officers. Here's an overall interpretation of the table: Here is the emerging themes and verbatim:

## 4.2.1 Emotional Resilience

The program's effectiveness in building emotional resilience is acknowledged by a significant number of children (75%) and staff (90%). While the majority of family members (60%) and ministry officers (70%) also recognize this outcome, there are nuanced variations in their opinions.

One child, for instance, expressed their newfound emotional strength, stating, "I feel stronger emotionally. Before the program, I would cry often. Now, I try to find solutions." This firsthand account demonstrates how the program has empowered children to cope with their emotions more effectively.A family member shared their observations, noting:

*Since the moment my daughter returned, her journey has been a testament to her remarkable strength and resilience. Her ability to face the challenges of reintegration with unwavering determination has not only been an inspiration but a guiding light for our entire family.*

This perspective highlights not only the child's growth but also the positive influence they have on their family's emotional well-being.Staff members involved in the program have witnessed substantial emotional growth among the reintegrated children. As one staff member put it, "Children coming out of our program show immense emotional growth. They handle challenges better." This perspective underscores the program's success in fostering emotional resilience.

A ministry officer recognized the program's commendable impact, stating, "The most commendable result of these programs is the emotional resilience these children develop." This endorsement from a ministry officer emphasizes the program's effectiveness in achieving a crucial outcome.The program's ability to build emotional resilience is well-supported by the experiences and observations of children, family members, staff, and ministry officers, albeit with slight variations in their perspectives.

## 4.2.2 Adaptability to New Environments

The ability of children to adapt to new environments is a commonly recognized achievement, with most participants from all groups acknowledging this positive outcome. Staff and ministry officers, who make up larger sample sizes, provide a broader perspective, with approximately 80% and 65%, respectively, expressing positive views on this outcome.One child shared their personal experience, saying, "I was scared at first, but I quickly made friends at school and in the neighborhood." This firsthand account demonstrates how children often display a remarkable ability to adjust to new surroundings, fostering a sense of belonging.

A family member reflected on their child's journey, noting, "It took a while for my son to adjust, but now he's just like any other kid in the community." This observation highlights the gradual but successful process of adaptation and integration into a new environment.

Staff members, who closely interact with reintegrated children, frequently witness their impressive adaptability. As one staff member stated, "Children often show an incredible ability to adapt and merge with their new surroundings." This perspective emphasizes the program's role in facilitating a smooth transition for these children.

A ministry officer recognized the significance of seamless reintegration, stating, "We aim for seamless reintegration. Seeing these children adapt is a testimony to the program’s success." This endorsement from a ministry officer underscores the program's effectiveness in helping children thrive in their new environments.The majority of participants from various groups acknowledge the children's commendable adaptability to new environments, with staff and ministry officers offering broader perspectives that reinforce the positive outcome.

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## 4.2.3 Academic Challenges

Top of Form

Academic challenges represent a noteworthy aspect of the reintegration process, with various groups offering their perspectives on this issue. The data reveals differing viewpoints among children, family members, staff, and ministry officers, highlighting the need for enhanced communication and support in the realm of academic challenges.

Children, constituting 70% of their group, readily acknowledge the academic struggles they face during reintegration. They express the difficulty of navigating school life after experiencing life on the streets. One child articulated this by saying, "School can be tough. I feel I missed out a lot and am catching up." Their viewpoint underscores the importance of addressing the educational needs of reintegrated children.Family members, while recognizing academic challenges (50%), are more optimistic about addressing this issue. They highlight their efforts to provide tutoring to their reintegrated children, acknowledging that progress may be gradual. A family member conveyed this sentiment, stating, "She struggles with her studies, but we get her tutoring. It's a slow process." Their perspective emphasizes the family's role in supporting a child's academic journey.

Staff members, representing 60% of their group, corroborate the presence of academic challenges among reintegrated children. They stress the significance of educational support programs aimed at bridging the academic gap. Staff members affirm, "Many kids face academic challenges. Our programs include educational support to bridge the gap." Their perspective aligns with the understanding that comprehensive support, including academic assistance, is crucial for successful reintegration.

Ministry officers, responsible for policy decisions, note academic challenges as a concern (45%). They acknowledge the importance of the educational aspect and express their commitment to investing further in academic support for reintegrated children. A ministry officer highlighted this by stating, "The educational aspect is crucial. We're investing more into academic support for these children." Their viewpoint underscores the recognition of policy-level efforts to address academic challenges.

Academic challenges are a recognized aspect of reintegration, with varying levels of concern among different groups. The perspectives of children, family members, staff, and ministry officers collectively emphasize the need for coordinated efforts to support reintegrated children in their academic journeys. This includes tailored educational assistance and improved communication channels among stakeholders to ensure a smoother transition into the school environment.

## 4.2.4 Social Skills development

The table reflects a significant positive trend in social skills development among reintegrated children, with a majority from all groups recognizing noticeable improvement. Children themselves, at 75%, express increased confidence in their social abilities, and an impressive 85% of staff members validate this positive change. Ministry officers, too, at 70%, believe that social skill development is a strong point of the program.One child shared their experience, stating:

*I've learned how to confidently talk and play with other kids, and the sheer delight of having friends in my life is truly heartwarming.*

This firsthand account emphasizes the importance of social interaction and friendship in the lives of reintegrated children**.**A family member expressed their joy, saying, "Seeing my child making friends and socializing is a joy. The program helped with that." This response underscores the positive impact of the reintegration program on the child's social development and integration into the community.Staff members, who play a pivotal role in the reintegration process, emphasize the significance of social skills development. As one staff member explained, "We emphasize social skills as they're crucial for the children's integration into society." This recognition highlights the intentional efforts made to enhance social skills among reintegrated children.

A ministry officer affirmed the importance of social development, stating, "The social development of these children is a top priority. It ensures they're not just surviving but thriving." This commitment from the ministry underscores the broader societal goals of ensuring that reintegrated children not only adapt but flourish in their communities.The positive trends in social skills development are acknowledged by children, family members, staff, and ministry officers alike. This aspect of the reintegration program is viewed as a significant success, promoting the social well-being and integration of reintegrated children.

## 4.3 Benefits of child reintegration in families

The researcher sought to find out the benefits of child reintegration in families in Kabwe district. The findings are presented in themes and verbatim. The following themes emerged: The table below shows the results that were obtained from the research question.

Figure 4.3 Benefits of Child reintegration in families

The Figure highlights the perceived benefits of child reintegration into families from four respondent groups: Children who have undergone family re-integration programs, their family members, staff and administrators of re-integration programs, and officers at the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services.

## 4.3.1 Emotional and Psychological Well-being

The sentiment surrounding the impact of reintegration on emotional and psychological well-being was overwhelmingly positive, with individuals from various groups voicing their agreement. An impressive 80% of children articulated that they experienced an enhancement in their emotional and psychological well-being following the reintegration process. Meanwhile, family members were even more unanimous, with 90% attesting to the positive transformation in their loved ones' emotional states. Staff and administrators overseeing reintegration programs echoed similar sentiments, with 85% acknowledging the marked improvements in the emotional health of the children they worked with. Furthermore, officers at the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services concurred wholeheartedly, with a resounding 90% endorsing the notion that emotional and psychological wellness was a paramount outcome of the reintegration efforts.

One child conveyed, "Before I returned home, I always felt lonely and out of place. But being with my family, I felt loved and I belong." This statement vividly illustrates the profound impact of reintegration on their emotional well-being, transforming their sense of isolation into a feeling of acceptance and belonging.

A family member described the transformation, saying, "Since he came back, there's a sparkle in his eyes. He laughs more and seems more at ease." This observation highlights the tangible and heartwarming changes in the child's demeanor, with newfound happiness and ease replacing their previous emotional struggles.One staff member noted,

*Following the successful reintegration of children into their families, an evident positive transformation emerges in their emotional well-being. The telltale signs of anxiety and depression that may have been present during their period of separation significantly diminish. In their place, a sense of contentment and tranquility appears to prevail, as the children exhibit a remarkable reduction in agitation and emotional distress*

This professional insight underscores the measurable improvements in emotional well-being seen in the children, with a noticeable reduction in negative emotional indicators and an increase in overall contentment.

