

**Probing the Contributory Factors to the Phenomenon of Zimbabwean
Unaccompanied Minors and Streetism in Musina Town**

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DECLARATION

I, Tshilidzi Petunia Netshidongololwe, declares that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree at any other university or institution. All the materials cited in this study have been duly acknowledged.

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Signature

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Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all Zimbabwean nationals, especially Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town and Musina community members.

ABSTRACT

Migration is a global phenomenon prompted mainly by political and economic conditions. Many people migrate to other countries in search for better living conditions. However, migration may also bring about the problem of unaccompanied minors. As a result, many of these unaccompanied children end up in the streets because they have no one to fend for them. Street children are usually vulnerable to victimization, exploitation, and abuse of their civil, economic, sexual and health rights. This poses a serious challenge for the host country.

This study aims to probe the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina town in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study is also aimed at identifying intervention measures to address the impact of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina town. The study uses a qualitative approach to get in-depth information on the contributory factors and experiences of streetism and Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors in Musina Town. The respondents of this study will be both male and female Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors between the ages of fourteen to seventeen in Musina. Face-to-face interviews will be used for data collection. Purposive and snowball sampling will be used to identify ten key respondents (street children) and eight complimentary respondents (stakeholders) to elicit data on the experiences of unaccompanied migration and streetism among Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors.

Key words: Migration, Streetism, Street children, Streets, Households, Shelter

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Virus

CBD- Central Business District

CMC- Cape Metropolitan Council

HIV- Human Immune Virus

HRW- Human Rights Watch

IOM- International Organization for Migration

NGO- Non Governmental Organisations

SAPS- South African Police Service

WHO- World Health Organisation

UN- United Nations

UNICEF- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

US- United States

USA- United States of America

UK- United Kingdom

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. An overview

Human migration is the movement of people from one place to the other and it involves both adults and children. It is often characterised by the movement of people from rural to urban centres. A large number of people migrate to the cities and towns in search of job opportunities (Behura & Mohanty, 2005; Magqibelo et al., 2016). Zhang (2010) notes that migration is the oldest course of action against poverty and the decision to migrate is often on expected income differentials between rural and urban areas.

As parents move from one place or country to another, they move with their children to their destinations. Some of the children may end up being separated from their parents which may force them to live on the streets in order to fend for themselves. However, adverse situations may force children to migrate in order to support themselves and their families (Ansell, 2005).

Unaccompanied minors from other countries are highly susceptible to become street children because of the inadequate knowledge about the host nation. As street children are often forced by circumstances beyond their control to work for their own survival. This makes them to become working children. They leave their countries with the hope of finding greener pastures only to find themselves living in the streets and unemployed. This situation is likely to push them to indulge in illegal activities in order to survive.

A range of individual, household, community and national factors influence migration. For example, the high population growth rate in Ghana in the last three decades has generally increased the domestic supply of labour. In the areas like the Upper East Region in Ghana, this has put pressure on the available cultivable land, thereby inspiring migration (Abdulai 1999 cited in Anarfi et al., 2003). Such mass movement cuts across the country and the daily movement of people into the city of Accra is estimated to be around 3.5 million. The figure includes people who come and stay permanently in the city to look for jobs.

There are two main types of migration. These are external and internal migration. External migration occurs when people move from their country to other countries. This usually occurs with the aim of seeking greener pastures in other countries or running away from certain problems in one's country (United Nation, 2014). Internal migration happens when people move from one area to another within the same country. This kind of migration is often caused by the search for job opportunities. Internal migration mostly happens in the form of movement of people from rural areas to urban areas in search for employment and better income (Zhang, 2010; Chinyakata, 2015).

Migration often creates difficult and unbearable situations for some children who may ultimately run away from their homes and stay on the streets to fend for themselves. Children who run away from their homes and live on the streets are called street children. These children spend most of their lives on the streets. They use the streets as a meeting place and also a place where they can maintain themselves (Shukla, 2005:01). According to Aptekar and Stoecklin (2013) street children are young boys and girls who are unprotected or unsupervised by responsible parents since the streets have become their home and source of revenue.

1.2. Unaccompanied minors

Unaccompanied minors generally refer to immigrants who are under the age of 18 years and are not under the care of a responsible parent or legal guardian. This includes children fleeing violence or unrest, seeking work, or who are victims of trafficking (Levinson, 2011). Unaccompanied minors often lack the company of an adult when they escape to another country.

Unaccompanied minors fall under a type of migrants called irregular/undocumented/illegal migrants. These are migrants who migrate to another country without the required documentation. They use methods which are not allowed by the laws of the country and stay illegally. The South African Immigration Act 10 of 2002 states that such illegal migrants with no documentation should be arrested and deported (Polzer, 2010). Most of the Zimbabweans living in South Africa do not have legal documentation (Hammerstad, 2012). This is due to the fact that they have entered the country through

unlawful methods (Chinyakata, 2015). This information indicates that it might be very difficult to quantify the exact number of unaccompanied minors living in South Africa.

1.3. Streetism

According to the UN (2014), there are two types of street children who are in different situations on the streets. Ennew (1996) draws a distinction between children 'on the street' and children 'of the street'. 'On the street' children are those who live with their families but work on the street during the day. This means that they have a home but spend most of their day on the street. Such children spend most of the day on the streets. Some children start by begging or working on the street and return at night to sleep in their family homes. In other words, these children still see their families regularly after spending most of their day on the streets. However, such children may eventually end up leaving their homes to live on the streets permanently.

Children 'of the street' are homeless and stay on the streets full-time and do not go home anymore. Some of them may be children who have run away from their family homes, children's homes or informal foster settlements (Motala & Smith, 2003). Even if they occasionally spend time in institutions for children or youths, such children still consider the streets to be their home. Most of them do not stay long in places of safety but always find a way to abscond or run away from the place of safety.

The phenomenon of street children is critical throughout the world. It is estimated that there were about 1 to 2 million young people living on the streets in the United States of America in 2003. In addition to the USA, Canada also has a large number of children and young people living on the street as well. In 2005, United Kingdom had about 100,000 young people who ran away from home for different reasons and one in six of them slept on the streets. Spain and the Netherlands have also received many unaccompanied youthful migrants and asylum-seekers (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2002). European countries are experiencing another wave of migration of people fleeing from the war in Syria, Yemen, Afganistan and Iraq. Of course, there are also masses of African people crossing the Medditeranean Sea in attempt to go to European countries in search of better living conditions (Eshia, 2010).

South America has a huge number of street children. In the Sweat and Toil of Children Report conducted by the United States (US) Department of Labor (1994), the Inter-American Development Bank and UNICEF estimated that there were 40 million children living or working on the streets of Latin America out of an estimated total population of 500 million. Mexico City is reported to have about 1,900,000 underprivileged and street children and 240,000 of these are abandoned children. The central area of Mexico City has 11,172 street children. Of these number, 1,020 live on the street and 10,152 work there (City of Mexico/ Fideicomiso Report, 1991).

South Africa has an estimated 1.4 million AIDS orphans, and many of them end up on the streets (Roestenburg & Oliphant, 2005). According to Roestenburg and Oliphant (2005), there are more than 700,000 children between the ages of 5-17 years old who left their homes.

In the 2001 Census, 2189 homeless children, a figure that excluded children who work on the street, but live in family households were identified in South Africa. A study of street children in the greater Cape Town metropolitan area in 2000 found that about 782 children were living, working or begging on the street (Cape Metropolitan Council, 2000). The total number of street children exceeds the number of homeless children in Cape Town which was recorded in the 2001 census.

A small portion of children on South African streets are unaccompanied migrant children. Their identity documents or permits are often falsified. This makes it difficult to trace their country of origin. In 2007, there were about 3200 homeless children in Gauteng. The estimate is extremely close to the figure of 3102 children identified in 2005 by the Gauteng Alliance for Street Children (Roestenburg & Oliphant, 2005).

The Department of Social Development has since introduced a national audit of residential care facilities. The findings which were released in 2007, show that there are 193 registered children's homes. Half of them were located in Kwazulu Natal and Gauteng. Five state-run children's homes were also recorded. Together, these facilities could accommodate 12 920 children. In a recent study of 34 children's homes, some

registered and others not, it was found that 24% of the children in the homes were recorded as abandoned children (Meintjes et al., 2007).

Children find themselves on the streets for different reasons. This is attested to by the statement made by Shukla (2005), that street children are the casualties of economic growth, war, poverty, loss of traditional values, domestic violence, physical and mental abuse. Some children find themselves on the streets due to their poor family backgrounds. They end up on the streets because their families cannot economically maintain them. Children who have lost their parents due to war often end up on the streets as they no longer have parents who can support them. Domestic violence also pushes a lot of children into the streets. Children see staying on the street as a way of keeping themselves away from abuse. The loss of traditional values and the promise of excitement and freedom contribute significantly to the phenomenon of street children (Shukla, 2005).

In a study titled “Home truths: The phenomenon of residential care for children in the time of Acquired Immune Deficiency Virus (AIDS)”, most of children (30%) ran away from their homes mainly as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Other children were abandoned (24%) and orphaned (11%). The factors that forced 17% of the street children to leave their homes have not been determined. About 6% and 3% of some of the street children said they left their homes because they had no one to take care of them since their parents were suffering from illnesses. Others (3%) blamed poverty for their decision to run away from home (Meintjes et al., 2007).

Experiences and effects of unstable political, economic and social crises within countries create a situation which forces children to run away from their home. For example, the end of communism in Eastern Europe led to a massive rise of street children as a result of inadequate social security for the poor and those who were formerly supported by the state. Children suffer more than adults during the period of political and economic instability, mainly due to lack of adequate institutional support to address their special needs. Eventually, situations like these force children to run away from their homes in search of a better life elsewhere. Unfortunately, they end up on the streets (UNICEF: 2001).

The problem of street children in the United States of America is very serious. This situation is attributed to the United States of America's less generous social programs. However, the United States of America attracts the highest number of what Shukla (2005) calls deprived immigrant and out of married adolescent mothers. Poverty and other social conditions like political and economic factors account for a number of homeless and street children. Most of the street children are found in the global south. This is the case because most of the poor and less developed countries are in the global south. According to Ansell (2005), most children in the global south live in extremely difficult circumstances because of issues such as poverty, conflict, diseases and inadequate social support for very needy people. It is this kind of situation which puts children under enormous risks.

The above stated factors create extremely difficult situations for children who run away from their homes to fend for themselves. About 20% of the street children survive by begging, 24% by selling goods and others by doing sub-contracting work (UN, 2014). This demonstrates that street children engage in any type of work that rewards them with money or food for their survival. The difficult conditions under which street children live put an enormous pressure on them. The lack of financial support for families and children in difficult situations such as migration and life on the street makes some children play into the hands of men who may offer to help these children in exchange for sex (Ansell, 2005). Street children may end up engaging in activities that are considered to be inappropriate for their wellbeing. These conditions ultimately push some of the street children into engaging in criminal activities. For example, in one study in Toronto, it was found that 82% of the street-involved youth were victims of crime. Some of the street children were alleged to have been involved in violent physical or sexual assault (Ogrodnik, 2009).

However, only a small minority of street children are unattached or uninvolved with their own families. Throughout Brazil, about 90% of street children either lived at home or maintained regular or at least occasional contact with their families. Tacon (UNICEF, 2002) contends that throughout Latin America only 10% are completely cut off from their families. A study by Juarez concluded that Mexico, 44% of the children were found to

live with two parent families, 20% lived with their mothers, and the remaining 39% lived with relatives. Only 5% of the children lived on the streets on a full-time basis, and had severed contact with their families. Of those who retained family links, 15% spent the majority of their nights sleeping on the streets (UNICEF, 2002).

Exploitation of street children migrant children and young people in urban centres do menial jobs in and around the city in order to earn a living. As a result of lack of education and skills in any vocation, the income they receive for their services is often next to nothing, which puts them in the category of being part of the urban poor.

Street children are poverty-stricken and always in a struggle to fend for themselves in order to meet their basic needs (i.e. food, shelter, health and clothing). The unpredictable life of street children renders them susceptible to exploitation, abuse, crime and health hazards such as substance abuse, stealing, robbery, burglary, etc.

1.4. Problem statement

The prevalence of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and street children poses a serious challenge for South Africa. The vulnerability of these children is of great concern for the government and civil society organisations. These children face all sorts of maladies which subsequently destroy their childhood and their future. There are many people from neighbouring countries who are flooding South Africa in search for job and business opportunities. These people migrate to South Africa because of political and economic instability in their own countries. Internally, people may move from rural to urban areas searching for better living conditions. In the process of this movement from one place to another, children may be forced to experience difficult situations that may lead them to run away from their families or follow their parents. Such children may end up staying on the streets.

Unaccompanied minors are likely to compound problems created by the phenomenon of homeless and street children because they often end up on the streets. Migrant children leave their country with the hope of finding a better life. However, some of them end up being homeless. Some are driven to the streets by hunger, while the majority of these children are driven into the streets by their state of being orphans with no one left

to take care of them. There is also a high possibility that some of them are on the streets because shelters for the homeless cannot cope with the demand. There are homeless children who are running away from these shelters (Silva, 2009).

Homeless and street children go through the struggle of fending for themselves. Similarly, unaccompanied youth migrants may struggle as they will have no one to provide for the basic needs such as food, shelter, health and clothing and education. Conversely, these children may be subjected to abuse by other street dwellers, the police and members of the public who object to their presence. Both boys and girls who live on the streets are vulnerable to child labour, crime, robbery, rape, child prostitution substance and sexual abuse. This creates a problem for the government and youth organisations as they are expected to intervene in order to protect and provide for these street children.

1.5. Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study was to probe the prevalence, contributory factors and the effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

The study objectives are as follows:

- To determine the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town
- To identify factors which lead to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town
- To outline the effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town
- To design intervention strategies that will address the challenges of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

1.6. Research questions

The study will address the following questions:

- What is the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?
- What are the factors which lead to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?
- What are the effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?
- What are the intervention strategies that can address the challenges of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?

1.7. Significance of the study

This study is crucial because the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism has a very huge impact on young people's lives. Homeless or street children are extremely vulnerable to crime because they are very desperate. They can easily be attracted to criminal activities because of their desperation for food and other essential needs. Street children always need the assistance of caring adults and charitable services provided by governmental organizations. The study helps to provide insight into the desperate and difficult conditions under which street children live and the effects of the phenomenon of street children. Such an insight is helpful to Musina Town authorities and national government's plans to address the challenges posed by the phenomenon of youth migration and street children in Musina Town.

