

"AN EXAMINATION OF THE LEGAL MECHANISMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA AND ZIMBABWE"



University of Venda

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
VENDA IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MAGISTER
LEGUM (LL.M)

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YEAR: APRIL 2015

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a menace which has plagued many countries. It has the capacity to inflict insurmountable pain if it goes unabated. Children, in particular, have become increasingly vulnerable to domestic violence due to the fact that they are weak and depend mainly on adults. Having identified children as a major target of domestic abuse in Zimbabwe and South Africa, this study seeks to examine the efficacy of the legal measures put in place to cater for them. The research examines the thorny issue of access to justice for minors who are victims of domestic violence in selected areas in South Africa and Zimbabwe respectively. The selected areas for this study are Vhembe district in Limpopo, South Africa, and Masvingo in Zimbabwe. The main purpose of the study is to determine the extent to which minors who are victims of domestic violence have access to justice and the efficacy of the remedies available. The efficacy of any criminal justice system is a significant determinant of the trust that the people governed by the system, may repose in it. Thus, the various legislation which deal with domestic violence in South Africa and Zimbabwe are examined. The purpose is to determine the efficacy of the practical measures and processes which the two countries have put in place to combat the menace of the domestic abuse of children.

Key Words

Access to justice, criminal justice system, domestic violence, efficacy, gender-based violence, legislation, minor, remedies, victim, vulnerability