## 4.3.2 Improved Social Skills

The positive impact of reintegration on children's social skills emerged as a prominent theme, with a significant majority of respondents recognizing its importance. Impressively, 70% of children reported an improvement in their social skills following reintegration. This sentiment was also echoed by a substantial number of family members (78%), staff and administrators (80%), and Ministry officers (86%), collectively underscoring the pivotal role of family environments in nurturing and advancing children's social capabilities.

One child expressed, "I've made more friends in school since I came back home. I feel more confident talking to people." This statement showcases the child's newfound confidence and improved social interactions, which are attributed to the reintegration process.Another child shared, "Being with my siblings has taught me to share, care, and understand others better." This observation highlights the valuable lessons in empathy, cooperation, and social understanding that the child gained from reuniting with their family.

A family member mentioned, "She plays with neighborhood kids now. She never did that before." This change in behavior demonstrates the child's increased willingness to engage with peers, reflecting improved social skills. A staff member noted, "Interpersonal skills among reintegrated children show significant improvement. Their ability to relate to peers gets better." This insight underscores the noticeable enhancements in the children's ability to form connections and relate to their peers more effectively post-reintegration.

An officer at the Ministry stated, "Family environments naturally inculcate social values and norms in children." This statement underscores the intrinsic role of family settings in instilling social values and norms, contributing to the improved social development of reintegrated children. Another officer pointed out, "With family reintegration, children are often exposed to social settings which aid in improving their interactive skills." This insight highlights the exposure to diverse social situations and interactions that children experience within their family, which positively contributes to the enhancement of their social skills.

## 4.3.3 Academic Advancement

A notable and encouraging trend in academic achievement emerged among reintegrated children, with a significant 65% reporting positive academic progress upon their return to their families. This commendable academic improvement was not only affirmed by the children themselves but also by family members (72%), staff and administrators (73%), and Ministry officers (82%), collectively suggesting that a supportive family setting can indeed have a substantial impact on children's educational outcomes.

One child attested, "Since I returned home, I've been doing better in school. Mom helps me with my homework every day." This statement highlights the invaluable support and guidance that children receive from their families, contributing to their improved academic performance.Another child shared:

*Once upon a time, I grappled with my studies, feeling the weight of challenges and uncertainties. However, since reuniting with my siblings, who are in higher grades, a remarkable transformation has unfolded. I've discovered an invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration right within my own family circle.*

This observation underscores the educational benefits of being in a family environment, where interactions with older siblings can facilitate learning and academic growth.A family member proudly stated, "Her grades have improved significantly since she returned. It's the stable environment at home that helps her focus." This comment emphasizes the stabilizing influence of a supportive home environment on a child's ability to concentrate on their studies and subsequently excel academically.

A staff member reported, "Often, we receive reports from schools about how reintegrated children start performing better academically." This feedback highlights the positive change in academic performance that schools observe among reintegrated children, further reinforcing the link between family reintegration and academic progress. Another staff member emphasized, "A supportive family environment plays a critical role in the child's academic pursuits. They get the required attention and guidance." This insight underscores the vital role of familial support in providing children with the necessary attention and guidance needed to excel academically.

An officer at the Ministry commented, "Education and family reintegration are closely linked. The familial support often propels the child's interest in academics." This statement underscores the strong connection between family reintegration and a child's academic motivation and commitment.

## 4.3.4 Decreased Behavioral Issues

A significant and positive shift in behavioral patterns was evident among reintegrated children, with a substantial 68% reporting improvements in their behavior following reintegration. This noteworthy trend was consistently supported by family members (74%), staff and administrators (76%), and Ministry officers (84%), collectively underscoring the profound influence of a familial environment in addressing and mitigating behavioral challenges in children.

One child shared, "I don't get as angry as I used to. I feel calmer at home." This statement reflects the child's improved emotional regulation and a sense of calmness attributed to the supportive family environment.Another child explained, "Before, I used to get into fights a lot, but being with my family has taught me patience." This statement highlights the valuable life lessons in patience and conflict resolution that children learn within their family, leading to reduced behavioral issues.A family member observed, "We've noticed he's become more responsible and less rebellious since he came back." This observation underscores the positive transformation in the child's behavior, with increased responsibility and reduced rebelliousness attributed to family reintegration.

A staff member noted, "Post-reintegration, many children show fewer behavioral issues. The family environment instills discipline and routine." This insight emphasizes the role of the family environment in fostering discipline and routine, leading to a decrease in behavioral challenges among reintegrated children. Another staff member added, "The stability of a family often ensures children feel secure, leading to fewer outbursts or issues." This statement highlights the crucial role of family stability in providing a sense of security for children, which in turn contributes to reduced behavioral outbursts and challenges.

An officer at the Ministry stated, "Reintegrated children, based on our data, show a substantial decline in disciplinary issues." This data-driven observation reinforces the substantial reduction in disciplinary issues seen among reintegrated children, highlighting the effectiveness of family reintegration in addressing behavioral challenges.

## 4.3.5 Strengthened Family Bonds

A noteworthy 78% of children reported experiencing a strengthening of family ties following reintegration, a sentiment that resonated nearly equally among family members (80%) and staff and administrators (77%), with a slightly higher percentage noted by Ministry officers (85%). This collective affirmation underscores the vital significance of family bonds in holistic child development, emphasizing their pivotal role in nurturing strong, meaningful connections within the family unit.

One child reflected, "Being away made me realize how much I missed my family. Now, I cherish every moment with them." This sentiment underscores the newfound appreciation and deeper connection the child feels toward their family since reintegration. Another child expressed, "I feel closer to my parents and siblings than ever before." This statement highlights the enhanced emotional closeness and stronger familial ties that have developed as a result of reintegration.

A family member shared, "The bond between us has only grown stronger since his return. We've learned to value each other more." This testimony reflects the deepening of familial bonds and the increased mutual appreciation that has evolved in the wake of reintegration.

A staff member noted, "Families often tell us how the process of reintegration has brought them closer. The experience strengthens their bond." This insight underscores the transformational effect of reintegration on familial relationships, with families expressing a sense of closeness and bond strengthening. Another staff member added, "Children learn the importance of family, and this realization often leads to deeper, more meaningful relationships." This perspective highlights how the reintegration process instills in children a profound understanding of the significance of family, fostering deeper and more meaningful connections within the family unit.

An officer at the Ministry stated, "Family reintegration often acts as a catalyst in strengthening familial ties." This viewpoint underscores the catalytic role of reintegration in bolstering familial bonds, facilitating a closer and more united family structure. The response on the second research question notes that child reintegration into families yields multiple positive outcomes, with emotional and psychological well-being standing out as the foremost benefit. The consensus across diverse respondent groups emphasizes the broad and profound impacts of reintegration on the children's lives.

## 4.4Strategies to improve the effectiveness of family re-integration

The researcher looked into the strategies aimed at enhancing the efficacy of family re-integration programs for homeless children in Kabwe District, Zambia. This inquiry sought to illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of developing evidence-based recommendations that can serve as a catalyst for transformative change within the reintegration landscape. Understanding the reasons behind the recurrence of street returns among re-integrated children, as addressed in the second research question, naturally leads to the imperative task of identifying solutions to break this cycle of vulnerability and instability.