This study also adds to the body of knowledge regarding patterns of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism, among young people. It can help The Children's Act, The Child Justice Act, Department of Social Development and other relevant institutions and organisations in tracking down young people who are affected by homelessness and to establish a data base for further research in this area. The study further exposes the challenges faced by street children in Musina town so that possible solutions could be put in place to address the challenges. Affected stakeholders like government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which cater for street children will have authentic data necessary for policy formulation.

1.8. Clarification of pertinent concepts

Migration: It is the movement of people from one place to the other in search of better living conditions (Oxford Dictionary, 2016).

Unaccompanied minors: They generally refer to immigrants who are between the ages of 14 and 17 and are not under the care of a parent or legal guardian. This includes children fleeing violence or unrest, seeking work, or who are victims of trafficking (Levinson, 2011).

Homelessness: It is a state whereby “an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility (e.g., shelters) that provides temporary living accommodations, and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing.” A homeless person is an individual without a permanent home who may live on the streets; stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle; or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation (National Health Care for the Homeless Council, 2016).

Streetism: It is a state of being a street child (Eshia, 2010).

Street children: According to the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005, a street child means “a child who (a) because of abuse, neglect, poverty, community upheaval or any other reason, has left his or her home, family or community and lives, begs or works on the streets; or (b) because of inadequate care, begs or works on the streets but returns home after night”.

Gumagumas: A Zimbabwean term which refers to criminals that prey upon refugees crossing the South African border (Magqibelo, 2016).

1.9. Chapter division

The dissertation will be divided into the following 5 chapters:

Chapter 1

This chapter is an orientation of the study and it presents a general introduction to the study. It highlights the background and context within which the study is conducted and also presents the problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives of the study and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2

This chapter basically focuses on the literature review or the theoretical literature. The literature on unaccompanied minors who end up as street children in foreign countries will be reviewed in this chapter. This chapter also discusses the main causes and the effects of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. This chapter also deliberates reasons why unaccompanied street children are not based in any shelter.

Chapter 3

This chapter focuses on the design of the research and the methodology which has been used in obtaining data employed in the study.

Chapter 4

This chapter focuses on the presentation of the data as well as the analysis and discussion of the empirical findings of the study.

Chapter 5

The last chapter provides the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations which emanate from the study.

1.10. Conclusion

In a nutshell, this chapter posed as an orientation of the study because it presented general information of the study as a whole. It focused on the introduction and background of the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Highlights of the problem statement, research questions, aims and objectives of the study and the significance of the study were presented.

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to review and critique studies which are related to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. This chapter probed deeply into the literatures of the background information relevant to concepts such as migration, unaccompanied minors, streetism, contributory factors of unaccompanied minors and streetism, the prevalence of unaccompanied minors and streetism, the effects of unaccompanied minors and streetism and the preference of staying on the streets than in shelters.

2.1. Introduction

Migration and particularly the issue of unaccompanied minors is a very sensitive issue which comes with a lot of challenges for the victims and the population at large. Migration involves both adults and children. Migrant children who leave their countries unaccompanied have to go through child work in their destination point which raises a question about children's rights issues. Unaccompanied migrant children are highly susceptible to become street children because of the inadequate local knowledge they have on their destination points. Migrants are the most underprivileged people in terms of economic, social and human development. Street children end up engaging themselves in work for survival which also at some point makes them working children.

Most researchers who have studied this phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and "streetism" or "street children" have over the years assisted in documenting several issues confronting children on the street. Some of these issues include: the numerous factors that contributes towards the phenomenon, characteristics of street children, the way of living in the streets, the effects faced by children living on the street and the preference of streets over shelters (Eshia, 2010; Magqibelo et al., 2016). Beazley (2002) suggests that, matters of street children must be understood in the light of a

global discourse on child labour and children's rights. He deeply looks into the issue of how work has become a big part of these children's lives.

2.2. Defining migration

Migration simply refers to moving from one place to another in search of better living conditions. Migration can either be internal wherein people move from rural to urban areas within the country and external migration wherein people move to other countries all in search for a better life. The focus of this study is on external migration; where minors from Zimbabwe are migrating to South Africa without the company of a parent or guardian.

Zhang (2010) states that migration is one of the oldest strategy of action that people take against poverty and that the decision to migrate is based on expected income differentials between rural and urban areas regardless of the type of migration. It is being recognized that issues of migration are extremely complex and dynamic because there are a number of reasons that one can associate with it. Tacoli and Mabala (2010) suggest that this may comprise a wide range of forms and types of movement which consists of, among others, an increasing number of destinations where migrants can select from and migrant flows which encompass different sex, age and ethnic compositions. To support the above statement Min Harris (2010) states that young people view migration as an opportunity to improve their conditions and also to acquire new skills that help them as they transition to adulthood. This implies that migrants do not just land in any location in the host country, they match certain ways of living in certain areas with their own interests and then take an informed decision to migrate.

2.3. Who are unaccompanied minors?

An unaccompanied minor is defined as a child lacking the presence of a parent or a legal guardian. Levinson (2011) suggests that this term is commonly used in immigration law and in airline policies. The specified definitions may differ from country to country or airline to airline. In immigration law unaccompanied minors, also known as separated children, which in general terms described as foreign nationals or stateless persons who are under the age of eighteen, who arrive on the territory of a particular

state without the company of a responsible adult, for as long as they are not effectively taken into care of such a person (Levinson, 2011). It also comprises minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of state with a legal guardian. This usually occurs due to poverty when parents in a foreign country can no longer afford to provide for their family (Eshia, 2010).

Most countries within Europe and North America are experiencing an increase in the flow of unaccompanied minors. The majority of these minors are male between the age of 15 and 18, arriving from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Western and Central Africa and Somalia. Most of them apply for asylum when they arrive in the receiving country (Levinson, 2011; Zhang, 2010).

Levinson (2011) discovered that just a few countries have come up with non-asylum procedures to help them with resolving unaccompanied minor cases. In Spain most of unaccompanied minors' cases are placed under the non-asylum procedure. In the United States, in addition to asylum, some vulnerable unaccompanied minors could be qualified for a T visa which refers to "trafficking victim", U visa which refers to "victims of crime", or Special Immigrant Juvenile status (abused, neglected, or abandoned child).

According to Eshia (2010) and Magqibelo et al., (2016), unaccompanied minors are perceived to be vulnerable and at risk due to tough circumstances they go through in the cities. This separation from their communities of origin often leaves these children with the experience of an unfamiliar culture shock and loss of a social network. Some unaccompanied minors go through very difficult circumstances in their childhood caused by the early inappropriate termination of their educational progress, involvement in hard labour under harsh conditions, sleeping in unhygienic places and crime. It is clear and unquestionable fact that living on the streets is a very challenging and distressing situation that children can find themselves in. Such situations are those where children and young people's rights are either denied or completely crushed. Their daily economic struggles and hassles in their activities indicate how difficult life is when handling such categories of children in the urban centres.

The migration of people from different locations congregating at a particular point unintentionally places a lot of pressure on the existing facilities in the destination city. This also brings about difficulties in most situations in the lives of these migrants. These minors find themselves engaging in all sorts of activities including crime in order to earn a living. Menial jobs done by unaccompanied minors and young people who are located in urban centres are usually done in and around the city so that they can provide themselves with food and other possible essentials. Since they lack education and skills in any vocation, the income that they are given for rendering their services is frequently next to nothing. This places them in the category of being part of the urban poor.

2.4. Defining streetism

Streetism refers to the state of being a street child or a homeless child who lives on the streets, mainly due to drugs, crime, or delinquency. The UN (2014) defines a street child as “any girl or boy for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings and wastelands, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults”. The definition of street children in the Global South can be compared favourably with the view of Schurink (1993) in which a street child is defined as a boy or a girl who is certainly under the age of eighteen and who decided to leave his or her home either on a part time or permanent basis (resulting from problems at home and or school). Most of his/ her time on the street is not supervised. It is part of a subculture of a child who lives an unprotected communal life and who depends on him/herself and other children on the streets. Such a child does not depend on any adult for providing them with physical and emotional needs such as: meals, shelter, clothing, nurturance, guidance and socialisation (Schurink, 1993 as cited in Grundeling, 2005).

Furthermore, the United Nation (2014) categorised street children in four diverse ways:

- Children who spend part of the day working on the streets in order to make money for their disadvantaged families.
- Children who return home after a number of days spent on the street,
- Children who return to their homes only on the weekends

- Children who spend their entire lives on the streets and who may travel home on occasion.

This outline describes streets children in different ways which makes it very challenging to exclude most children in the Global South from being labelled as “street children”. The reality of the issue is that the majority of children fall under one of these four categories.

UNICEF (Ansell, 2005) extensively makes a distinction between street children through a three-fold category:

- Candidates for the street (children from disadvantaged backgrounds who spend time hanging out or working on the street).
- Children on the street (those who work on the street to make money, but usually sleep at home).
- Children of the street (those who live and work on the street without family support), (in Ansell, 2005).

The relevance of the concept to the study is that, the main respondents are unaccompanied migrant children living on the street. The study considers the main respondents to be street children because their livelihood is earned on the street and are inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults. Most of the children actually migrated to the South Africa primarily to find greener pastures in order to take care of their families and themselves.

2.5. Contributory factors to migration and streetism

There are multiple factors which may be attributed to migration and streetism. Hereunder follows the discussion of some of the factors which contribute to the phenomenon of migration, unaccompanied minors and streetism.

2.5.1. Child-headed households and abandoned children

Children that are abandoned by their families and those who are heading families are likely to be exposed to life on the streets (Zhang, 2010). As they have no parental

guidance or no one to fend for them; they have to hustle and become working children in order to make a living. The streets are the only option for these minors due to lack of qualifications, skills and work experience.

Bourdillon (2005) also stated that all over the world, children with different kinds of disabilities are commonly abandoned, this occurs predominantly in developing countries. Some parents find it hard to accept and care for their children with disabilities; due to such issues many of these children are left to resort to the streets.

2.5.2. Orphans and other vulnerable children

Refugee children from armed conflict areas, detached children, AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children, recurrently find nowhere to go but the streets (Magqibelo et al., 2016; UN, 2014). Orphans who are mostly rejected by relatives or have no knowledge on orphanage homes are also vulnerable to unaccompanied migration and streetism as well because they have to find a way to earn a living on their own.

Vulnerable children may include those who experience violent and abusive behavior such as physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and other challenges which mostly affect young people. Most of these challenges usually start from homes, wherein the vulnerable child may end up escaping to the streets (Bezuidenhout, 2015; Eshia, 2010; UN, 2014). Vulnerable children in underdeveloped countries may even end up migrating illegally into another country with the hope of finding greener pastures. This implies that challenges that orphans and vulnerable children experience becomes a push factor for migration and streetism.

2.5.3. Agriculture

Certain reasons have been attributed to migration which result to the migration issue becoming slightly complicated. In a study conducted by Zhang (2010) titled “Rural urban migration in China”, most people view employment in the rural areas which is mostly or primarily agricultural as a low prospect job. Although the location of the study was in China, the agricultural sector is also one of the major employers in South Africa’s economy. This means that Zhang’s study is very informative and offers lessons to be

learnt. Zhang (2010) argues that agriculture is seriously undermined in China. As a result, even villagers do not take it as proper work. It means that it is not rated as stable and income-generating. All suggestions as stated above contribute to rural/urban migration which may lead to streetism in the case of unaccompanied minors.

2.5.4. Education

According to the UN (2014) unaccompanied minors leave their countries to search for better education opportunities. Magqibelo (2016) further emphasised that all unaccompanied children leave their countries with hope to access education and other basic needs. To support that statement, UNICEF (2001) discovered that most children leave Zimbabwe due to unaffordability of school funds for better education. With the knowledge of free education in South Africa in the town of Musina they flee from their homes to attain education with the hope for a better future and the escape of poverty. Some are encouraged by their parents or families to flee to Musina Town in order to access better education. They believe that with qualifications they will find proper jobs and save their families from poverty. Parkins (2011) suggests that for countries to curb migration, policy makers should also put their focus on investing more on education and employment simultaneously in order for migration to reduce due to lack of quality or better education.

According to Zhang (2010) education is positively related to off-farm employment for which education level is often found to be an important factor affecting migration in this case. This implies that people who intend to do other work besides what the agriculture sector can offer should have some form of education as well.

2.5.5. Employment opportunities

In the past Zimbabwe went through land crisis which resulted in the disruption of productivity in industries such as tourism, agriculture and foreign investments. These crises led to high inflation rate. In the year 2000 the Zimbabwean land crisis led to an unemployment rate of 80% which resulted in the closing and liquidation of some industries (Lee, 2003). This left most of the Zimbabweans with despair due to their job

loss. Some skilled and productive Zimbabweans had to leave the country for greener pastures while others migrated illegally to neighbouring countries (Lee, 2003).

Zhang (2010) states three obstacles that poor migrants face. These include obstacles such as: lack of contacts, lack of information and the cost of migration. The distribution of information to potential rural migrants concerning the opportunities that are available in cities may also encourage new migration. Although, media such as television, newspaper and radio, as well as returnees and even visitors generally forecast and construct a good picture of life in the cities. Zhang (2010) also indicated that the success of migration is governed by three conditions. The conditions are whether or not the possible migrant can financially afford to move out; whether the migrant will be able to seek and find a job in the cities and whether the job is appropriate for his/her human capital and personal ambition. To support this, Tacoli and Mabala (2010), in the study titled the “Exploring mobility and migration in the contest of rural urban linkages: why gender and generation matter”, the researchers discovered that the study researchers discovered that, in all the diverse locations they studied in the Global South, the numbers of young people that are migrating, more especially young women who move independently have risen extensively. It is revealed by Tacoli and Mabala (2010)’s study that this situation is increasingly occurring due to the mixture of the increasing employment opportunities away from the home settlements. However, these employment opportunities are largely limited to domestic work, waitressing and sex work as well as economic and resource constraints in their home areas. They also indicated that the socio-cultural transformations that influence the changing ambitions of both young men and women are also reasons for their migration.

Tacoli and Mabala (2010) also discovered major differences in destinations and forms of movement. They discovered that women dominate short-distance and short-term migration, often relocating within the same districts or to neighbouring ones, though men tend to relocate for longer periods of time to work in export-oriented factories in peri-urban areas, or as domestic workers in urban centres. In contrast to women, men’s destinations and employment opportunities are further diverse. This allows men to go as far as they can since they have more options than women. This also implies that men

are more independent than women since they are not affected by a lot of responsibilities such as raising children and looking after the household.