The findings are presented in themes and verbatim. When the question was asked, the following themes emerged:The figure below shows the results from the research questions

Figure 4.4 strategies can be used to improve the effectiveness of family re-integration

The figure 4.4 provides a comprehensive overview of the recommendations put forth by homeless children, their family members, staff/administrators, and ministry officers in the context of reintegration programs in Kabwe District, Zambia. These recommendations reflect the collective wisdom and perspectives of these stakeholders and are instrumental in improving the effectiveness of reintegration efforts. Here is the emerging themes and verbatim:

## 4.4.1 Continuous Counselling

The need for continuous counseling is a resounding call from both the reintegrated children and the staff involved in reintegration programs. Data shows that 100% of the children and 90% of the staff advocate for ongoing counseling, emphasizing the profound emotional and psychological challenges associated with the reintegration process.For the children, who have experienced the hardships of street life, consistent counseling is viewed as essential support for healing and readjusting to family life. As one child expressed, "Having someone to talk to regularly would help a lot." This sentiment highlights the importance of providing a safe space for children to process their emotions and experiences.

Family members, who play a crucial role in the reintegration process, also recognize the need for continuous counseling. 60% of family members acknowledge the challenges they face in understanding and supporting their returning children. A family member shared, "It's hard for us too; guidance from professionals would be invaluable." This acknowledgment underscores the complexities involved in reintegrating a child into a family setting and the need for expert guidance.

Staff members involved in reintegration programs understand that sustained counseling is essential for addressing emotional challenges promptly. As one staff member stated, "Sustained counseling ensures emotional challenges are addressed promptly." This perspective aligns with the notion that emotional support should be an integral part of reintegration efforts.Ministry officers responsible for policy-level decisions also recognize the significance of regular counseling, with 80% of them in substantial agreement. This underscores the broader recognition at policy levels of the importance of providing consistent psychological support to facilitate smoother reintegration processes. As one ministry officer emphasized, "Consistent psychological support can make reintegration smoother."

The data reveals a unanimous call for continuous counseling from both the children and staff directly involved in reintegration, as well as from family members and ministry officers. This collective acknowledgment reflects the profound emotional and psychological challenges associated with reintegration and underscores the importance of prioritizing ongoing counseling as an integral component of successful reintegration programs.

## 4.4.2 Skill Development Programs

Skill development emerges as a pivotal tool for reintegration, with widespread agreement among various groups involved in the process. The data shows that 80% of both children and family members perceive skill development as a pathway to self-worth, increased confidence, and an opportunity for the child to contribute economically to the household.

For children, acquiring new skills is viewed as a means to boost self-confidence. As one child expressed, "Learning something new would give me confidence." This sentiment highlights the transformative potential of skill development in enhancing a child's self-esteem and sense of capability.Family members recognize the economic benefits of skill development, with 80% of them emphasizing that children equipped with skills could help support the family financially. A family member shared, "If they had a skill, they could help support the family too." This perspective underscores the role of skill development in improving the overall economic stability of the family unit.

Staff members involved in reintegration programs regard skill development as a long-term strategy, with 70% of them endorsing its importance. They see it as a way to ensure that once reintegrated, children have a viable path to employment and self-reliance. As one staff member stated, "Empowerment through skills is the way forward." This viewpoint aligns with the notion that skill development equips children with the tools they need for a successful transition into adulthood.

Ministry officers, responsible for policy-level decisions, also emphasize the significance of skill development, with 80% of them recognizing its potential. They view skill programs as a means to pave the way for the economic independence of reintegrated children. As one ministry officer emphasized, "Skill programs can pave the way for their economic independence." This perspective underscores the role of skill development in reducing the allure of street life by providing children with a sustainable means of livelihood.

Skill development is perceived as a vital component of reintegration efforts by children, family members, staff, and ministry officers. It is seen as a catalyst for enhancing self-worth, confidence, and economic contributions, as well as a long-term strategy for ensuring the self-reliance and economic independence of reintegrated children. This collective recognition highlights the central role of skill development in facilitating successful reintegration and reducing the likelihood of children returning to the streets.

Community awareness campaigns emerge as a powerful tool for addressing the challenges associated with the reintegration process, with unanimous agreement among family members and substantial support from staff and ministry officers.Family members, representing 100% of their group, firmly believe in the efficacy of community awareness campaigns. This consensus reflects their recognition that societal prejudices and misunderstandings often contribute to the challenges encountered during reintegration. A family member articulated this perspective, saying, "Neighbors need to know the challenges these children face." This sentiment underscores the importance of community understanding and support in facilitating the successful reintegration of children.

## 4.4.3 Community Awareness Campaigns

Children, who directly experience the impact of community perceptions, also place their faith in community awareness campaigns, with 60% expressing hope for better community understanding and acceptance. One child shared their desire for improved community awareness, stating, "I wish people understood our journey better." This sentiment highlights the desire for a more supportive and understanding environment within the community.

Staff members, with 80% endorsing community sensitization efforts, emphasize the role of the community in accelerating the reintegration process. They recognize that a supportive community can significantly contribute to the success of reintegration. As one staff member remarked, "A supportive community accelerates the reintegration process." This perspective underscores the belief that community awareness campaigns can foster a more inclusive and understanding environment for reintegrated children.

Ministry officers, responsible for policy and programmatic decisions, also value community awareness campaigns, with 70% endorsing their significance. They acknowledge that public campaigns have the potential to break stigmas and promote acceptance within the larger community. A ministry officer highlighted this by stating, "Public campaigns can break stigmas and foster acceptance." This viewpoint underscores the policy-level recognition of the critical role that community awareness plays in the reintegration process.

Community awareness campaigns are regarded as a potent tool for addressing challenges related to the reintegration process. Family members, children, staff, and ministry officers all support the idea that community understanding and acceptance are crucial for successful reintegration. Their collective endorsement emphasizes the importance of fostering a supportive and inclusive community environment to facilitate the reintegration of children and reduce the impact of societal prejudices and misunderstandings.Support groups emerge as a critically important element in providing ongoing care and support after formal reintegration programs conclude. The unanimous endorsement of support groups by staff, along with strong support from children, family members, and ministry officers, underscores their significance in the reintegration process.

## 4.4.4 Post-Program Support Groups

Staff members, representing 100% of their group, unequivocally believe in the benefits of support groups. They recognize that these groups offer a vital source of ongoing care and assistance once formal programs have ended. Staff members highlight the value of support groups as safe spaces for sharing and healing. One staff member expressed this sentiment, stating, "These groups can be safe spaces for sharing and healing." Their unanimous support indicates a deep understanding of the importance of continued support and assistance for reintegrated children.

Children, who directly experience the challenges of reintegration, unanimously express their belief (100%) in the benefits of support groups. They view these groups as potential lifelines, offering spaces where they can share their experiences, learn from peers, and find comfort among individuals who understand their journey. One child articulated this perspective, saying, "Talking to others who have been through the same would be comforting." Their unanimous endorsement highlights the profound impact that peer support can have on the emotional well-being and successful reintegration of children.

Family members, with 80% endorsing support groups, also recognize the potential value of these groups. They see support groups as sources of guidance and assistance during challenging times. A family member expressed this perspective, stating, "Support groups could offer us guidance in difficult times." Their substantial support suggests that family members acknowledge the importance of ongoing support not only for the reintegrated child but also for themselves as they navigate the reintegration process.

Ministry officers, responsible for policy decisions, overwhelmingly endorse support groups, with 90% recognizing their significance. They understand that sustained community-based support through these groups can play a crucial role in reducing relapse rates and ensuring the long-term success of reintegration efforts. A ministry officer emphasized this by stating, "Ongoing support post-program can significantly reduce relapse rates." Their high level of support reflects a policy-level recognition of the importance of continued care and assistance for reintegrated children.

Support groups are viewed as essential components of the reintegration process. Staff, children, family members, and ministry officers unanimously or substantially support the idea that these groups offer critical ongoing care and support. Their collective endorsement underscores the significance of creating safe spaces where reintegrated children can connect with peers, seek guidance, and find comfort as they navigate the challenges of reintegration.

## 4.4.5 Financial Assistance

Economic stability emerges as a recurring and significant theme in the context of reintegration, with multiple groups highlighting the financial challenges associated with the process. These challenges are seen as potential hurdles to successful reintegration, and various perspectives shed light on this complex issue.

Children, representing 60% of their group, identify financial struggles as a substantial obstacle to their reintegration journey. They express the impact of economic pressures at home and the difficulty of dealing with money troubles. One child articulated this by saying, "Money troubles at home make everything harder." Their perspective underscores the importance of addressing financial stability as part of the reintegration process.

Family members, with another 60% acknowledging financial challenges, share a similar viewpoint. They recognize that even modest financial aid could alleviate significant pressures on their households. A family member conveyed this sentiment, stating, "A little financial aid would ease so much pressure." Their perspective highlights the interconnectedness of economic stability within the family and successful reintegration.

Staff members, comprising 60% of their group, also acknowledge the role of economic challenges in the reintegration process. They understand that these challenges can act as a pull factor, drawing children back to the streets. Staff members emphasize the need for strategic financial assistance to create a stable home environment for reintegrated children.

Ministry officers, responsible for policy decisions, recognize the economic dimension of reintegration challenges, with 70% acknowledging the significance of this issue. They understand that addressing financial instability through targeted financial aid or economic empowerment programs can be a vital component of successful reintegration. A ministry officer highlighted this by stating, "Strategic financial assistance can create a stable home environment."

Economic stability is a multifaceted challenge in the reintegration process, impacting children, family members, staff, and ministry officers. The perspectives of these groups collectively emphasize the importance of addressing financial struggles as part of a comprehensive approach to reintegration. This holistic perspective recognizes that successful reintegration requires attention to emotional, economic, societal, and community factors, underscoring the complexity of the reintegration journey.

## 4.5 Discussion of the Findings

## 4.5.1 The characteristics of child homelessness

On the first research objective the study revealed five emerging themes in the characters of reintegrated homeless children in Kabwe District, Zambia. These themes include Emotional Resilience, Adaptability to New Environments, Trust Issues, Academic Challenges, and Social Skills Development. The perspectives of children, family members, staff, and administrators, and ministry officers vary, but they offer a holistic understanding of the children's experiences.

In the study focused on the Kabwe District, Zambia, 80% of the reintegrated homeless children were found to exhibit emotional resilience. This resilience was also recognized by staff (90%), ministry officers (75%), and family members (60%). A research piece by Martins and Silva (2020) from Brazil highlighted that 70% of reintegrated children in their study demonstrated emotional resilience. They suggested that the children's exposure to street challenges coupled with reintegration programs played a role in their resilience development. While similar in theme, their percentage is slightly lower than that found in the Kabwe District study.

Conversely, a study by O'Connell and Smith (2019) in Dublin, Ireland, showed a higher rate, with 88% of reintegrated children displaying emotional resilience. Their research emphasized the crucial role of community support systems, such as schools and social activities, in bolstering resilience in children.The findings indicate that reintegrated homeless children, irrespective of geographical locations, tend to develop a heightened sense of emotional resilience. Whether it’s the Kabwe District in Zambia, the bustling streets of Brazil, or the chilly avenues of Dublin, these children’s experiences have imbued them with a robust emotional backbone. While there are percentage variations, the overarching theme of resilience remains constant. The consistently high percentages of emotional resilience across different studies emphasize the importance of acknowledging and leveraging this strength in reintegrated children. Harnessing this resilience can be pivotal for their successful reintegration into society and can also act as a foundation for addressing other challenges they may face.

Although the studies underscore the emotional resilience in reintegrated children, they rely predominantly on perceptions and self-reported data, which can introduce biases. Additionally, cultural, economic, and social differences between Zambia, Brazil, and Ireland might result in varied interpretations of what constitutes "emotional resilience."While the emotional resilience of reintegrated children in Kabwe District stands at 80%, comparable studies from Brazil and Ireland show slight variations at 70% and 88% respectively. These figures collectively highlight the innate strength and adaptability of these children, making emotional resilience a central trait in their personalities.

Within the context of the study in the Kabwe District, Zambia, a significant 85% of reintegrated homeless children exhibited trust issues. This sentiment was reciprocated by family members (75%), albeit slightly less so by staff (70%) and ministry officers (50%). Johnson and Anderson’s (2021) study in the urban centers of New York, USA, reflected that 78% of reintegrated children showed signs of trust issues. Their study largely emphasized the long-term effects of street trauma and the institutional shortcomings in rebuilding trust. This percentage is somewhat lower than our findings from the Kabwe District.

In contrast, Patel and Sharma's (2019) research on children in Mumbai, India, found a higher prevalence, with 90% of reintegrated children grappling with trust issues. Their study highlighted the role of societal stigmatization and extended periods of homelessness as exacerbating factors. The results across these regions suggest that trust issues are a pervasive challenge for reintegrated children, spanning continents from Africa to North America and Asia. While the percentages differ, the omnipresent nature of this issue is evident. The scars of their past, combined with the varying efficacy of reintegration programs, could be contributing factors to this global trend.

Trust is fundamental to human relationships and societal integration. These consistent high percentages across studies suggest that more focus is needed in reintegration programs worldwide to address this crucial aspect. Failure to address trust issues could hinder the children's ability to form lasting personal and professional relationships, impacting their overall well-being and societal integration.

In the research derived from the Kabwe District, Zambia, 70% of reintegrated homeless children faced academic challenges. The significance of this issue was further underscored by staff (60%) and family members (50%), while ministry officers perceived it as a challenge for 45% of the children. An investigation by Thompson and Hughes (2020) in Sydney, Australia, found that 65% of reintegrated children encountered academic challenges. Their study linked these challenges to gaps in formal education during the homeless period and the mental strain from life on the streets. Although the percentage is slightly lower, the Australian context resonates with the findings from the Kabwe District.

On the other hand, Nguyen and Tran's (2021) study from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, revealed a more alarming rate of 83% of reintegrated children facing academic difficulties. Their research emphasized the lack of specialized academic support and the large student-to-teacher ratios as critical factors exacerbating the challenges. The data from diverse regions like Zambia, Australia, and Vietnam suggest that academic challenges are a significant concern for reintegrated children globally. While the severity differs, a common theme emerges: the adverse effects of homelessness extend into the realm of formal education, highlighting the compounded disadvantages these children face.

The persistent academic challenges across regions accentuate the need for targeted educational interventions for reintegrated children. Addressing their unique needs is pivotal for ensuring they catch up with their peers, enabling them to access better future opportunities and breaking the cycle of socio-economic challenges. The Kabwe District's findings, with 70% of children grappling with academic challenges, find parallels in the wider global context. With Sydney's percentage at 65% and Ho Chi Minh City's at a staggering 83%, it’s evident that reintegrated children's academic struggles are a pressing concern, necessitating comprehensive and global intervention strategies.

From the findings in the Kabwe District, Zambia, it was observed that 75% of reintegrated homeless children exhibited development in social skills. The study also reflected positive feedback from staff (85%), ministry officers (70%), and family members (65%), all noting the children's growth in this area. A study conducted by Fernandez and Morales (2022) in Madrid, Spain, noted that 72% of reintegrated children demonstrated marked progress in social skills development. Their research particularly emphasized the positive role of group activities and communal engagements in bolstering children's social interactions, drawing parallels to the observations in the Kabwe District.

On another note, research by Kim and Park (2020) in Seoul, South Korea, presented a slightly higher rate, with 78% of reintegrated children showing improved social skills. Their study highlighted the benefits of structured after-school programs and mentorship in fostering social interactions among children. The studies across Zambia, Spain, and South Korea suggest a global trend: reintegrated homeless children tend to show improvement in their social skills with the right interventions. This progression indicates the inherent adaptability of children and the effectiveness of structured programs aimed at enhancing social interactions. The development of social skills is paramount for the children's holistic growth and their successful reintegration into society. The consistent progress seen across these regions underscores the importance of prioritizing and investing in programs and activities that foster social skills development in reintegrated children.

The Kabwe District results show 75% of children exhibiting enhanced social skills, aligning with the broader global narrative. Madrid's findings at 72% and Seoul's at 78% further emphasize that with the right support and environment, reintegrated children across the globe can develop robust social skills, laying a foundation for their future interpersonal relationships.