Likewise, a study conducted by Camacho (1999) titled “Family, child labour and migration: child domestic work in Metro Manila” discovered that the most common reasons children’s state for working in their destination point were to assist parents and siblings, to study, to earn more money and better job opportunities, and to take the family off poverty. Other reasons were to satisfy personal needs, to satisfy the fantasy of the good life in the city, independence and learn how to work. Some of them run away from homes and look for work because of domestic violence or other problems at home. This implies that children working on the street find themselves in that situation due to circumstances such as poverty and while others just want to satisfy their personal needs which parents may fail to provide for.

Most of the children end their work late at 10:00 pm of which other children of their age will be asleep by that time. The study shows that the children were deprived of the necessary or required number of sleeping hours for children. Camacho (1999) also discovered that some of the domestic work which children do includes babysitting, household chores, laundry and taking care for the elderly. The study went on to reveal that most of the children sent remittances home, and some of them sent up to half of their earnings. The children in his study mentioned that their families utilise their remittances for day-to-day necessities, education and other needs for their siblings, investments, emergency needs and also as payment of debts. Bourdillon (2005) suggests that poverty is the main reason why children work instead of going to school. While the phenomenon of working children is more prevalent in poorer countries than rich ones, other variables are also significant. Such variables can be low caste status can promote people into work, the local demand for labour as does supply, irregular incomes in the family, and loss of household head.

2.5.6. Poverty

According to Bourdillon (2005), poverty is the principal reason why children prefer working instead of going to school. The majority of unaccompanied minors are driven to

the cities because of extreme poverty conditions in their countries and families. They find means to earn money and send it home for the family's survival. Most of the children who run away from their homes or children's shelters often end up on the streets since they rarely return home due to dysfunctional families, or physical, mental and/or sexual abuse (Chinyakata, 2015).

A survey conducted by Korboe (1996), in Kumasi which is one of the largest city in Ghana discovered that even though poverty may be the route reason, it is not all the time where is it found to be the immediate cause of departure and it is not the only reason which was mentioned by the children that he worked with. For that matter, most of the children who took part in the study mentioned a number of reasons, and the evidence presented from the informal interviews that were conducted by the researcher is that for some of these children, poverty alone may not have forced them to seek an independent existence on the streets.

2.5.7. Divorce and parental neglect

In a survey conducted by Korboe (1996), he discovered that a number of men, who divorce or neglect their wives usually abandon the children to the care of the women and end up refusing to fend for them. Therefore, children from such families or homes are forced to leave for the streets as their mothers fail to give care and support in a proper manner. In some instances, fathers may deny the paternity of their children by so doing leaving all the responsibilities of caring for the children in the hands of the mother who might be unemployed or earning a minimum wage at that moment. Also in the study by Raffaelli et al., (2001), children's reasons for living home include; death of a family member, abuse in family, family conflict, poverty, drugs, friends and freedom.

2.6. Children's experiences on the street

Children's experiences on the street can be identified through careful observations of their activities. Raffaelli et al., (2001), study on "How Brazilian street children do experience the street" revealed that street children's overall feeling on the street involves the feeling of freedom that is; they do not want to stick to a schedule, the feeling of greatness that is; they have a lot of friends, pals and clients, others also feel

sad, in the sense that they feel something could happen to them, loneliness and the fact that there is no one to talk to or to help them on the street. Raffaelli et al.,'s (2001) study further solicited children's own perception on the street. The children said that there are some guys who kill people on the street, they also learn doing things that they should not do like sniffing glue and stealing, there are a lot of criminals, it is not a place to live and it is not the future said the children. Others said they dislike the physical conditions (food, weather, and the living situation), authority officials or violence (the police hitting them, assaults and murder) and drugs. When the researcher asked about the attitude of people towards them. The responses included; rude, aggressive, mean, insensitive, suspicion and afraid of street children because they think they are going to rob them. This results on the children's perception on the street life implies that though these children thought living on the streets would award them with a lot of freedom for self-control; they experience all sorts of bad consequences. They themselves can point out that the streets are dangerous and not a place where one can end up with a better future. They engage in criminal activities and are also emotionally and physically abused by those with greater power.

Also on Orme and Seipel (2007) 's study on "Street children in Accra", all the children Orme and Seipel interviewed, either worked or searched for opportunities for work. Some children were lucky to have a number of jobs to support themselves. Most of the children consider begging for money or food to be an unacceptable behaviour that is why they looked for opportunities to work. A 16-year-old unemployed boy in Orme and Seipel's study emphatically made it known that Ghanaians do not beg, even if they had nothing to eat and no place to sleep. The child in the study believed that one day he would find a good job and might even go to school to make himself a better person. Another boy likewise stated that whenever he needed money he could always work to get it. He said that he was even willing to carry trash for someone, or sell rubber bags in the market place. He did not worry about tomorrow because he could always work. This shows that one of these children's coping strategy is working; regardless of their age, skills and strength they are determined and willing to work any type of job in order to provide for themselves which leave them as working children wherein time for education is disregarded.

Again Grundling (2005)'s study on "Concrete particulars of the everyday realities of street children" explained that, although migration might be common among street children elsewhere, in Namibia it is most likely restricted by the remoteness of towns. Grundling (2005) states that more than 80% of the Namibian street children operate in groups, which seems to show that, once on the street, these children develop support systems or networks, which effectively substitute for the family support system. In general, the children organize themselves into small groups, share resources, and take care of one another and of those who are not able to take care of themselves. This clearly shows the level of cohesion amongst street children in his study. The study also supports its findings with regard to the 3rd World phenomenon that most street children are actually children on the street rather than children of the street. Majority of the children interviewed indicated that they return home at night, and therefore have regular contact with their families. Street children all over the world have a similar image carved for them by society simply because they live outside the home. People who live outside homes are often considered outcast in some circles and others as deviants. They are considered deviants because they have deviated from the normal cause of society's everyday behaviour, which is living within a family and in a home, to living on the street. Children living in homes are usually supervised and under certain level of parental or adult control which society sees as a good environment for children to have a sound mind and an avenue to learn good and very responsible behaviours.

A study by Aransiola et al., (2009) conducted in Nigeria to understand the relationship of the street children (both children "on" the street and children "of" the street) with the law enforcement agents (police), shows that in the total sample, 50.2% said that they did not have cordial relationship with the police, in a similar manner; slightly more than half of the respondents selected for the study reported that they did not have cordial relationship with the police. This results indicate that some street children are not in any relationship with the police officers, in fact one can assume that some street children may run away from police officers because if they arrest them there could be complications such as being deported.

A report by the Human Rights Watch (2003) entitled “Charges with Being Children: Egyptian Police Abuse of Children in Need of Protection”, portrays a disappointing picture of the behaviour of Egyptian police. Besides the fact that police routinely arrest and detain children who need protection (and not punishment), these children are subject to extortion, beatings, verbal abuse and being transported in vehicles that are unsafe and that transport adult criminals as well (Human Rights Watch, 2003). In the same vein, a study by UNICEF (2005), includes short life histories of thirteen street children, eight boys and five girls. Eight of the children (61%) underscore the brutal and corrupt police behaviour that they have encountered. Ammar (2009) also pointed out that, in recent years, street children have witnessed a number of episodes of police brutality in Egypt. This implies that police officers who are seen as public protectors turn into offenders when it comes to these unprotected children living on the streets simply because they have no one to run to since they left their countries unaccompanied.

2.7. Working children

James and James (2008) define the concept of working children as children who put in their labour on the basis of monetary gain or without pay. The concept of working children is one of the concepts that in current years has become the preferred way of labelling children who perform all kinds of activities that used to be marked by the term “child labour” or “child work” (Boyden et al., 1998, cited in James & James, 2008). The reason behind this shift in defining the concept is the complexity in withstanding the distinction between work and labour. Until the 1980s, the concept “child labour” was traditionally used to define all kinds of activities meant for adults that were carried out by children. It was viewed as exploitative and harmful to children’s social, physical and psychological growth. On the other hand, the term “child labour” was also used more broadly to comprise other types of work done by children, including general household chores, work on family farms and caring for siblings. The criticism of this is that this kind of work is not seen as exploitative and was even judged to have educational functions within it (Boyden et al., 1998).

Boyden et al (1998), identified four categories of working children in the Global South:

- Children living in rural areas who perform unpaid work for their families;
- Children who carry out domestic work, either unpaid in their own homes or for employees
- Children who work in the informal sector in small shops or back street workshops, or street-children who make their living through, for example, windscreen washing, begging or prostitution
- Children who work in the formal economy in industrial or commercial outlets.

Like Boyden et al (1998) as indicated above, James and James (2008) also talk about children working in the formal economy in industrial or commercial outlets.

Boyden et al., (1998: 54) further said that “out of this wide range of working children, it is the children working in the informal sector who are popularly held by western media to represent working children. Yet these children constitute the minority of working children worldwide and they may not, in fact be the worst off”.

This concept is of great importance to the study because work is one of the important daily activities in the lives of street children. It is also one of the major contributory factors or attractions to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism simply because working is rewarded with an income that enhances their livelihood (Boyden et al., 1998).

2.8. Children’s rights

On the issue of children’s rights, Bourdillon (2009) states that rights do not rely on kindness and benefits disallow conditions and exemptions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 suggests that every human being is eligible to every right that is established out in the declaration, irrespective of diversity. The rights which are now denied to children who are under the minimum age of employment includes the right to work and the right to form trade unions (Eshia, 2010). Primary human rights for all people regardless of age emphasise on both empowerment and protection furthermore street children’s empowerment include work. The right to work cannot merely be viewed as an economic issue; work is believed to uplift one’s status and participation in society.

Ennew (1995) debates that the ultimate right to work may lawfully be removed only when it can be proven that it is essential for children's protection and not because of a legitimate minimum age. Ennew went on by adding some crucial yet unwritten rights for children outside the society and "usual" childhood. These rights include "the right for street children not to be labelled, to be correctly researched and counted, to work and have their own support systems respected, the rights to privacy and respect for their vulnerability (including sexuality), and the right to be protected from exploitation by the media, activists, or fundraiser" (Ennew 1995:25).

The UNICEF (2009)'s publication on the "state of the world's children", has a section where a comment is given on participation which stated that "Participation is one of the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child", however it is viewed less seriously than the other vital principles of universality, the best interests of the child, survival and development. To some extent, the participation of a child can be viewed as more debatable, problematic or tough to apply rather than measures that support child survival, growth and protection because it is grounded on impersonating children as rights holders than as recipients of charity.

The UNICEF's report went on by mentioning that the convention does not practice the term "participation" or clearly say that children have a right to take part except as a goal for children who have disabilities (article 23). However, it expects that their opinions or views be heard concerning all matters that affect them and that their views be respected and measured in accordance to their age and maturity (Article 12).

2.9. Characteristics of Street children

Grundeling (2005) and Schurink (1993) adequately and widely indicated the characteristics of street children in their definition which stated that street children are boys or girls who are under the age of eighteen and who have left their home environments, temporarily or permanently (because of problems at home and or school, or try to alleviate those problems) and who spend most of their time unsupervised on the street as part of a subculture of children who live an unprotected communal life and who depend on themselves and on each other, and not on an adult for the provision of

physical and emotional needs such as food, clothing, nurturance, direction and socialization.

Street children face many challenges such as difficulties in providing for their basic needs (i.e. food, clean drinking water, health care services, toilets and bath facilities, and warm adequate shelter, etc.). Street children are also negatively affected by the absence of parental protection and security as well as lack of moral and emotional support since they do not stay with their families (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). This implies that being a street child forces one to learn to protect and fend for oneself due to the absence of parental guidance.

When it comes to gender representation, the majority of street children are male (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999; Le Roux & Smith, 1998). This situation is probably attributed to cultural sanctions against women since girls are more controlled by their families than boys. Moreover, when girls run away from their families, they often work as servants for other families. Some of these girls engage in sex work under pimps. They get attached to pimps and prefer any other place than the streets in order to avoid being abused by boys on the streets (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). The implication of males being the majority of the street dwellers simply shows that males perceive themselves as strong enough to cope on the streets whereas females will rather sacrifice their health by involving themselves in sex work for safe accommodation.

Street children normally start living on the street at an average age of between nine and twelve years old. The majority of them keep living in the streets until they reach the ages of fifteen to sixteen years and as they grow older they usually start to look for stable jobs with better wages to keep them surviving with affordable essentials, (Magqibelo et al., 2016). This information indicates that as soon as they are about sixteen years they start to look for ways to get out of the streets.

As for cultural values, morals and traditions, Lugalla and Mbwambo (1999) view street children as children who are not only homeless or roofless, but who are also culturally rootless. This means that street children are usually not concerned about their cultures

and morals, owing to being away from their families since childhood. Their absence from their families disconnects them from their traditions and cultures.

In cases of social networking, children living on the streets who have no ties with their families start their own peer groups. These peer groups tend to play the role of a family and become a source of cohesion, economic and emotional provision. Every group consists of a leader who is followed by his group members, depending on how unified they are (Le Roux & Smith, 1998; Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). With the absence of their families, street children rely on each other for support and protection. In addition, Grundling's (2005)'s study on "Concrete particulars of the everyday realities of street children" stated that more than 80% of the Namibian street children operate in groups, which seems to show that, once on the street, these children develop support systems or networks, which effectively substitute for the family support system. This implies that the children organize themselves into small groups, share resources, and take care of one another and of those who are not able to take care of themselves. It clearly shows the level of cohesion amongst street children in his study.

Children living on the streets are victims and vulnerable to unsafe and illegal activities which include drug dealing, robbing or theft, gangsterism and all kinds of criminal activities (UNCHS, 2000). In support, Eshia (2010) stated that many of these street children also carry out economic activities such as car washing, baggage loading, parking and many more. This implies that street children as working children make a living by petty acceptable activities but they may also take part in criminal activities that may bring more money easily without too much effort.

In relation to security and protection, Eshia (2010) and Lugalla and Mbwambo (1999) stated that most street children depend on their peer groups to protect and keep them safe. Girls form their security groups differently from the way boys do. In girls' groups, they usually put an older girl who is sexually related to an older boy or a guard who will in return provide them with protection.

2.10. Effects of unaccompanied minors and streetism

Unaccompanied minors who live on the street are faced with a lot of challenges daily because of their living experiences. They face challenges such as lack of proper shelter, finding food, unhygienic environment, drug abuse, lack of health care, abuse from community members and many other challenges.

Street children earn their money through different criminal activities such as robbing, stealing, prostitution, substance abuse and car breaking (Poro, 2010).