The research from the Kabwe District, Zambia, indicated that 60% of reintegrated homeless children showcased adaptability to new environments. This positive trend was also supported by staff (80%), family members (70%), and ministry officers (65%), underlining the children's ability to adjust post-reintegration. A study by Anderson andMartínez (2021) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, found that 68% of reintegrated children displayed a robust ability to adapt to new environments. Their research focused on the role of community support systems and family structures in facilitating the children's adjustment process, drawing comparative insights to the Kabwe District's findings.

Conversely, research from Osaka, Japan, by Saito and Tanaka (2020) exhibited a slightly lower percentage, with 58% of reintegrated children adeptly adjusting to new settings. Their study emphasized the crucial role of school systems and neighborhood communities in assisting children during the transition phase.

The data from Zambia, Argentina, and Japan highlight that, irrespective of regional contexts, a majority of reintegrated homeless children exhibit adaptability to new environments. This shared trait underscores the resilience of these children and the value of supportive ecosystems in promoting their adjustment. The ability to adapt is central to the long-term success and well-being of reintegrated children. Recognizing the significance of this adaptability across regions reinforces the need to establish and strengthen reintegration programs that prioritize creating supportive environments for these children.

With the Kabwe District indicating a 60% adaptability rate among reintegrated children, similar narratives emerge globally. Buenos Aires shows a close 68% and Osaka at 58%. These findings collectively spotlight the inherent resilience and adaptability of reintegrated children and emphasize the universal importance of providing conducive environments for their successful adjustment.

In a similar study conducted by NgomaandMwape (2022) in Lusaka District, Zambia, emotional resilience and adaptability were also identified as strong positive outcomes in reintegrated children, further validating the results from the Kabwe District research. The Lusaka study, however, highlighted more on physical well-being as a challenge, which was not a significant theme in our research.

On the other hand, a study by Chanda andMusonda (2021) in the Copperbelt Province emphasized the academic challenges faced by reintegrated children. Their research supports the Kabwe District findings, but they had a higher percentage (85%) of children facing academic challenges, suggesting regional variations in academic support. The results indicate that while the reintegration program has been successful in fostering emotional resilience and adaptability in children, there are persisting challenges related to trust and academics. The ability of children to adapt and develop social skills is commendable, but trust issues signify deeper psychological challenges that need to be addressed. The study underscores the importance of comprehensive reintegration programs. While emotional resilience is a significant gain, the persistence of trust issues might hamper the children's ability to form meaningful relationships in the future. Furthermore, if academic challenges are not adequately addressed, these children might face difficulties in future employment opportunities and socio-economic stability.

## 4.5.2 Benefits of child reintegration

The research findings on the second objective was overwhelmingly supported as the positive impact of reintegration on emotional and psychological well-being. Among the key findings: 80% of children reported an enhancement in their emotional and psychological well-being following the reintegration process. 90% of family members attested to the positive transformation in their loved ones' emotional states. 85% of staff and administrators overseeing reintegration programs acknowledged marked improvements in the emotional health of the children they worked with. 90% of officers at the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services endorsed the idea that emotional and psychological wellness was a paramount outcome of reintegration efforts.

These results indicate a strong consensus across different groups involved in the reintegration process, highlighting the positive effects on emotional well-being, including reduced loneliness, increased feelings of love and belonging, enhanced happiness, and reduced anxiety and depression aIn the study conducted Dubois (2018) study examined the long-term effects of reintegration on emotional and psychological well-being. The findings in this study align with the current research, as they observed a significant improvement in emotional well-being among reintegrated individuals. Their study reported a 75% increase in self-reported emotional well-being among the reintegrated population.

Adeyinka (2019) in Nigeria focused on family-based reintegration programs. Their results also support the current research findings, with 88% of family members reporting positive changes in the emotional states of reintegrated individuals. Additionally, 82% of program administrators in their study observed significant improvements in emotional well-being among reintegrated children.Furthermore, the high level of agreement among staff and officers overseeing reintegration programs, as seen in this research and the studies, underscores the importance of training and supporting professionals involved in the reintegration process. This support can help maintain the positive impact of reintegration on emotional well-being and ensure the well-being of both children and their families.

The emotional and psychological well-being of individuals is closely linked to their overall quality of life and social integration. Therefore, these findings have implications for broader societal well-being and community cohesion. Reintegration programs can contribute to the creation of a more emotionally healthy and resilient society by addressing the emotional struggles faced by those separated from their families.

Policymakers should also consider the long-term effects of reintegration on emotional well-being. Longitudinal studies, as seen in the study from Nigeria, can provide valuable insights into the sustained impact of reintegration efforts, helping to refine and improve these programs over time.

Additionally, these findings highlight the need for continued research and evaluation of reintegration programs to ensure their effectiveness and adaptability to different cultural and regional contexts. Comparative studies across various countries and contexts, similar to the studies presented, can help identify best practices and inform evidence-based policy decisions.

The research findings and comparisons to studies provide robust evidence that reintegration efforts have a positive impact on emotional and psychological well-being. These results emphasize the importance of supporting and expanding reintegration programs, particularly those with a family-based approach. By doing so, societies can promote the emotional well-being of separated individuals and contribute to healthier, more inclusive communities. Policymakers, practitioners, and researchers should collaborate to ensure the continued success and improvement of reintegration initiatives, ultimately benefiting individuals and society as a whole.

The research findings highlight the positive impact of reintegration on children's social skills. Key results include: 70% of children reported an improvement in their social skills following reintegration. 78% of family members recognized enhanced social skills in reintegrated children. 80% of staff and administrators overseeing reintegration programs observed improvements in children's social capabilities. 86% of Ministry officers acknowledged the role of family environments in nurturing children's social skills.

These results underscore the pivotal role of family environments in fostering and advancing children's social capabilities. In the study conducted in South Africa by Mkhize, S., andNkosi, T. (2021). Explored the social development of reintegrated children. Their findings are consistent with the current research, as they reported a 68% improvement in the social skills of reintegrated children. While the percentage is slightly lower than in the current study, the overall trend aligns, emphasizing the positive influence of reintegration on social development.

The findings suggest that reintegration has a substantial positive impact on children's social skills. The high percentages of children, family members, staff, and Ministry officers recognizing improvements in social capabilities underscore the importance of family environments in nurturing and advancing these skills. The statements from participants highlight the development of confidence, empathy, cooperation, and better social interactions resulting from the reintegration process.

These results emphasize the significance of family-centered reintegration efforts. Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize programs that facilitate the reunification of children with their families. Such programs can provide valuable lessons in social values, norms, and interactive skills within a supportive family setting.

The improved social skills observed post-reintegration have broader implications for children's peer interactions and integration into their communities. This development can lead to increased participation in school, extracurricular activities, and community events, ultimately contributing to the child's overall well-being and integration.The role of staff and administrators overseeing reintegration programs is crucial. Therefore, training and support for these professionals should include a focus on facilitating social development in reintegrated children. This can ensure that the positive impact on social skills is maximized.

The research findings and comparisons to studies highlight the substantial positive impact of reintegration on children's social skills. These results emphasize the importance of family-centered reintegration efforts, the value of professional support, and the potential for improved peer interactions and community integration. Policymakers and practitioners should consider these findings when designing and implementing reintegration programs to maximize the social development of separated children.

The research findings highlight a notable and encouraging trend in academic advancement among reintegrated children. These results collectively suggest that a supportive family environment significantly contributes to improved academic outcomes for reintegrated children.Mitchell (2020) examined the educational impact of family reintegration programs. Their findings align with the current research, as they reported a 70% increase in the academic performance of reintegrated children. This study supports the idea that family reintegration positively influences academic outcomes.

The findings suggest that reintegration plays a pivotal role in promoting academic advancement among children. The high percentages of children, family members, staff, and Ministry officers recognizing improvements in academic performance highlight the significance of a supportive family environment in nurturing children's educational outcomes. The statements from participants emphasize the benefits of family support, guidance, and exposure to older siblings' knowledge in enhancing academic progress.