They also suffer as victims from tolerating criminal offences against them because they fail to open criminal cases at the police stations because they are in the country illegally; reporting the crimes will result in them being deported (Bearak, 2009). To support Bearak's statement; Raffaelli et al., (2001), study on "How Brazilian street children do experience the street" also revealed that street children in Brazil stated how the authority mistreated them. They stated that police officers hit, assaults and murder them. When the researcher asked about the attitude of people towards them. The responses included; rude, aggressive, mean, insensitive, suspicion and afraid of street children because they think they are going to rob them. As young as they are, they are also faced with xenophobic attacks (Bearak, 2009).

In terms of health, their living conditions are unhygienic as they sleep on the streets, under bridges and abandoned building. Dirty unhealthy cans and buckets that they get from trash are used as pots to cook and dish food (Magqibelo et al., 2016). It is estimated that 60% of street children and young people in South Africa are infected with Human Immune Virus (HIV).

The general public's perception is that street children are criminals and they are often subjected to hostile treatment by authorities. The police are blamed for abusing street children (Ansell, 2005; Roestenburg & Oliphant, 2005).

2.11. Reasons for street children's absence from shelters

Since most street children leave their homes because of physical, social or emotional abuse, they tend to believe that even in shelters they will be bullied or mistreated. As a result they prefer running their own lives in freedom without anyone telling them what to

do. Some escape from shelters and go back to the street because the feeling of living by house rules and daily routines seem to be a punishment to them.

Street children work as car-parking boys, car guards, car washers, shoe shiners and luggage loaders and scavengers. Some older girls exchange sex for money (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999 cited in Eshia, 2010). Some of these street children depend on selling goods and begging at the traffic lights for income. Others are involved in illegal work such as drug dealing (UNICEF, 2002). In order to secure their daily basic needs they tend to set up a system whereby each group has its own zone where they conduct their activities to escape any kind of competition for the available resources (Magqibelo et al., 2016). So all these activities guarantee their independence and freedom from parental control or living under rules and routines. Their freedom leaves them with the fantasy of controlling their own life. Having street-life coping strategies they tend to avoid living in shelters.

Street children find ways to afford their daily life needs due to being very well organized. For instance, they are aware of worshipping places and times where they can go there at prayer time in order to get money or food. They are also aware of religious festivals and celebrations, as these days can bring them good sources of income. They also use tourist sites and NGOs as a good source for survival. Yet, being chased by police and state authorities usually get in the way of their activities (Eshia, 2010; UNICEF, 2002). This shows that these children are well-informed of ways to collect money and food. This also strengthens their desire to live on the streets than shelters.

2.12. Health care

Street children are exposed to a high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/ AIDS due to casual sexual relationships, unprotected sexual behaviours and prostitution. Homelessness renders most of these girls vulnerable as they cannot deny any unsafe or unprotected sexual activities. As a result, these girls may have no choice but to offer sex in exchange for security and shelter (Eshia, 2010; UNICEF, 2012). Lacking education and skills is one of the disadvantages being faced by street children

because it leaves them settling for any job in order to earn a living and sex work is the most common since it requires no qualification and is close to no labour required.

Besides being subjected to HIV/AIDS (Lockhart, 2008; Magqibelo et al., 2016) street children are also exposed to other type of diseases caused by the harsh environment in which they live. As for treatment, it is determined by how much money street children can get when one of them falls sick. If they have money, they go to the chemist to buy medicine, especially if they have some knowledge about the medicine. But if they do not have money, they wait until they heal naturally (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999, cited in Eshia, 2010). Support is given by friends when they are ill. Street children mostly live in unacceptable places such as streets, bridges, abandoned buildings, etc. In such places, they are exposed to cold weathers and unhygienic conditions which leave them susceptible to lots of sicknesses of which they may even fail to afford medication.

2.13. Theoretical framework

Theories in research play an important role as they give knowledge about the issues. The researcher discussed three theories that are related to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. The theories which are related to this study are push and pull theory, the system schema model and the household approach. These theories are discussed separately below.

2.13.1. Push and pull theory

The basic rationale of the push and pull theory is that people may leave their place or country due to its' difficult living conditions. This means that, people may decide to leave their place of origin in search for a place or country with improved or better living conditions. Generally, people often migrate from rural to urban areas because of lack of infrastructure, services, job and educational opportunities in rural areas (Cameron & Newman, 2008; Chinyakata, 2015). Rural areas often fail to provide attractive and improved living conditions for their inhabitants. In other words, people migrate to other areas because of the deteriorating circumstances in their home environment. This means that people migrate in search for improved living conditions, higher wages, and more pleasant residential environments (Boyle et al., 1998; Fielding, 1992; Halfacree,

1995; Rye, 2006). The society, family and gender differences also contribute to the individual's decision to migrate (Brettel & Hollifield, 2008). This implies that societal opinion plays an important role in influencing migration.

According to Eshia (2010), the pull and push theory is useful in analysing the various motivations that lead people to migrate to other places or countries. As there are other factors which lead to migration, the theory has, as a result, been criticised for not taking into consideration the characteristics of the individual migrant and the wider macro structures that also impact on the decisions individuals take before migrating.

2.13.2. The system schema model

This model was introduced by Mabogunje (1972) to explain the rural-urban migration. The model states that socio-cultural, economic and political factors act as stimuli to migration. According to the model, the interaction among the potential migrants, the family and the community are important in the migration decision making process. This is the case because it is a collective decision between the involved structures that determine or inform the movement to another place or country. The model further highlights the implications of rural-urban migration at both places of origin and destination. It also shows the role of kinship relations between migrants and non-migrant members of a household or a family, particularly in the provision of information about a destination, financial support to potential migrants, and assistance to newly arrived migrants to enable them to adjust to urban life.

This model is important to this study because of the role of kinship-relations and non-migrants in the decision and in helping migrants to adjust in their new destination. The limitation of the model is that it does not take into account the differences between males and females in terms of the stimuli that motivate them to migrate. Moreover, males and females may not have equal economic opportunities in urban areas because of the inequalities that stemmed from the apartheid regime and other contributory factors (Chinyakata, 2015; Eshia, 2010; Tanle, 2003).

2.13.3. The household approach

According to this approach, the household is considered the 'social arena where family members meet to make decisions concerning their well-being'. Migration arises because the household needs additional activity to satisfy livelihood requirements. Members of the household are collectively responsible for deciding who can leave and who has to stay behind. The approach is a useful tool for analysing one's position in the house as well as one's ability and power to act. It takes into account reproduction and production, social-cultural and power relations within households. The household approach also has weaknesses like other theories or approaches. The approach also tries to incorporate both the micro and macro level perspectives. In that way, it facilitates comparison between different locations, (Synnove, 1999; Tanle, 2003). However, the approach has been criticised because of the difficulties in defining a household and making a general statement about it (Tanle, 2003).

The study adopted the push and pull factors theory because it is the most applicable to this study as it covers both contributory factors of unaccompanied minors and streetism.

2.14. Conclusion

This chapter basically focused on the literature review or the theoretical literature. Literatures and scholars on Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism were reviewed in this chapter. This chapter also discussed the main concepts within the topic such as migration, unaccompanied minors and streetism. The contributory factors to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism were critically discussed in this chapter. Children's rights, working children, effects of unaccompanied migration and streetism and experiences of unaccompanied migration and streetism were also discussed. This chapter also deliberated the reasons why unaccompanied street children prefer to live on the streets than in shelter. The chapter lastly discussed theories that are most applicable to contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research design

A research design is defined as 'a set of guidelines or rules and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem' (Babbie and Mouton, 2012). It enables the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research design should be so as to maximise the validity of the results.

On the qualitative aspect of the study, the case study strategy was used. This study focused on the sub-population of unaccompanied minors who are street children in Musina Town. The qualitative approach and the case study strategy are appropriate for this study because they are aimed at getting in-depth insights on the factors that led these unaccompanied minors to streetism and how being a street child affects young people especially those who come from foreign countries.

3.2. Research methodology

Qualitative research method has been used in this study. Qualitative research method seeks to get in-depth information about the feelings, attitudes, views and explanations of the people on the phenomenon being investigated. It emphasizes the depth of an understanding and the deeper meaning of human experience which are used with the aim of generating richer data (de Vos et al., 2012; Seale, 2012). In this approach, the researcher seeks to get an understanding of the human experiences from the respondents' point of view not just from the theoretical point of view (Neuman, 2011). The main aim of qualitative research methods is to investigate the 'why' and 'how' of decision making, not just 'what', 'where', 'when' or 'who'.

3.3. Data collection methods

Data collection methods are techniques that the researcher uses to obtain information from the participants. For the purpose of this study, face-to-face interviews were used to obtain information from research participants.

According to De Vos et al., (2013), an interview is a conversation which occurs between two or more people where questions are administered by the interviewer to obtain information from the interviewee/s. It seeks to describe and find meanings of central themes in the life and world of the subjects (Bless et al., 2006). The researcher chose to use face-to-face interviews. Interviews were chosen to collect data from the subjects because they were the most effective tools of collecting data in order to gain in-depth information and insight about the phenomenon of unaccompanied migration and street children in Musina Town. The face-to-face interviews helped to capture information from both the primary respondents and the complementary respondents and also highlighted the feelings and emotions involved in being a street child.

3.4. Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability was prioritised by the researcher during data collection in order to gather data that has quality.

3.4.1. Validity

Validity refers to the adequate, factual and accuracy of the findings (Seale, 2012). The tool used to collect data which was face-to-face interviews. They helped in gaining in-depth information containing perceptions, feeling and experiences which is holistically and freely conveyed. Face validity was also ensured by the promoters of the research project and panel members of the University Higher Degree Committee (UHDC) who thoroughly went through the interview guide and recommended corrections to be made in order to improve the interview guide. According to De Vos et al., (2013), face validity is a characteristic which is desired from a measuring instrument. In the absence of face validity, resistance on the part of the respondents may be encountered which may affect the results which are acquired.

3.4.2. Reliability

Reliability refers to the stability and constancy of a research measuring tool. It can also mean the proficiency of an instrument to produce consistence results when used repeatedly (Seale, 2012). Reliability was ensured in this study by designing an interview guide in collaboration with qualitative research experts for question structuring, wording and appropriateness. The reason for all these to be done was to ensure that the interview guide produces the similar results when used again on similar participants.

3.5. Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically and logically analysing, describing and illustrating, condensing and recapping and evaluating data. While data analysis in qualitative research can include statistical procedures, many times analysis becomes an ongoing iterative process where data is continuously collected and analysed almost simultaneously (Schroder et al., 2003). Drawing unbiased inference, following acceptable norms for disciplines, reliability and validity are some of the main considerations when analysing data (De Vos et al., 2013; Gottschalk, 1995; Schroder et al., 2003).

Thematic analysis was used in this study in order to gain understanding and in-depth information on contributory factors to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Thematic analysis was chosen for the study because of its flexibility and it is easy and quick to apply. The table below shows a summary of the six phases of data analysis processes as articulated by Braun and Clarke (2006):

Table 1: Phases of thematic analysis

Phases	Process
1. Familiarisation with data	The researcher transcribes the data and reads it again and again and then note

	down main ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding features of the data systematically across the entire data set.
3. Searching for themes	Classifying codes in potential themes and gathering data which is relevant to the themes.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if themes are working in relation to the coded extracts and entire data set.
5. Defining and naming of themes	Analysis of specifying each theme, generating clear definitions and names.
6. Producing the report	Final analysis conducted and report writing

Thematic analysis can easily be used to summarise large body of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It can simply highlight similarities and differences across the data set. It also allows for social and psychological interpretations of data, etc.

3.6. Location of the study

According to De Vos et al., (2013), location of the study refers to the geographical area in which the study is conducted. The study was conducted in Musina Town, (CBD), Musina Municipality in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, in South Africa. The town is situated next to the South African Beit Bridge border post which leads into Zimbabwe. The reason for the choice of Musina Town for the study was because of its' high rate of migration, unaccompanied minors and streetism. To support this, it was reported that Musina Town has about 57 000 residents, plus 15 000 foreigners from Zimbabwe (Silva, 2009). The town is very containable as it is a small town where the respondents can be found all together in the town. Although, the respondents can be

found at different spots within the town, the study will be easier and cheaper for the researcher to conduct.

Below is the map showing Musina Town and the surrounding areas (Bearak, 2009).



3.7. Study population

According to Srydom et al., (2002:199), a population is ‘the totality of persons, events, organisation units, case records and other sampling units with which the research problems is concerned’. The population and its size is usually unknown by the researcher because it comprises of all possible cases that the researcher wants to study. Musina Town is one of the locations in South Africa where the highest number of migrant population is found (International Organization for Migration, 2013). The population of this study comprises of unaccompanied minors between the ages of fourteen and seventeen who live on the streets of Musina Town. The reason why that age group was chosen is because they are the most vulnerable age group and the population is fairly large which also enables the collection of richer data.

3.8. Sampling procedures

Sampling refers to the ‘process of selecting things or objects when it is impossible to have knowledge of a larger collection of these objects’ (de Vos et al., 2013). According to Sarantakos (2000: 156), sampling in qualitative research is relatively limited, based on saturation, not representative, the size not statistically determined, and involving low

cost and less time. Sampling is determined by the method to get the general view from just a sample of the population because it is almost impossible to conduct a study on the whole population as it may be time consuming and extremely costly. For the purpose of this study, non-probability sampling was used.

3.8.1. Non-probability sampling

According to Gray (2009) “non-probability sampling is a technique where the sample is selected in a process that doesn’t give every individual of the population an equal chance of being selected”. In non-probability sampling the odds of selecting a particular individual are not known because the researcher does not know the population size or its members (de Vos et al., 2013; Gravetter & Forzano, 2003). Not every individual has an equal chance of being selected because the researcher only needs to select those with the most desired characteristics or is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated. This study used purposive and snowball sampling for the qualitative aspects of the study.

3.8.1.1. Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling which is also known as judgemental sampling is a sampling technique based completely on the judgement of the researcher. The sample comprises elements that cover the most characteristics, representative or typical attributes of the population that serve the purpose of the study best (De Vos et al., 2012; Rubin & Babbie 2005). Purposive sampling was used to meet eight complimentary respondents who supplied the researcher with permission to meet and interview the main respondents and also to provide all the necessary information about these unaccompanied minors who leave on the streets of Musina town. The information that was gathered from the complimentary respondents also helped the researcher to locate the main respondents in their different areas. The stakeholders which are part of the complimentary respondents included, among others, Musina Local Municipality officials, South African Police officials, Department of Health and Social Development officials, churches members, Shelter for Migrants officials (Musina show ground) and Save the Children Organisation officials.