These results underscore the importance of family-centered reintegration efforts in promoting academic success. Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize programs that facilitate the reunification of children with their families, as the stability and support provided at home significantly contribute to a child's ability to focus on their studies and excel academically.

The positive change in academic performance observed by schools among reintegrated children, as reported by staff members, highlights the need for collaboration between reintegration programs and educational institutions. Schools can play an active role in supporting the academic development of reintegrated children, aligning their efforts with the positive impact of family reintegration.

The research findings and comparisons to studies highlight the significant positive impact of reintegration on academic advancement among children. These results emphasize the value of family-centered reintegration efforts, collaboration with schools, long-term planning, and the role of familial support in fostering academic motivation. Policymakers and practitioners should consider these findings when designing and implementing reintegration programs to maximize the educational outcomes of separated children.

The research findings highlight a significant and positive shift in behavioral patterns among reintegrated children: These results collectively underscore the profound influence of a familial environment in addressing and mitigating behavioral challenges in children.Turner (2021) examined the behavioral improvement in reintegrated children. Their findings align with the current research, as they reported a 70% reduction in behavioral issues among reintegrated children. This study supports the idea that family reintegration positively influences behavior.

The findings suggest that reintegration plays a pivotal role in positively influencing children's behavior. The high percentages of children, family members, staff, and Ministry officers recognizing improvements in behavior highlight the significance of a familial environment in teaching valuable life lessons, fostering discipline and routine, and providing a sense of security, ultimately leading to reduced behavioral issues.

These results emphasize the importance of family-centered reintegration efforts in addressing and mitigating behavioral challenges in children. Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize programs that facilitate the reunification of children with their families, as the stability, discipline, and routine provided at home significantly contribute to improved behavior.

The role of the family environment in instilling discipline, routine, and a sense of security has broader implications for children's overall well-being. Family support and stability can help children develop emotional regulation, conflict resolution skills, and responsibility, which are essential life skills that can benefit them throughout their lives.

The research findings and comparisons to studies highlight the significant and positive impact of reintegration on behavioral improvement among children. These results underscore the value of family-centered reintegration efforts, supportive family environments, data-driven decision-making, and the role of professionals in fostering positive behavioral changes. Policymakers and practitioners should consider these findings when designing and implementing reintegration programs to enhance the behavioral well-being of separated children.

The research findings highlight a significant strengthening of family bonds following reintegration: 78% of reintegrated children reported experiencing a strengthening of family ties. 80% of family members noted a deepening of familial bonds. 77% of staff and administrators observed stronger connections within reintegrated families. 85% of Ministry officers emphasized the vital role of family bonds in holistic child development and the strengthening of these bonds through reintegration. These results collectively underscore the profound significance of family bonds in nurturing strong, meaningful connections within the family unit.

Müller (2020) explored the impact of family reintegration on family dynamics. Their findings align with the current research, as they reported a 79% increase in the strength of familial bonds following reintegration. This study supports the idea that reintegration plays a vital role in strengthening family ties. Their results complement the current research, as they noted an 82% improvement in family connections after reintegration. This study reinforces the positive correlation between family reintegration and the strengthening of family bonds.

The findings suggest that reintegration serves as a catalyst in strengthening family bonds. The high percentages of children, family members, staff, and Ministry officers recognizing the deepening of familial connections underscore the vital significance of these bonds in holistic child development. The statements from participants reflect the newfound appreciation, deeper emotional closeness, and increased mutual appreciation within the family unit since reintegration.

These results emphasize the importance of family-centered reintegration efforts in nurturing and strengthening family bonds. Policymakers and practitioners should prioritize programs that facilitate the reunification of children with their families, recognizing that family bonds are integral to a child's well-being.The reintegration process can serve as a platform for promoting family values and reinforcing the importance of family in a child's life. Education and support provided during reintegration can facilitate a deeper understanding of family bonds, fostering more meaningful relationships.

The research findings and comparisons to studies highlight the significant and positive impact of reintegration on the strengthening of family bonds. These results underscore the importance of family-centered reintegration efforts, promoting family values, considering the long-term impact, and being culturally sensitive in supporting families. Policymakers and practitioners should consider these findings when designing and implementing reintegration programs to enhance family bonds and holistic child development among the reintegrated children.

## 4.5.3 Strategies for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts

The third research objective saw data from Kabwe District, Zambia, underlines that a successful reintegration strategy isn't one-dimensional. The echoing sentiments from different stakeholders emphasize the need for a blend of emotional, psychological, societal, and economic interventions.The emphasis on continuous counseling echoes studies from Nairobi, Kenya, where OchiengandKibet (2020) found that sustained psychological support dramatically improved the reintegration success rate. Likewise, skill development's significance is mirrored in a study from Accra, Ghana, by Amponsah andBoakye (2021) which showcased how skill acquisition reduced recidivism to street life.

The overwhelming consensus across stakeholders for post-program support groups implies that the reintegration journey doesn't end when a program concludes. It's a continuum, demanding persistent support. Similarly, the unanimous call from family members for community awareness campaigns points to societal stigmas and prejudices that can significantly impede the reintegration process. The results strongly advocate for a comprehensive reintegration strategy.

In light of the Kabwe District findings, coupled with corroborative studies from Nairobi and Accra, it becomes clear that reintegration isn't a singular event but a sustained effort. A multidimensional approach that addresses emotional healing, skill development, societal awareness, peer support, and economic stability can significantly enhance the reintegration success rate.The emphasis on continuous counselling was evident in the findings. Both children and staff showcased a near unanimous endorsement of its significance. This underscores a profound emotional and psychological need associated with the challenges and potential traumas of street life. The emphasis placed on continuous counselling aligns with insights from global studies. For instance, research conducted by Singh and Das (2019) in New Delhi, India, emphasized that continuous emotional and psychological support played a pivotal role in successful reintegration, drastically reducing the chances of children returning to the streets.

Children coming from the streets into a family environment don't just require physical comforts. The psychological scars, traumas, and behavioral patterns developed during street life demand professional intervention for successful reintegration. Continuous counselling can aid in understanding and addressing these emotional challenges and coping mechanisms, helping both the child and the family to adapt and grow together.

Acknowledging the importance of continuous counselling suggests that any reintegration program needs to be paired with long-term psychological support. This involves not just initial counselling sessions, but sustained touch points over time to monitor and address evolving challenges and to provide a safe space for both the child and family.

Skill development emerged as a pivotal recommendation from the findings. A substantial percentage from each group—children, family members, staff, and ministry officers—identified skill training as a significant factor for successful reintegration. This suggests a clear direction towards empowerment and self-reliance as a means of long-term success.

The emphasis on skill development resonates with findings from various global studies. For instance, a study by Moyo and Patel (2020) in Harare, Zimbabwe, highlighted that skill-based training substantially reduced the propensity of street-connected children returning to the streets, as it provided them with avenues for economic independence and self-worth.Street-connected children often face significant challenges in traditional educational environments due to past traumas and different life experiences. Skill development programs can offer a more practical and engaging path to learning, helping them gain tangible skills that can be directly applied in the workforce. This not only aids in economic stability but also builds confidence and a sense of self-worth

The consensus on skill development programs signifies that reintegration efforts should look beyond emotional and psychological support. Practical tools, in the form of skills that can lead to employment, are crucial. This not only benefits the individual child but also offers a chance to uplift the economic situation of the entire family, reducing the financial stressors that may contribute to homelessness.The recommendation of establishing post-program support groups received unanimous endorsement, especially from the staff. The data revealed a clear consensus among children, family members, and ministry officers on the benefits of continuous, community-based support after the formal reintegration program concludes.The value of post-program support groups has been echoed in international contexts. A study by Adeleke andAdelabu (2018) conducted in Nigeria emphasized that support groups for street-connected children resulted in improved self-esteem, better social relationships, and reduced tendencies to return to the streets.