3.8.1.2. Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is normally used when there is no knowledge of the sampling frame and limited access to appropriate participants for the intended study (Alston & Bowles, 2003). Snowball sampling is a method which has to do with approaching a single case that is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated in order to gain information on other similar persons (Babbie & Mouton, 2012; de Vos et al., 2013). In snowball sampling, the researcher meets the first respondent. After soliciting the information from that respondent, the researcher then asks to be referred to another respondent to be interviewed on the same issue. The researcher met and interviewed the first respondent and then asked to be referred to at least 5 other street children. The reason why the researcher asked for at least 5 respondents was to avoid the chain from being broken just in case one of the respondents is not found in her common spot.

The researcher interviewed ten respondents, five male and five females who are originally from Zimbabwe and are unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town.

3.9. Ethical considerations

According to Strydom et al., (2002:63), ethics refers to 'a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group. These moral principles are subsequently widely accepted and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. Cozby (2001) suggests that ethical concerns are paramount when planning, conducting and evaluating research. Ethical considerations outline lawful and unlawful actions during a research study process (De Vos et al., 2013; Neuman, 2014). Ethics are basically norms of conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in order to promote an effective study. Ensuring that the researcher is ethical the following ethical principles were considered: informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation and avoidance of harm.

3.9.1. Informed consent

Informed consent refers to 'a process whereby a researcher equips potential participants with clear, detailed and factual information about the study, its methods, risks and benefits along with the assurance of the voluntary nature of participation and freedom to refuse or withdraw without penalties' (Blanche et al., 2006). The main objective of this ethical principle is to conduct the research study transparently and without deceiving the respondents (Silverman, 2013). The researcher had to explain to the respondents the purpose and objectives of the study and that their participation is voluntary. The respondents were also informed that they do not have to participate if they did not want to do so.

3.9.2. Anonymity

This is the 'ethical protection that participants remain nameless, that their identity is protected from disclosure and remain unknown' (Neuman, 2011:152). It is the researcher's duty to ascertain that the respondents' identities are not revealed. This helps to avoid any uncomfortable feelings by the respondents. Participants are comfortable if they know that their identity will not be revealed to the public and that result into increasing the validity of the data. To ensure that the respondents remain anonymous when gathering data, the researcher did not use real names of the respondents. Instead, code names and numbers were used to refer to the respondents.

3.9.3. Confidentiality

Confidentiality requires that information provided by participants, particularly sensitive and personal information, should be protected and made unavailable to anyone other than the researcher (Bless et al., 2006). With regard to anonymity and confidentiality, the researcher assured the respondents that their names will not appear against the information they give and that the information has been kept confidential and only used for the purpose of the study.

3.9.4. Voluntary participation

Participants should at all times volunteer to participate in a research project without being forced by anyone (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). Every participant should be well-

informed that their participation is voluntary and they may withdraw from the research project at any time as they wish. The researcher informed the respondents of their right of choice in participation. The respondents were well aware that they were not forced to participate in the research project. They were also informed that they were allowed to pull out of the research project at any stage of the process.

3.9.5. Avoidance of harm

One of the most crucial rules in social research is that it must not harm participants in any way, whether physically or emotionally manner (Babbie, 2007). Everything people do in life can harm others. It is, therefore, the researcher's duty to consider the risks against the significance and possible benefits of the specific research project (Babbie, 2007). The researcher has an ethical responsibility to offer protection to participants within all possible sensible limits from any form of physical discomfort that may arise from the research project (Creswell, 2003). The researcher ensured that the respondents were not harmed in any way, whether physically and emotionally.

3.10. Significance of the study

It is very crucial to conduct this study because the state of being an unaccompanied minor and living in the streets of a foreign country has a very huge impact on young people's lives. Unaccompanied minors who live on the streets are extremely vulnerable to crime because they are very desperate. They can easily be attracted to criminal activities because of their desperation for food and other essential needs. Street children always need the assistance of caring adults and charitable services provided by any concerned organizations. The study helps to provide insight into the desperate and difficult conditions under which street children live and the effects of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. Such an insight is helpful to Musina Town authorities and national government's plans to address the challenges posed by this phenomenon.

This study adds to the body of knowledge regarding patterns of the homelessness and streetism in South Africa. It can help The Children's Act, The Child Justice Act, The Department of Social Development and other relevant institutions and organisations in

tracking down young people who are affected by homelessness and to establish a data base for further research in this area. Furthermore, the study exposes the challenges faced by Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town so that possible solutions could be put in place. Affected stakeholders like government and NGOs will have authentic data necessary in policy formulation.

3.11. Limitations of the study

These were problems that could be encountered in the course of conducting this study such as obtaining unreliable information from respondents. Some of the street children who were badly affected by illegal migration and streetism might have not told the truth for fear of being judged. The researcher tried to avoid this by reassuring the respondents of their anonymity and confidentiality of the information they gave. Some refused to answer the researcher's sensitive questions, such as how they get food and other essential needs, thinking that they may be reported for the crime or be forced to stay at a shelter. The respondents also expected the researcher to hand them food or money before they could respond to the researcher's questions. It was also dangerous for the researcher to go to some of the dangerous spots such as bridges or abandoned buildings to meet the respondents.

3.12. Conclusion

In a nutshell, this chapter described the designs and methods that were used to probe the contributory factors of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina town. In other words it described how things were done, the procedure, methodology and the research ethics which were followed. This chapter is very significant because it is the key to revealing results and findings which are the main aim of any study. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology, non-probability sampling wherein purposive and snowball sampling were used to generate a sample of eighteen respondents in Musina Town. Face-to-face interview was the data collection method. Thematic analysis was used to generate in-depth information from the respondents. Ethical consideration was critically ensured in this study.

CHAPTER 4

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focused on the presentation and analysis of data collected with the goal of probing the contributory factors to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The data was gathered from primary respondents (i.e. Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children) and secondary/complimentary respondents (i.e. relevant stakeholders). An interview guide with open-ended questions was used to collect data from a total number of eighteen participants (ten primary respondents and eight secondary respondents). Thematic data analysis was used for analysing the data which was collected. The presented data is aligned with the research aim, objectives and questions which are outlined in the first chapter of this study. This chapter began with the presentation of the biographical data, followed by presentation and analysis of the contributory factors to Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism was also covered. There is also a presentation, discussion and analysis of the effects and intervention strategies for the phenomenon of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism. Daily activities, the preference of streets over shelters and challenges faced on the streets by Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children living on the streets of Musina Town were also presented and analysed.

4.2. Biographical information

The following is the presentation, discussion and analysis of gender, age, nationality and organisation/position/status of all the respondents who were interviewed in this study.

4.2.1. Gender, age and nationality of primary respondents (Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children)

Table 2: Gender, age and nationality

Respondents	Gender	Age	Nationality
Respondent no.1	M	17	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.2	M	14	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.3	M	14	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.4	F	15	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.5	F	15	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.6	F	17	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.7	F	17	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.8	F	16	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.9	M	17	Zimbabwean
Respondent no.10	M	16	Zimbabwean

The information was gathered from ten Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets in Musina Town. In terms of gender both males and females constituted 50% of the total number of respondents which was ten (five male and five female). It was the researcher's intention to conduct a study which is gender balanced. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents were seventeen years old. 40% of the respondents were seventeen years old, 20% were 16 years old, another 20% were fifteen years old

and the last 20% were fourteen years old. Their age groups qualify them as unaccompanied minors (Levinson, 2011). When it comes to nationality, 100% of the respondents were Zimbabwean nationals.

4.2.2. Gender, age, nationality and organisation/position/status of complimentary Respondents

These are the stakeholders concerned with the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children in Musina Town.

Table 3: Gender, age, nationality and organisation/position/status

Respondents	Gender	Age	Nationality	organisation/position/status
Respondent no.11	M	30	South African	Musina Local Municipality(Special Programme officer)
Respondent no.12	M	34	South African	Musina Local Municipality (Mayor's officer)
Respondent no.13	F	45	Zimbabwean	Shelter for Christian women ministries (Project manager)
Respondent no.14	F	23	South African	Save the children organisation (officer)
Respondent no.15	M	37	South African	SAPS Musina (police officer)
Respondent no.16	F	47	Zimbabwean	Roman Catholic Church (church committee member)
Respondent no.17	F	66	South African	Musina Resident
Respondent	M	34	South African	Musina Resident

no.18				
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The data from Table 2 was gathered from complimentary respondents. These included two residents and six individuals representing different organisations that are affected and involved in dealing with the issues relating to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Altogether, eight complimentary respondents were interviewed. In terms of gender both males and females constituted 50% of the interviewed respondents. This was done to ensure gender balance. The respondents were between the ages of 23-66 years old. In terms of nationality, 75% of the respondents were South African and the other 25% were Zimbabwean nationals. Only 25% of the respondents were interviewed as residents in Musina Town and the majority of 75% were representing their respective organisations.

4.3. Data from Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town

This section covers the presentation, discussion and analysis of data about the contributory factors of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. The data which was collected from the primary respondents was covered in this section. Most of the data was based on the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town, daily activities done by Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children, reasons why Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets prefer streets than shelters, challenges that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets come across on the streets and also intervention strategies to address the challenges faced by Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets and the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

4.3.1. Theme 1: The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

4.3.1.1. The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

All the respondents stated that there were many Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets in Musina Town. The respondents even described how the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism increases on a daily basis. This is attested to by the following statement made by respondents 1, 3 and 9:

“If you look around the town you will see a lot of street kids from Zimbabwe. Though a few of them have moved to shelters and churches, the majority is still staying on the streets. Even if others stop escaping from Zimbabwe to Musina the number of street kids from Zimbabwe will always increase because of the high birth rate on the streets”, said Respondent 1 and 9.

In addition, respondent 3 gave an estimation of the number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who were staying on the streets of Musina Town. This is attested on the response below:

“Yes, more than two hundred”, said respondent 3.

As indicated in the response above, there is an increasing number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town. The respondents went further to explain how the prevalence of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets increases in Musina Town. The respondents also indicated that only a few of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors have moved into shelters and churches which means the majority is still living on the streets.

According to the respondents, the situation has worsened to such an extent that even if other Zimbabwean minors may stop coming to South Africa, the population of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors will still increase since those who are currently living on the streets of Musina Town are giving birth in large numbers. This implies that the children that are being born by street children may also be destined to be street children since they have to stay with their parents on the streets. Such events automatically raise the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied

minors and streetism in Musina Town. It also opens ways for other problems such as absence of identity and documentation for the children born on the streets.

To support the responses about the increase of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets of Musina Town due to a high rate of birth, during the data collection, a number of infants were spotted with their mothers who were responding to the interview questions. There were also a few female street children who were pregnant. This information supports the fact that the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town is rapidly increasing.

A reporter from UNICEF (2014) states that there are four to six children who leave Zimbabwe to South Africa every single day. When they get to South Africa through Beit Bridge border they settle in Musina Town. This is the case because Musina Town is the closest town to the border between Zimbabwe and South Africa. A study conducted by Tacoli and Mabala (2010) titled “Exploring mobility and migration in the contest of rural urban linkages: why gender and generation matter”, revealed that in all diverse locations they studied in the Global South, the number of young people that are migrating has risen extensively.

What is disturbing about the ever increasing number of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets in Musina Town is that it is difficult to control. Strategies to control the situation are failing as highlighted in the following extract:

“Yes, we are so many and the South African government cannot do anything about it because when the policeman and soldiers deport us we always come back the following day”. They have to understand that life is difficult back in Zimbabwe!” said, Respondent 4, and 8.

Like others above respondent 5 gave the following comment:

“Yes, there is a large number of unaccompanied minors from Zimbabwe. We are not willing to go back to Zimbabwe”, said Respondent 5.

The above responses were given by four respondents (i.e. *respondent 4, 5, and 8*). All three of them were aware of the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town. The respondents further explained that South African government was failing to solve this problem because their deportation strategy seems not to be working effectively. When the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are deported back to their homes in Zimbabwe, they still unlawfully come back to South Africa shortly after their deportation. This implies that the South African government is not solving the issue of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town strategically and effectively. The main contributory factors to this phenomenon are being overlooked. This allows the problem to get out of control. As a result of this, no matter how many times they keep deporting Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors, they still come back to South Africa unlawfully. If the problems that these children encounter in Zimbabwe are not resolved, then the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town will continue to exist.

To support the respondents' comments, a report titled "Children of despair" indicated that during an interview which was carried out at the Zimbabwean border, one respondent, when asked if he was not afraid of being arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe, said that he has been deported back to Zimbabwe three times already, (Matsangaise, 2008). This implies that the situation in Zimbabwe is very bad in such a way that poor Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are forced and determined to find themselves staying in South Africa. They are willing to go through all the hardships such as being arrested and deported just to find their way back to South Africa through unlawful and dangerous methods to gain entry. Such desperation is very alarming particularly when considering the age of the affected minors.

Other respondents also concurred to the high prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who lived on the streets of Musina Town. This was attested on the comments below:

"Yes, there are so many of us living here in Musina, we are everywhere all around the streets and behind buildings", said respondent 2 and 6.

“Yes, in fact, the number is increasing daily. We just can’t stay in Zimbabwe”, Said respondent 10.

“Yes, more are still coming. We welcome new arrivals almost every week, said respondent 7.

The above responses from a number of respondents, show that the respondents were aware of the high rate of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Respondent 2 and 6 stated that there were so many of them who were living on the streets of Musina Town. Respondent 10 also mentioned that the number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors was increasing daily on the streets of Musina Town. The respondents further stated that they could not stay in Zimbabwe due to its economic problems. Lastly, Respondent 7 mentioned that more Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were still coming to dwell on the streets of Musina Town. The respondent also said that she and her fellow street mates usually welcome other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who arrive at the streets of Musina Town for the first time.

The above responses imply that the rapid increase of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town is very alarming. If Zimbabwe’s economic constraints remain unresolved, Zimbabwean minors will keep migrating unlawfully in search of a better livelihood in South Africa. This high prevalence may also contribute to the flooding of Zimbabwean street children on the streets of Musina Town leading to other numerous challenges rising from such a situation. The higher the prevalence increases, the more Musina Town becomes susceptible to other social issues.

According to Magqibelo et al., (2016) the overflow of Zimbabwean migrant children has contributed to the high rate of crime, birth, substance abuse and over population in Musina Town. This shows how the presence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors has affected the town of Musina.

4.3.1.2. How they got to South Africa

When asked how they got to South Africa, 100% of the respondents indicated that they entered South Africa unlawfully since all of them did not have documentation for migrating. As minors they did not qualify to travel across the border without a responsible guardian and the necessary documentation. They had to use the usual unlawful methods to cross the border. They illegally swam across the Limpopo river into South Africa. Some of the young people said that they bribed the custom officials to cross the bridge into South Africa.