Reintegration is a continuous journey, and the transitionary period following structured programs can be a vulnerable time for many children. The potential isolation, coupled with adjusting to a new way of life, can be overwhelming. Support groups provide a safe space for sharing experiences, expressing concerns, and seeking advice, thereby reinforcing the reintegration process. The strong advocacy for post-program support groups indicates that successful reintegration requires a network of sustained support. While structured programs lay the foundation, support groups can continue the momentum, ensuring children and families don't feel abandoned post-program.

Community awareness campaigns emerged as a vital recommendation, especially from family members, with 100% endorsing its importance. These campaigns aim to break societal prejudices, increase understanding, and foster acceptance for children reintegrated from the streets. In international contexts, community awareness campaigns have proved effective in breaking down societal barriers. A study by Mwansa, L. (2016) on street-connected children in Lusaka, Zambia, showed that well-executed awareness campaigns can significantly improve community perceptions and reduce stigma.

The reintegration of children from the streets into family structures is not solely an individual or family journey—it's a community process. Negative perceptions, misunderstandings, and discrimination from the community can hinder reintegration and exacerbate the challenges these children face. Raising community awareness ensures that the larger community becomes an ally rather than an obstacle. Community acceptance is crucial for the successful reintegration of children. Positive community relationships can bolster a child's self-worth, reduce feelings of isolation, and provide additional support structures. There's a need to focus on broader societal awareness, ensuring communities are informed, empathetic, and supportive.

Financial assistance is seen as a pivotal component for the successful reintegration of children from the streets. From the study, both children and family members (each at 60%) voiced the challenges posed by financial struggles, underlining the potential risks these economic pressures can create in terms of pulling the child back to the streets. The recognition of this issue also resonates with 60% of staff and 70% of ministry officers, pointing towards its broader importance.

Globally, financial hardships remain one of the main reasons children find themselves on the streets. A study conducted by Tembo, J. (2018) in Ndola, Zambia, revealed that financial assistance, when paired with other support mechanisms, greatly improves the reintegration success rate, ensuring children and their families can overcome economic barriers. The allure of the streets can often be tied to the perception of potential economic gains, no matter how meager. For a child who has been a breadwinner on the streets, reintegrating into a family structure with financial struggles can present an emotional and psychological challenge.

Financial assistance not only eases this pressure but also reinforces the family's ability to support and nurture the child. To ensure reintegration is successful in the long term, families need a stable financial environment. This doesn't merely mean handouts but rather a comprehensive approach that could encompass direct financial aid, economic empowerment programs, skill training for family members, and even micro-loans for establishing small businesses.

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.0 Overview

This chapter summarizes the main findings of the research and offers insights into possible recommendations and future studies. Based on the challenges and successes documented in the previous chapter, we derive strategies that could enhance the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District, Zambia.

## 5.1. Conclusion

The process of reintegrating homeless children into family and societal structures in Kabwe District, Zambia, reveals a complex interplay of emotional, psychological, and socio-economic dynamics. It isn’t a mere physical shift from street life to a domestic environment, but rather a journey of transformation on multiple fronts. Through a comprehensive analysis of various studies and contexts, the research has discerned a consistent pattern of positive outcomes associated with child reintegration efforts.

First and foremost, child reintegration has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to enhance child well-being. Reuniting children with their biological families or suitable care arrangements has consistently resulted in improved psychological and emotional health, better educational prospects, and an overall higher quality of life for the children involved. These outcomes are a testament to the transformative power of reintegration in nurturing the development and emotional stability of vulnerable children.

Furthermore, family stability emerges as a cornerstone benefit of child reintegration. The reuniting process fosters stronger familial bonds and more stable family dynamics. Families are often provided with essential support and resources, empowering them to better meet their children's needs and ensuring a more nurturing and secure environment for their growth and development.

Moreover, community involvement and cultural sensitivity have been highlighted as critical factors in the success of child reintegration initiatives. Local communities, organizations, and volunteers play instrumental roles in supporting the reintegration process, ensuring that children are welcomed back with open arms and provided with the necessary resources and support tailored to their unique backgrounds.

In essence, the reintegration of homeless children in Kabwe District is a multi-dimensional challenge. Addressing it requires a holistic approach that considers emotional, psychological, social, and economic factors. While the challenges are profound, with targeted efforts, understanding, and community participation, the process can lead to successful, sustainable outcomes for these children.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Continuous Counseling: Offer regular, accessible counseling sessions for both children and families, addressing past traumas, helping adapt to new environments, and building trust.

Skill Development Programs: These should be introduced as part of the reintegration program, aimed at equipping children with tangible skills that can be channeled into productive avenues, reducing economic pressures.

Community Awareness Campaigns: Such campaigns should be initiated to educate communities, dispel myths, and foster a sense of belonging and acceptance for reintegrated children.

Post-Program Support Groups: Establishing localized support groups, facilitated by experts but driven by community participation, can ensure a continuity of care and provide a platform for shared experiences and learning.

Financial Assistance: While not a long-term solution, initial financial assistance can alleviate immediate pressures and provide families with a buffer as they navigate the early stages of reintegration. Simultaneously, programs that promote economic empowerment, entrepreneurial training, or vocational guidance can offer a more sustainable route to financial stability.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Staff and Administrators of Re-integration Programs:

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS UNIVERSITY**

Dear Respondent,

I am a master’s student at the Information Communications University. I am conducting a research titled.Examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts: a case of Kabwe district Zambia.

You have been purposively selected to participate in this study by way of this questionnaire. The information you give is purely for academic purposes and will be treated with complete confidentiality. You reserve the right to refuse to take part in this study, and you may also terminate your participation at any time without any prior notice.

Section: A Bio Data

Section: A

1. What is your age?

A) Under 18 B) 18-24 C) 25-34 D) 35-44 E) 45-54 F) 55-64 G) 65 or older

2. What is your gender?

A) Male

B) Female

C) Non-binary/third gender

D) Prefer not to say

E) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your highest level of education completed?

A) Less than high school

B) High school graduate

C) Some college or vocational training

D) Bachelor's degree

E) Postgraduate degree (Master's, PhD, etc.)

4. What is your current employment status?

A) Employed full-time

B) Employed part-time

C) Unemployed and actively seeking work

D) Unemployed and not currently seeking work

E) Self-employed F) Retired G) Student H) Homemaker I) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Section: B Questions

1. What is the estimated percentage of homeless children among the total child population in Kabwe District?
2. What are the primary reasons leading to child homelessness in Kabwe District?

A) Family conflicts

B) Poverty

C) Lack of access to education

D) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Are there distinct differences in the characteristics of homeless children in urban and rural areas of Kabwe District?

A) Yes

B) No

1. How does the age distribution of homeless children in Kabwe District vary?

A) Young children (under 10 years)

B) Adolescents (10-18 years)

C) Mixed age groups

1. What is the gender distribution among homeless children in Kabwe District?

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1. What are the characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia?

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1. Can you share your personal experiences and reasons that led children to return to the streets after participating in a reintegration program? (Open-ended)

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1. Are there any specific challenges or difficulties during family reintegration that may contribute to the child return to the streets?

A) Lack of family support

B) Economic hardship

C) Stigma and discrimination

D) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How satisfied were you with the support and services provided during your reintegration program?

A) Very satisfied

B) Somewhat satisfied

C) Neutral

D) Dissatisfied E) Very dissatisfied

1. Do you give any follow-up support after reintegration? If yes, what type of support was it?

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1. Based on your personal experience with a family reintegration program, what aspects of the program do you believe are most effective in supporting transition back to family or community?

A) Counseling and emotional support

B) Educational support

C) Financial assistance

D) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Can you identify any specific challenges or barriers encountered during family reintegration process that, if addressed, could improve the overall effectiveness of such programs?

A) Lack of follow-up support

B) Limited access to vocational training

C) Family-related challenges

D) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. In your opinion, what kind of ongoing support or follow-up services would be helpful for children and families after reintegration to ensure a successful and lasting transition?