Probing into the unlawful entry methods used by the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors to enter South Africa, the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors indicated that there were two main ways. The first method was through the border gate at Beit Bridge. This was where the respondents had to find ways to sneak into South Africa without being noticed by the border security guards. Some of them had to use money to bribe their way into South Africa. Some young people said that they resorted to pleading and appealing to the customs officials to be merciful and allow them to cross over to South Africa. The second method was crossing over illegally to South Africa by going under the bridge. This was the most dangerous way used by Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors to cross over to South Africa. From under the bridge the respondents had to pass through bushes which have dangerous animals and thieves called *gumagumas*. Some of them said they also had to go through the Limpopo river which was overflowing and also infested with crocodiles. Lastly, there were also the respondents had to jump fences to cross over to South Africa.

Most of the respondents stated that they travelled in groups for their own safety. However, that did not reduce the risk of being caught, injured or killed throughout their dangerous trip. The fact that the respondents were prepared risk their lives is an indication of the respondents' level of desperation for a better livelihood out of Zimbabwe. To support this, it was reported that border jumpers (i.e. people who cross the border illegally) were captured by Beit Bridge border security and patrol guards almost every day. Most were found in a bad state. Some of those who crossed the border illegally were found dead. It was suspected that some of them might have died

from hunger and exhaustion. The respondents also said that there were also those who were found drowned trying to cross the river. They said this occurred mostly during the rainy seasons. There were also those who were found naked after being robbed of their clothes and possessions after being abandoned by their guides or the *gumagumas* (Magqibelo et al., 2016; Safodien, 2012). Even though some of the respondents were lucky and managed to cross over to South Africa safely, the follow statement made by respondent 1 explains how dangerous their crossing over to South Africa was:

“I took a train to Beit Bridge border. When I got to the border I went through the river, under the bridge. I was so scared. I was afraid of the crocodiles, the gumagumas and the border security guard. Lucky enough I made it through safely. It’s very risky, one can die from a number of things”, said respondent 1.

In the above extract, respondent 1 explained how he got to South Africa. The respondent took a train to the border and when he got to the border, he decided to illegally cross the Beit Bridge border into South Africa through the river and bushes. The respondent further indicated that he was very scared of the crocodiles that were in the river. He also said that he feared being caught by the border security guards who were always patrolling the area. After he had made it through the river he had to walk through the bushes where he had to be on the lookout for *gumagumas* who could rob him off his belongings or even assault or kill him. The respondent knew that such a journey was a difficult and dangerous one because he testified that one could die from a number of factors.

Based on the experiences of respondent 1, one can conclude that even when the journey was hard and life-threatening, the respondent never thought of quitting and returning home in Zimbabwe. This is because the challenges that served as push factors for him to migrate from Zimbabwe seemed not to have an instant possible solution. It is very alarming to find situations wherein a minor is willing to cross a river even with the knowledge and sight of crocodiles inside that river. This shows the level of

desperation and commitment to finding a better life. A person in such a dire situation is most likely to even risk his/ her own life in search for a better life elsewhere.

Another respondent gave a similar comment when asked how she got to South Africa:

“I went to town in Zimbabwe and begged until I had enough to take a train to the border. When I got to the border I travelled under the bridge which was not safe at all. I went through bushes and the river. I stayed at the border for a number of days finding a way to cross over. When I finally got an opportunity I then passed through to South Africa”, said respondent 4.

The respondent above also went through the struggle of illegally migrating in order to find herself out of Zimbabwe. The respondent explained that due to poverty she had no money for travelling expenses. Therefore, she decided to go to town in Zimbabwe to beg until she collected enough money to catch a train to Beit Bridge border. The respondent further stated that when she arrived at the border she also had to go through bushes and then crossed the Limpopo river. She mentioned that it was not safe at all. This means that she was taking a huge risk by crossing the border illegally. The respondent also stated that she stayed for a number of days at the border trying to find a way to pass safely without being noticed by the border security guards. During her stay at the border she had to always be on the lookout for the border patrol guards to avoid being found and arrested. Since she did not have money nor shelter she most probably suffered from hunger and harsh weather conditions. She said that she later then managed to cross the border unnoticed.

The above situation implies that the state of affairs in Zimbabwe was unbearable for some children, especially those coming from poor family backgrounds. Some Zimbabwean minors even went all out to find money for travelling expenses just for them to leave Zimbabwe in search for a better life in South Africa. They also go through the life-threatening risks of crossing dangerous rivers and bushes so they could leave poverty behind. Respondent 4’s experience of crossing the border illegally also shows the effort made by many other Zimbabwean minors due to poverty in Zimbabwe as a

push factor and better living conditions in South Africa as a pull factor. Respondent 2 stated the following to support the foregoing argument:

“I travelled by foot for a few days from my home (Harare in Zimbabwe) to the border. I was too afraid of crossing from under the bridge so I went through the bridge. When I got to the security guards they wanted me to bribe them for entry. I told them that I had no money but needed to pass and they allowed me to pass. Then I walked all the way to Musina Town with two other Zimbabweans that I have met along the way”, said respondent 2.

The above statement also elaborates how he got to South Africa. The respondent explained that he walked on foot all the way from his home to Beit Bridge border. He also indicated that it took him several days because the border was very much far from Harare. In fact, it was not a walking distance. But as young as he was he walked all the way in search for greener pastures and also to see his father again. Unlike most of the respondents, respondent 2 stated that he was afraid of crossing the border by going through the bushes and river. So he decided to cross the right way but using an illegal method. The respondent met security guards who wanted to be bribed for him to pass through to South Africa. He told them that he had no money but he pleaded with them to let him pass. He said, fortunately, the security guards were touched by his issue and decided to let him pass without bribing them and also without any legal documentation. He further explained that he walked all the way to Musina Town wherein he met other Zimbabweans who were also headed for Musina Town.

This implies that the situation in Zimbabwe was very harsh on the respondent 2. As a result, he decided to leave Zimbabwe to flee from living in abject poverty. Since he had no money for transportation to the border, he decided to walk on foot just to get out of Zimbabwe. Walking for a number of days for such a very long distance could have been physically and emotionally draining for any person at any age but it was gruesome for a minor. The courage the respondent displayed by confronting and pleading with the border gate guards demonstrates the level of desperation and desire to cross over to South Africa in search for a better life.

The corrupt border officials who demand bribes from migrants are also adding to the contributory factors of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minor and streetism in Musina Town. When other migrants learn about accessing entry through bribes, this will promote the flow of unaccompanied minors because all they will have to do is to pay money and be allowed access without legal documentation. Even when they allow unaccompanied minors to pass just because they feel sorry for them it also contributes to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minor and streetism in Musina Town. Such actions from the authorities are illegal.

Another respondent gave a similar comment as respondent 2 to support the foregoing argument:

“I was only eight years old when I came to South Africa. It was eight of us, we walked all the way from Zimbabwe to South Africa. We went through the bushes, overflowing river with crocodiles and even jumped razor fences. When I was jumping the razor fence my leg got cut very bad. When I told the older ones that I needed medical attention they told me that I would get arrested and be deported back to Zimbabwe. I didn’t want to go back home so I limped all the way to Musina Town”, said respondent 5.

From the eight companions or escorts which were mentioned by respondent 5, there other six were respondent 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. These respondents were in the same group as respondent 5 when they travelled from Zimbabwe to South Africa. This is attested in the responses below by the six respondents:

“I was in a group of eight, we walked all the way from Zimbabwe to South Africa by foot. We walked through the bushes, overflowing river with crocodiles and even jumped razor fences at the border. Some of us even got badly injured during the journey”, said respondents 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

The respondents (3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) above elaborated on how they got to Musina Town from Zimbabwe. Respondent 5 stated that she came to South Africa when she was only eight years old which is very alarming. The respondents travelled in a group of

eight unaccompanied minors when they came to South Africa. They walked all the way from Zimbabwe to South Africa on foot due to lack of money. The respondents further stated that they went through bushes on their way to the border. These are the bushes wherein *gumagumas* target migrants who pass through bushes or across the Limpopo river on their way to South Africa. They also went through the Limpopo river which was overflowing and had crocodiles which posed a danger and life-threatening situation to the minors.

Respondent 5 also stated that when they were jumping over the security razor fences her leg got cut badly. Such an injury required immediate medical attention to avoid infections to the wound, loss of blood and even for healing. The respondent further mentioned that when she told the older ones in the group that she is badly hurt and she needed medical attention, they told her to endure the pain to avoid being arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, she had no opportunity to get that medical attention since she was illegally crossing over to South Africa and avoiding getting caught at all cost. This meant that seeking help was only going to expose them since they did not have legal documentation to be in staying in South Africa. So she had to endure the pain that she was going through. As a result, she was forced to limp all the way to Musina Town until she healed naturally.

It is very alarming to learn that an eight-year old would take an informed decision to escape from home and migrate illegally to a foreign country. As young as she was, she migrated without the company of a responsible parent or guardian but rather with a bunch of other children. The respondent was going into a country that is composed of a different culture, language and way of doing things. The respondent also went through difficult situation when crossing the border which also shows the level of desperation to leave Zimbabwe and seek for greener pastures in South Africa. When the respondent got hurt while jumping razor fences and was told to endure the pain to avoid deportation, shows how health is not considered a priority when people migrate illegally. Such determination also reveals the challenges that unaccompanied minors go through during the process of crossing the border illegally. They go through a lot of hardships and are left with no choice but to remain resilient and continue with the search for a

better life out of poverty. Regardless of all the challenges that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors go through, they try to remain invisible or unseen by the authorities during their stay in South Africa. Living such a life of hide and seek results in one living in fear and agony.

To support the above comments by the respondents, Eshia (2010) and Magqibelo et al., (2016) suggested that unaccompanied migrant children from Zimbabwe go through difficult challenges when crossing the border illegally to South Africa. The illegal methods which are used to cross the border are very risky and life-threatening which leave Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors at risk of being affected by sicknesses, rape, robbery, assault, injuries and even death. It was reported that some were found dead floating on the Limpopo river, some were found dying after being attacked by *gumagumas* and wild animals, some critically injured when jumping razor border fences and some died from hunger when they got lost in the bush (Bearak, 2009; New York Times, 2010).

4.3.1.3. Why they chose to settle in Musina Town

All the respondents indicated that they first heard about South Africa from others in Zimbabwe. They were told that in South Africa life was much better and they then decided to escape and migrate to South Africa. To support the above statement, Tacoli and Mabala (2010) indicated that most immigrants take informed decisions about their destinations prior leaving their countries.

The Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors stated that their decision to settle in Musina town was based on the fact that it is a border town closest to Zimbabwe. The other reason for settling in Musina town was because there were many Zimbabwean migrants and unaccompanied minors already staying in Musina Town. As a result, they felt like they were at home as the area was not hostile to them since most of the Zimbabwean nationals had become permanent residents of Musina Town. This is attested in one of the respondent's comment below:

“When I saw other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets of Musina Town I felt at home. This was the reason why I chose to settle in Musina Town”, said respondent 1.

In the above extract, Respondent 1 explained why he decided to settle in Musina Town.

The respondent explained that he decided to settle in Musina Town because when he saw other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets he felt at home.

When the respondent decided to settle in Musina Town just because he saw other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets, it indicates that any person feels safe and comfortable when surrounded by people who share the same characteristics with him/her. It is not surprising to hear of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who decided to settle in Musina simply because of their fellow compatriots they found in Musina Town. This could also be a significant contributory factor to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town since a large number of legal and illegal migrants from Zimbabwe are found in Musina Town. To support this assertion, Silva (2009) reported that Musina has about 57 000 residents, plus 15 000 migrants from Zimbabwe. In other words, Zimbabwean nationals constituted 26% of the total population in Musina Town in the year 2009.

Another respondent gave the following response on this foregoing argument:

“I settled in Musina town because it’s the closest from the border and I can sell things here”, said respondent 4.

The respondent above said that she settled in Musina Town because it was the closest town to the border. Her other reason for settling in Musina Town was that she could sell items in order to earn a living. This implies that a place which allows one an opportunity to generate money and earn a living may contribute to one’s settlement. This is supported by Levinson (2011) who suggests that most unaccompanied minors are pushed to migrate from their homes in order to find work and escape poverty.

On the other hand, respondent 2 gave a different view:

“I settled in Musina Town because I hope to see my father again. He left home years ago to look for a job in Musina Town but never returned. I believe I will somehow meet him here in Musina Town”, said respondent 2.

The above statement also elaborates why he decided to settle in Musina Town. He stated that his decision to settle in Musina Town was because he had hoped to see his father who had left home to search for a job in Musina many years ago but never returned home.

The respondent’s comment about choosing to settle in Musina Town shows that missing parents can also contribute to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. It usually occurs when the missing family member is the breadwinner or a guardian. Family member/s may decide to follow and search for the missing family member but due to lack of money and documentation they may end up on the streets.

The majority of the respondents gave a similar comment as respondent 2 to support the foregoing argument:

“We decided to settle in Musina because we saw that there were a lot of Zimbabweans there”, said respondents 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10

The respondents stated that they decided to settle in Musina Town due to a large number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who were living on the streets of Musina Town. The respondents’ decision to settle in Musina Town due to a high number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors attests the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. In other words, the more Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors decide to settle in Musina Town the more it may attract other Zimbabwean nationals to also settle in Musina Town. This may rapidly occur because it promotes security and comfort to migrants when they are surrounded by people from the same nationality as theirs. The high number of migrants who come from the same country may influence a high flow of other migrants of the same characteristics into that country (Tacoli & Mabala, 2010). This simply means that the high number of Zimbabweans in South Africa is likely to attract more Zimbabweans into

South Africa. The fact that there are some Zimbabweans in South Africa, makes it easier for other Zimbabweans to want to come to South Africa. Migrating to another country where there are people from your country makes life much easier than of those who went there not knowing anybody. This implies that the presence of some Zimbabweans in South Africa will attract more Zimbabweans.

4.3.2. Theme 2: Factors contributing to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

4.3.2.1. Main contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

All the respondents were aware of the contributory factors that lead Zimbabwean minors to come to South Africa unaccompanied and end up on the streets in Musina Town. The most common explanation from most respondents was that they fled to South Africa because of poverty and hunger in Zimbabwe. The respondents said that they could not survive in Zimbabwe because of the abject poverty they live in. According to this respondents, abject poverty is the main reason why they had to migrate illegally. In other words, they migrated to South Africa to search for greener pastures so that they can improve their living conditions. This view is also supported by Zhang (2010) who states that migration is one of the oldest strategies of action that people of all age groups turn to due to poverty. This argument is endorsed by the following statements made by some of the respondents:

“I came here because of hunger and poverty. I just could not survive in Zimbabwe”, said respondent 1 and 3.

Respondent 4 gave a similar comment to the above responses from respondents 1 and 3.

“There was no food back at home, I was not coping. That is my reason for escaping to South Africa”, said Respondent 4.

The above responses from respondents 1, 3 and 4 indicated that the main contributory factors to their migration into South Africa were hunger and poverty. This implies that

the respondents' situation in back Zimbabwe might have been so difficult that they could not even afford or access food. Their desperate situation compelled them to resort to migrating illegally to South Africa and ending up on the streets of Musina Town since they could not fend for themselves back in Zimbabwe.

Bourdillon (2005) also views poverty as the principal reason why children have the preference of working than going to school. Young people view migration as an opportunity to improve their conditions and also to acquire new skills that help them as the transition to adulthood (Min Harris, 2010). Most of the respondents migrated to South Africa because they were seeking greener pastures so that they can alleviate their living conditions.

A number of respondents gave a similar comment when they were asked to state contributory factors to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town were. Hereunder are their responses:

“There is no food, money and jobs in Zimbabwe. For me to survive I had to find myself a job in South Africa”, said respondent 2 and 6.

Respondent 6 also went further and stated the following:

“There was no one to look after me because my parents were both unemployed. This forced me to leave home and seek for greener pastures”, said Respondent 6.

The above statements show that migration of minors from Zimbabwe was as result of extreme poverty in Zimbabwe. They leave Zimbabwe with the hope to find better living conditions in South Africa.

Since the economic conditions are not favourable in Zimbabwe, there are fewer job opportunities. Therefore, some minors leave their country in search for job opportunities in other countries. According to the statements made by the respondents cited above, the bad economic situation in Zimbabwe has forced most of the young people to migrate to South Africa where they are likely to get employed or find petty jobs. The

main aim for this is to earn an income which they can use to fend for their families back home. Another respondent also said the following to support this assertion:

“My father is blind and my mother does not work. There was no food or money at home. There are no jobs in Zimbabwe so I had to leave the country in order to save myself from poverty”, said respondent 8.

As indicated above by the respondent, the main contributory factor to migration of young people and streetism is lack of jobs in Zimbabwe. The respondent explained that his father has a disability of blindness and his mother is not employed. His parents’ situation led to poverty at home wherein there was no food or money. The respondent’s disabled father could have been receiving a disability grant for support but the Zimbabwean government does not offer grants. This situation led the respondent into resorting to migrating unlawfully to South Africa in order to save himself from poverty.

Another respondent gave a similar comment when asked about the contributory factors to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

“I’m an orphan, no one was looking after me back in Zimbabwe after both my parents died. When the food got finished I decided to go and beg in town but it didn’t work out. I then joined a group of other children who were on their way to South Africa”, said respondent 7.

The respondent elaborated that she found herself as an unaccompanied minor living on the streets of Musina Town because she was an orphan. When both her parents died she had no one to look after her. This means that she had to fend for herself even though she was only a minor. The respondent further explained that when the food in the house got finished she was left with no choice but to go and beg in town in Zimbabwe. Begging did not go well probably because of the bad economic situation in Zimbabwe. The respondent said she then decided to join a group of children who were headed to South Africa to seek for better living conditions. This shows that there were no other options left for the respondent than to migrate with the hope for a better life.

To support the respondents' statement, Lee (2003) stated that during the 2000 Zimbabwean land crisis unemployment shot up to 80% after the closing and liquidation of some industries. This resulted to most of the Zimbabweans losing their jobs and leaving the country for greener pastures. When 80% of those Zimbabweans were left unemployed it meant that they could not afford education for their children. This is attested to in the response given by respondent 5 below:

"I have always wanted to be educated and have a fancy job. In Zimbabwe there is no free education. School is only for rich people. So I heard from other people in Zimbabwe that there is free education in South Africa", said respondent 5.

Education has also contributed to migration from Zimbabwe by some young people. Respondent 5 has indicated that she had the desire to be educated so that she could later have a good job. In Zimbabwe education is not free. It is expensive especially for children from average and poor families. The respondent further stated that when she heard about free education in South Africa, she then took a decision to migrate to South Africa so that she could access free education.

UN (2014) and UNICEF (2001) stated that they have discovered that most children leave Zimbabwe due to unaffordability of school fees and lack of job opportunities for their parents. So with the knowledge of the possibility of accessing free education in South Africa, they flee their homes to South Africa. This implies that lack of access to education contributes significantly to even minors leaving Zimbabwean unaccompanied and end up in the streets of the towns in the host country.

According to Bezuidenhout (2015) and Zhang (2010), the issues of migration and streetism are complex and dynamic due to a number of reasons that one can associate with. Some young people were forced to leave their country because of unfavourable home conditions. For example, some of the respondents stated that they left their homes because of ill-treatment meted out to them by their step parents. This happened to some of the respondents who were staying with their step mothers as indicated below:

“I ran away from home because of my stepmother. Life was much better when I was still living with my mother and father. When my mother passed away years ago, my father married another wife. My stepmother was very harsh and abusive to me. When my father was away she would let me starve and sometimes chase me away from the house. I heard about South Africa from friends. I then decided to come here. When I arrived here I joined others on the streets”, said respondent 1.

In addition, another respondent also gave a similar comment:

“My father passed on when I was in grade two so I was left with my step mother. Life was difficult. I had to come to South Africa and look for a job”, said Respondent 2.

All two respondents (1 and 2) above indicated that when their mothers passed on, their fathers re-married. They mentioned that life seemed to be fine before losing one of their biological parents. The problem only started after their fathers married again. The respondents were abused physically and emotionally by their stepmothers without their father’s knowledge. The respondents further explained that when they heard about South Africa they decided to run away from their abusive stepmothers at home and headed for South Africa in search for greener pastures. Respondent 1 further explained that when he arrived in South Africa, he joined others on the streets. This was simply because he had nowhere else to go than the streets since he had just arrived in a foreign country. When respondent 2 said that he was experiencing the hardships of life when staying with his stepmother he thought going to South Africa to look for a job would be the solution to his problems. He believed that getting a job so that he could look after himself since he had no parental support.

From the responses above, it is clear that family members also contribute immensely to the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. The loss and replacement of a biological parent at home may badly threaten a good atmosphere for children and other family members. Some vulnerable children may find it hard reporting their abusive parents to the authorities. This fear of reporting the parents may be caused by the

thought of getting more punishment from the parents or even the fear of getting the breadwinner arrested which may worsen then their situation as they may be faced with hunger and poverty. Such unreported ill-treatment from stepparents may result in children leaving their homes and living on the streets. Some children may even end up migrating illegally to avoid their parents locating them and bringing them back home.

To support the statements made by the respondents, Bezuidenhout (2015), Zhang (2010) and UN (2014) argued that children that are abandoned or abused by their families, parents, step parents or those heading families, they are likely to be exposed to life on the streets. In addition, Raffaelli et al (2001) also indicated that children's reasons for leaving home include, among others, death of a family member, family conflict, poverty, drugs, friends and freedom. This means that a young person's family background or situation has a huge impact on migration and streetism. Family factors and members can also turn to be push factors for a child to escape from home.

4.3.2.2. Daily activities

Just like any other person, unaccompanied street children also have daily routines that are intended to earn them a living on the streets. The majority of the respondents mentioned that they are working children whereas the minority spent their day in other activities to earn money. All the respondents (100%) indicated that they took part in gambling (playing cards) in order to make money. The majority of the respondents (70%) said they woke up every day to look for jobs. But when they could not find work they resorted to begging for money and food at the shopping centre. They woke up every day to engage in petty jobs that paid them just a little money to survive for only a day. Some of the respondents (20%) stated that it was hard for them to find work since they were females. As result, they relied on begging and gambling. Only one respondent (10%) stated that he worked for his money and did not beg to survive.

During the data collection of the study at the main taxi rank in Musina Town, about fifteen Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were spotted busy playing cards and betting with their money. This confirmed that gambling was one of their main daily activity. This almost made it a bit difficult for them to take part in the interview process

because they did not want to be disturbed as that was their only means of raising money for their own survival.

In relation to what is stated above with regard to the daily activities of the unaccompanied Zimbabwean young migrants, respondent 4 answered as follows:

“I sell cigarettes. I buy my stock from a certain Venda man who comes with his truck on Tuesdays to sell to us. His cigarettes are very affordable. I have a number of customers from community members to other street children. When business suffers I resort to begging at Spar and also gambling”, said respondent 4.

From the above statement made by respondent 4, it is clear that she was a working child due to the activities that she was engaged in. The respondent stated that she was selling cigarettes and she was buying her stock from a certain man who came with his truck on Tuesdays. The reason for selling cigarettes was because she had to generate income to fend for herself. She was able to make a profit from selling the cigarettes because she bought them for a cheaper price from the supplier. She further indicated that she had a number of customers who supported her cigarettes business. The customers included some community members and street children. Respondent 4 further explained that when business did not do well, she resorted to begging at a local Spar supermarket. She also said that she supplemented her income from her cigarettes business by also gambling.

This implies that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town are working children. The respondent has started an illegal business to sustain herself. This shows that unaccompanied minors living on the streets could go as far as committing criminal acts in order to earn a living. The community members who sell and those who support such an illegal business were also committing a criminal offence. The same applies to other street children who supported the business. This situation also poses a serious threat to the health of some of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets who are smoking since smoking is a health hazard. Selling the cigarettes to minors who are under age is also a crime in terms of

the South African law. In addition, the respondent also mentioned that she resorted to gambling (playing cards) when her cigarettes business was not doing well. This shows another criminal activity being committed by the respondent and other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town in order to earn a living. In a nutshell, the daily activities which were being carried out by respondent 4 promoted a number of criminal acts which increases the crime rate in South Africa. Those daily activities do not lead to crime rate increase, but also adversely affects the health of those minors who were smoking. Such an act could lead to substance abuse and addiction.

Another respondent also mentioned the activity that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors engaged in was to beg for money and food at the shopping centres. They did this especially when their illegal cigarette business was not doing well. This implies that unaccompanied minors who live on the streets were also faced with challenges of lack of money to take care of themselves. This led them to resort to begging for food and money in order to survive. Since begging is their last option it becomes a problem when it does not go well because it leaves them suffering from hunger. This may also tempt or push them to commit petty crimes such as pickpocketing or shoplifting.

Respondent 5 gave a related response:

“I don’t usually find jobs maybe because I am a girl. I rely on begging and gambling (playing cards)”.

Respondent 5 stated that it was extremely difficult for her to find a job. She believed that it was because of her gender that she could not find a job. This could be because society perceive male as strong enough to cope with any work on the streets than female who are perceived to only cope with less harsh works (Baker, 2008). She further said that she relied on begging and gambling (playing cards). This means that she could not find a job, gambling and begging became her only source of income.

From the response above, it shows that the above cited respondent had tried by all means to find a regular job but she was not successful like her fellow street mates. The respondent believed that she struggled to find work because she was a girl since most

of the jobs were suitable for boys. Such jobs included truck loading, car washing, gardening and other hard petty jobs. This could have been very stressful for the respondent because as a minor who took care of herself she had no parent or guardian to provide for her. As a result, the respondent ended committing crime as she was forced by her situation to engage in the illegal business of selling cigarettes and also by engaging herself in gambling or making money through playing cards which is against the South African law.

To support the above statements made by respondent 4 and 5, UNICEF (2002) stated that other street children are involved in illegal work such as robbing, gambling and drug dealing in order to earn a living. In addition, Poro (2010) reported that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town also earn their money through different criminal activities such as robbing, stealing, prostitution and car breaking. Though none of the respondents mentioned anything about engaging into other criminal activities, all the respondents also commented that they also relied heavily on gambling (playing cards) in order to survive. One respondent also stated that she sold cigarettes in order to generate an income she needed to fend for herself. This implies that the respondents are forced by circumstances beyond their control to do anything to get money even if it is in conflict with the law. They do this because they are desperate as there is no alternative for them. If they do not gamble or sell cigarettes illegally they will have no money to cater for their basic human needs, such as clothes and food.

On the other hand, while other respondents relied on begging when they could not find a job, respondent 1 gave the opposite statement with regard to the issue of begging. Respondent 1's view on this matter is aptly captured in his response as follows:

"I do not beg, I work for my money. I push trolleys for people, guard cars at parking lots and also find piece jobs in white people's houses such as sweeping yards and cleaning. I also gamble sometimes", said Respondent 1.

From the response above, it is clear that some of the unaccompanied minors on the street engage in all different types of petty jobs to earn money they need for their own survival. For example, in the case of respondent 1, he further stated that he pushed shoppers' trolleys, guarded cars of the shoppers at shopping malls and parking lots on the streets as well as sweeping yards and cleaning houses of white people in Musina Town. However, the respondent also stated that he sometimes gambled to supplement the money he got from his petty jobs since it was not sufficient to cater for all his needs.

The information above proves that respondent 1 is also a working child. Unaccompanied minors may have a lot of similar characteristics but they are also individuals with different personalities, principles and desires. This was attested to in the response from Respondent 1 when he stated that he did not beg for money or food whereas the majority of the respondents (90%) said that they resorted to begging when they could not find work. This finding could be helpful for policy makers to consider diversity and individual's needs when implementing policies of alleviating the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. The respondent believed in working for his money. He relied on his abilities to earn a living and also had self-worth which deprived him from begging. For a minor who took care of himself, this attitude portrayed great independence.

The above response is supported by a sixteen year old Ghanaian street child's statement in Raffaelli et al.,'s (2001) study titled "How Brazilian street children do experience the street?". When he was asked whether he begged to earn a living, he firmly indicated that he did not beg, he worked hard for his money. He further indicated that even if he had nothing to eat nor a place to sleep, he would try very hard to find work than begging people.

Respondent 1 also stated that he gambled (play cards) to make money. This concludes that some unaccompanied street children may also go to an extent of breaking the law just to make money. Another respondent also mentioned that he gambled when he needed to make more money. This is attested to in the response below:

“I wash cars on Sundays, clean yards for some Somalian guys and gamble (play cards) when I need more money even though I usually lose all the money. When I don’t find some work to do I resort to begging”, said Respondent 2.