A) Continued counseling and mentoring

B) Scholarships for further education

C) Economic empowerment programs

D) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you witnessed any best practices or innovative approaches in family reintegration efforts in Kabwe District that you believe should be replicated or expanded?

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1. From your perspective, what recommendations do you have for policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders involved in family reintegration efforts to make these programs more effective and sustainable? ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

Thank you

## Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Children who have Undergone Family Re-integration Programs

Dear Respondent,

I am a master’s student at the Information Communications University. I am conducting a research titled. Examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts: a case of Kabwe district Zambia.

You have been purposively selected to participate in this study by way of this questionnaire. The information you give is purely for academic purposes and will be treated with complete confidentiality. You reserve the right to refuse to take part in this study, and you may also terminate your participation at any time without any prior notice

1. To ascertain the prevalence and characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia.

1. Can you share your experiences of homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia? What were the circumstances that led to your homelessness?
2. What was your experience like when you were participating in the family re-integration program? Can you describe the support and services you received during this process?
3. How has your life changed since you were reintegrated with your family? Can you highlight any positive or challenging aspects of your reintegration?
4. In your opinion, what are the most important factors that contributed to the success of your family re-integration? Were there any challenges you encountered during this process?
5. Based on your experiences, what recommendations or suggestions do you have for improving family re-integration programs and support for children who have experienced homelessness in Kabwe District?

2. To assess the benefits of child reintegration.

1. Can you share your experiences and reasons that led you to return to the streets after participating in a reintegration program? What were the circumstances that triggered this decision?
2. Were there any challenges or difficulties you encountered during your reintegration into your family or community that may have contributed to your return to the streets?
3. How do you perceive the support and services provided to you during the reintegration process? Were there any gaps or areas where you felt additional support was needed?
4. In your opinion, what are the common factors that might cause other children to return to the streets after undergoing a reintegration program in Kabwe District, Zambia?
5. Based on your experiences, what recommendations or strategies would you suggest to improve the effectiveness of reintegration programs and reduce the likelihood of children returning to the streets?

3. To develop evidence-based recommendations for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District.

1. Based on your personal experience with a family re-integration program, what aspects of the program do you believe were most effective in supporting your transition back to your family or community?
2. Can you identify any specific challenges or barriers you encountered during your family re-integration process that, if addressed, could improve the overall effectiveness of such programs?
3. In your opinion, what kind of ongoing support or follow-up services would be helpful for children and families after reintegration to ensure a successful and lasting transition?
4. Have you witnessed any best practices or innovative approaches in family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District that you believe should be replicated or expanded?
5. From your perspective, what recommendations do you have for policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders involved in family re-integration efforts to make these programs more effective and sustainable?

## Appendix 3: Questionnaire guide for Family Members of Re-integrated Children:

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS UNIVERSITY**

Dear Respondent,

I am a master’s student at the Information Communications University. I am conducting a research titled.Examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts: a case of Kabwe district Zambia.

You have been purposively selected to participate in this study by way of this questionnaire. The information you give is purely for academic purposes and will be treated with complete confidentiality. You reserve the right to refuse to take part in this study, and you may also terminate your participation at any time without any prior notice.

Section: A

1. What is your age?

A) Under 18 B) 18-24 C) 25-34 D) 35-44 E) 45-54 F) 55-64 G) 65 or older

2. What is your gender?

A) Male

B) Female

C) Non-binary/third gender

D) Prefer not to say

E) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your highest level of education completed?

A) Less than high school

B) High school graduate

C) Some college or vocational training

D) Bachelor's degree

E) Postgraduate degree (Master's, PhD, etc.)

4. What is your current employment status?

A) Employed full-time

B) Employed part-time

C) Unemployed and actively seeking work

D) Unemployed and not currently seeking work

E) Self-employed F) Retired G) Student H) Homemaker I) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Section: B

1. How has the reintegration of your child affected your family dynamics and daily life?

a) Improved family relationships

b) Increased financial strain

c) No significant change

d) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Were there any challenges or difficulties that your family faced during the reintegration process of your child?

a) Adjusting to changes in household routines

b) Financial difficulties

c) Stigma or social pressure

d) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. How satisfied are you with the support and guidance you received during the reintegration of your child?

a) Very satisfied

b) Somewhat satisfied

c) Neutral

d) Dissatisfied

E) Very dissatisfied

1. In your opinion, how has the reintegration of your child influenced your family's overall well-being?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
2. Do you believe that community involvement and awareness about family reintegration programs could be improved? If so, how?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
3. Are there any legal or policy changes that you think would benefit families undergoing the reintegration process?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
4. In your opinion, what role should local community organizations and support networks play in assisting families during and after the reintegration of a child?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
5. What factors, in your opinion, contributed most significantly to the successful reintegration of your child into the family?

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9. Were there any challenges or obstacles that you believe could have been prevented or mitigated to enhance the success of the reintegration process?

a) Lack of access to support services

b) Insufficient preparation and guidance

c) Family-related conflicts

d) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. How do you perceive the support and services provided to your family during your child's reintegration process?

11. Were there any unexpected positive outcomes or benefits for your family as a result of the reintegration?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

12. Based on your experience, what kind of support or resources do you believe would have been helpful for your family during and after the reintegration process?

a) Ongoing counseling and support

b) Financial assistance

c) Parenting skills training

d) Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you believe there is a need for ongoing support or follow-up services for families after their child has been reintegrated?

a) Yes

b) No

14. Have you come across any positive examples or successful strategies from your own or other families' reintegration experiences that you believe should be shared or replicated?...........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

15. From your perspective, what recommendations do you have for policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders involved in family reintegration efforts to make these programs more effective and supportive for families like yours?...................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................

## Thank you

## Appendix 4: Interview Guide for Officers/Facilitators from Ministry OfCommunity and Social Services.

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS UNIVERSITY**

Dear Respondent,

I am a master’s student at the Information Communications University. I am conducting a research titled.Examining child homelessness and the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts: a case of Kabwe district Zambia.

You have been purposively selected to participate in this study by way of this questionnaire. The information you give is purely for academic purposes and will be treated with complete confidentiality. You reserve the right to refuse to take part in this study, and you may also terminate your participation at any time without any prior notice.

**1. To ascertain the prevalence and characteristics of child homelessness in Kabwe District, Zambia.**

1. In your assessment, how prevalent is child homelessness in Kabwe District? Can you provide specific figures or estimates?
2. What common characteristics or patterns have you observed among homeless children in the district?
3. Are there specific regions or areas in Kabwe where child homelessness is particularly concentrated?
4. What age groups among children are most commonly seen on the streets? Are there more boys than girls or vice versa?
5. Has the ministry undertaken any recent surveys or studies to quantify the extent of child homelessness? If so, what were the key findings?

**2. To assess the benefits of family reintegration.**

1. Based on your observations and reports, why do some children return to the streets after completing the reintegration program?
2. Are there specific components of the current reintegration program that seem less effective in ensuring long-term stability for the children?
3. What feedback, if any, have you received from children who returned to the streets after undergoing the reintegration program?
4. How does the ministry track the progress of children post-reintegration? Are there any follow-up mechanisms in place?
5. Are there any external factors, like family pressure or community stigma that play a significant role in children's decisions to return to the streets?

**3. To develop evidence-based recommendations for improving the effectiveness of family re-integration efforts in Kabwe District.**

1. Based on the data and reports available, what are the key barriers to successful family reintegration in Kabwe District?
2. Are there any best practices or successful models from other regions or countries that the ministry has considered adopting?
3. How does the ministry gather feedback from families post-reintegration? Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that the reintegration process is benefiting both the child and the family?
4. Are there specific resources or support systems that families indicate they need for successful reintegration?
5. In your opinion, what specific steps or actions should be taken immediately to enhance the effectiveness of the family reintegration efforts in Kabwe District?