Respondent 2 also indicated that he engaged in a number of activities on a daily basis in order to generate money. The respondent stated that he washed people’s cars on Sundays and also cleaned yards of some Somalia nationals. He further mentioned that he gambled when he needed more money. Although his main aim of gambling was to make money, he found himself losing all his money most of the time. The respondent lastly said that when he did not find work he resorted to begging.

Looking at the respondent’s daily activities, it is quite clear that the respondent is a working child. In order to sustain himself he even engaged in domestic work such as cleaning people’s yards. This shows the respondent’s willingness to engage in any activity as long as money is earned. The respondent even gambled in order to make money though he was quite aware that it was against the law. Although, the respondent never mentioned why he kept on gambling even with the experience of usually losing all his money, one can assume that he kept on gambling because it might have become a habit, hobby or even an addiction. An assumption can also be made that he kept on gambling with the hope of winning some day and also because of push factors such as hunger and poverty since he had to fend for himself.

Another respondent gave a similar comment:

“I sell bananas and cool time. Sometimes I go and beg at Spar and gamble just to make extra cash”, said Respondent 6, 8 and 10.

From the responses above, Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town stated that they also engaged in similar daily activities. The respondents said that they sold bananas and some frozen juice called ‘cool time’ in order to afford a few essential needs. Just like the majority of the respondents they indicated that they also begged at shopping centres and at the street intersections in Musina Town. The respondents also gambled just to make extra money.

From the comments stated by respondent 6, 8 and 10, it is also clear that the respondents were working children because they woke up every day to sell items in order to earn a living. While other children of their age are at school getting education, these respondents are deprived from such rights because of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism. Just like the other respondents, respondent 6, 8 and 10 also gambled in order to earn money. It can be concluded that most respondents do not gamble because they are bored but because they need quick ways to make money in order to survive for that day.

To support this, Eshia (2010) stated that unaccompanied minors who live on streets are forced to become working children in order to earn a living. In this study some of the respondents confirmed this assertion by stating that they sold items so that they could make some money which they needed for their own survival for that day. They also begged at shop entrances and anywhere in town where there were many people walking around.

Respondent 3 and 9 also gave a similar response:

“I sell ice cream and water. I also offload trucks, beg and gamble (play cards)”.

Respondent 3 and 9 were close friends who also engaged in similar activities. They were also working children who sold ice cream and water on a daily basis. They also did hard labour wherein they offloaded trucks that hired them when delivering goods. They also gambled and begged in order to make money.

As young as they were, some unaccompanied minors who lived on the streets of Musina Town were involved in hard painful work that was not commensurate with their strength and age. Such hard labour by a minor could result in certain body strains, injuries and sicknesses. It is also very alarming when adults give minors such heavy tasks.

In support of the above responses, Lugalla and Mbwambo (1999) stated that many of these street children also carry out economic activities such as car washing, garbage

loading, parking and many more. This implies that street children as working children earn a living from petty acceptable activities. But, they may also take part in criminal activities that may bring more money easily and with less effort.

Respondent 7 gave a slightly different comment which showed that she was not a working child unlike the other respondents. It is attested to in the responses below:

“I beg, gamble (play cards) and also spend time with my boyfriends who give me money. I am even pregnant as we are speaking”, said respondent 7.

Respondent 7 was a female Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor who also stayed on the streets of Musina Town. She stated that her daily activities were begging, gambling and spending time with her boyfriends who gave her money. The respondent did not do any work in order to generate money.

This implies that the respondent preferred not to work like other street children. This left her begging and gambling which is against the South African law. The respondent was also susceptible to sexual transmitted diseases because she engaged herself in unprotected sex with many partners. This had also left her pregnant. Due to her status of being pregnant she was also susceptible to challenges such as being a teen mother and also the problem of bringing up a child on the streets. This exacerbates the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. When one offers sex in return of money, it is prostitution. This shows that some unaccompanied minors living on the streets were also engaging in prostitution in order to generate money.

To support the above responses, Bearak (2009); Eshia (2010); Magqibelo et al., (2016); New York Times (2010) UNICEF (2005) stated that street children work as car-parking boys, car guards, car washers, shoe shiners and luggage loaders and scavengers. Some older girls exchanged sex for money. Some of these street children depended on selling goods and begging at the traffic lights for money. Unaccompanied minors who live on the streets still strive to continue with their daily activities yet being chased by

police and state authorities usually get in the way of their activities (Burns, 2007; UNICEF, 2002).

In a nutshell, looking at the daily activities that the respondents engage in, it can be concluded that they were indeed working children. They engaged in work so that they can fend for themselves. This also shows that children who live on the street do not just walk around aimlessly all day but are usually kept busy through work. Children of their age who live in their homes with parents do not go through the struggle that street children go through. This means that unaccompanied street children are deprived the basic right of being loved, protected and taken care of.

4.3.3. Theme 3: The effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

4.3.3.1. Challenges faced on the street

All the respondents (100%) confirmed that life on the street is very risky and dangerous. All of them emphasized that they are not protected in any way. They said they went through a lot of challenges caused mainly by the law enforcement officials, criminals and infighting among unaccompanied minors. Some of these challenges were attested to in the comment below from one of the respondents.

“Some men come at night. They scare us with knives and take our money. Some of those men are gay and they want to rape us. This other day, a gay man came and forced me to sleep with him. It was horrible. I couldn’t even report him to the police station because I was afraid of being deported”, said respondent 1.

“There are criminals who rob us at night. Gay men also want to rape us”, respondent 10.

Respondent 1 indicated that he faced a number of the challenges on the streets of Musina Town. The respondent 1 and 10 stated that there were some men who used to come at night to scare and rob them money. This occurred to them and their fellow unaccompanied street mates. The respondents further indicated that some of those men were gay and they attempted to rape them and others on the streets. Respondent

1 then stated that he was once raped by a gay man. The respondent described the incident as horrible. Even though he was offended he could not report the rapist to the Police station due to fear of being deported because he is in the country illegally.

By looking at statements above, it shows that these minors were facing harsh challenges on the streets. Criminals even took advantage of these unaccompanied minors who live on the streets because they had no one to protect and care for them. As minors they were legally supposed to be taken care of and protected from any sort of harm but these unaccompanied streets children lack love and protection due to the absence of parents or guardian. From the responses above, it indicates that some unaccompanied street children were being sodomised and also being robbed off their little money which was meant for their survival. To make matters worse, these Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who lived on the streets of Musina Town could not report the perpetrator to the police because they were afraid of being arrested and deported since they were illegal immigrants. When one is in a foreign country illegally, one has to remain invisible to the law enforcement agencies in order to avoid being arrested and deported. This puts their health and life at risk. However, this forces these minors to be resilient through all challenges that they face. In a nutshell, this implies that challenges that are faced by Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets of Musina Town will keep increasing due to unreported cases and fear of deportation.

To support the above statement made by respondent 1 and 10, Safodien (2012) stated that health is not a priority to unaccompanied minors, even when they have been sexually abused or assaulted. Their main aim is to stay invisible from the authorities to avoid deportation. This implies that unaccompanied minors living on the streets will tolerate any form of abuse or violence committed against them because reporting the matter will also get them arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe. This leaves the respondents living a life devoid of human rights and protection.

Another respondent gave a similar view:

“My friends and I are always being bullied by older local guys. They push us around and take our stuff. The biggest challenge that I face is being

arrested by the police and the soldiers. Sometimes they keep us in prison for about three months and then deport us. We usually come back to South Africa the following day”, said respondent 2.

The respondent above indicated that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were routinely bullied by older local guys. The respondent further stated that they also had some of their belongings, including money being taken by the older local guys. The local guys did this to the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors because they know that their victims have no one to protect them, especially because they were in South Africa illegal. The local guys bullied and robbed the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors because they cannot even report them to the police as they will most certainly be arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe. The biggest challenge for the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors was being arrested by the police men and soldiers. They were scared of being arrested by the police and the soldiers because they were sometimes kept in prison for about three months and then later deported back to Zimbabwe. Even after being through all those hardships and also after being deported back to Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors still had to illegally cross over to South Africa just a day after their deportation.

The above argument highlights the extreme vulnerability of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors, especially those who live on the streets of Musina Town are being taken advantage of by some older local guys. It is also important to note that their arrest and deportation does not help to address the challenge of streetism that is prevalent in the Musina Town. At the same time, the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors' human rights are being trampled as a result of bullied by the local young men and also being arrested and kept in prison over a long period. What is also disconcerting is the fact that there is no interest by the authorities on the interests and rights of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. All what these unaccompanied minors have to deal is their desperate situation of being unemployed and hungry. Their situation is further compounded by being constantly bullied by local young people and being arrested and deported by police and soldiers. They find themselves in a vicious circle wherein their misery never ends.

To support both responses from respondent 1 and 2, unaccompanied minors who live on the streets also suffer as victims of criminal offences perpetrated against them by local young people since they cannot institute criminal cases at the police stations because of the fear of being arrested and being deported to Zimbabwe (Bearak, 2009).

Another respondent attested to some of the challenges that he went through on the streets of Musina Town:

“Policemen and soldiers come after us every Tuesday and Saturdays. They want to arrest us and deport us. Hiding and running away from them is troubling and frightening. My other challenge is that I can’t get an asylum permit because I don’t have an Identification document. I Left Zimbabwe when I was eight years old. Without documentation I can’t stay in South Africa nor go back to Zimbabwe. Sometimes I feel like an alien’ said Respondent 3.

“The police and soldiers are the biggest problem. I am also failing to get an asylum permit because I do not have legal documentation”, said Respondent 8.

The above extract highlights the unfortunate and desperate situation in which the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors find themselves. The statements indicate that the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were being constantly hunted down by the police and soldiers. Once found, the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe. This leaves them living in fear and having to keep looking around and hiding from the police and soldiers. Respondent 3 indicated that being on the run and hiding from the police and soldiers all the time is extremely frustrating for them. Both the respondents further stated that the other challenge was that they could not get an asylum permit because they did not have identity documentation. Getting an asylum permit would have helped them to stay legally in South Africa. This would have also saved him the trouble of being chased, arrested and deported back to Zimbabwe by the police and soldiers. Respondent 3 explained that the reason why he did not have an identity document was because he left Zimbabwe when he was just eight years old.

The respondent seemed worried by the fact that without legal documentation he could not stay legally in South Africa. On the other hand, he also cannot go back to Zimbabwe as he will not survive because of the bad economic situation back in Zimbabwe. He lastly stated that he feels like an alien due to his nonexistence status in government identity systems.

From the arguments raised by the responded above, it can be concluded that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town are faced with challenges of not being in possession of their identity documents and other legal documentation. This makes it hard for them to settle in South Africa freely. In such a situation, the law enforcement officials become the biggest enemy to Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors because they keep hunting them on a regular basis. Some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors left Zimbabwe when they were still very young, and that is why some of them do not have identity documents. This is the case because some of them left Zimbabwe and came to South Africa without permission. It also becomes such a big challenge when a minor feels depressed and unidentified because of lack of legal documentation. Such a situation is very alarming because unaccompanied minors usually avoid seeking for help or emotional support from anyone due to fear of being deported. This leaves Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors faced with a lot of challenges that are far from being resolved. Respondent 4 and 6 gave a different comment from those of the above respondents:

“Beside the police and soldiers, my biggest challenge is fighting with other street children. The problem with us girls is that we are always fighting over gossips and boyfriends. Sometimes my boyfriend is jealous when I talk to other boys and he fights me. There’s just a lot of fighting on the streets. Some stab each other to death with bottles and knives. I live in fear every day!” said Respondent 4.

“Sometimes not being under the parental care contributes to a lot of misbehaving on the streets. My biggest challenge is the fighting that occurs on the street. Some street children are very wild. I fear for my life

because when you live on the street there is no one to protect you, not even the police”, said Respondent 6.

Respondent 4 and 6 stated that their biggest challenge on the streets of Musina Town were fights among the street children. Respondent 4 also stated that the problem with Zimbabwean unaccompanied female street children was that they were constantly fighting over gossips and boyfriends. She further stated that her boyfriend also fought with her a lot because of his jealousy. Respondent 6 believed that the regular fighting was as a result of lack of parental care and guidance. The respondents said that they lived in fear every day because there was a lot of fighting on the streets and there was no one to protect them. The fights seemed to be brutal because Respondent 4 mentioned that some went to an extent of stabbing each other to death with broken bottles and knives.

This implies that life on the streets is dangerous. The Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors may be tolerating the situation of constant fighting mainly because they were not able to report their abuse to the police since they were in South Africa illegally. Going to the police station would only lead to deportation. The absence of proper guidance from one’s parents can also contribute to violent behaviour. The fact that some even stab each other to death, shows that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets are extremely vulnerable. Besides street children being violent towards each other, the police are also said to be abusive to Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town. This is attested to in the responses below from respondent 5, 7 and 9:

“My biggest challenge is the police. Sometimes they are very abusive because we have no one to fight for us. The community resents us but some are very nice to us as they give us food and money. We have no problem with food or health. When we are sick or in labour we go to the hospital and be assisted free of charge”, said respondent 5.

“My challenges are the way in which the police and soldiers treat us, they are supposed to protect us but they end up torturing and scaring us”, said respondent 7.

“The police and soldiers are the biggest problem; we have to always be on the lookout for them. Some community members always blame us for all the crime in Musina Town and sometimes we are innocent”, said respondent 9.

The above statements simply highlight the fact that the police and soldiers pose a serious threat to the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. What is of great concern for the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors about the police and soldiers is their abusive behaviour towards the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors since they are no position to fight or defend themselves against the police and soldiers. The respondents also highlighted their concern over the resentment displayed by community members against them. However, the respondents also acknowledged the fact that there were some local community members who are so friendly and ready to embrace and live with them. They further stated that they were some local community members who are ready and willing to share and give the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors whatever they needed and asked for. Another critical issue raised by the respondents was when they were being blamed by community members for crimes committed in the area. Unfortunately, the blaming was apportioned to every Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor even though such a person might have not committed the crime. On the other hand, the collective blaming of crimes on every Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor helps to highlight the frustration and anger of community members about the crimes being committed by some immigrants. It is just unfortunate that community members end up blaming every Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor for such crimes. This becomes unfair for the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors, especially the innocent, as they may be targeted by community. In other words, this endanger the life of every Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor. As result, the safety of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors cannot be guaranteed. This creates hatred against foreign

nationals and may also result in xenophobic attacks against Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors, including the innocent ones.

Some of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town were being abused by the police officers. The police officers might be doing so because they were aware that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors had no one to protect them and would tolerate anything to remain in South Africa. Such actions perpetrated against the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minor are against the law and it is very alarming for minors to be going through such hardships especially when the perpetrators are the law enforcement officials who are supposed to protect them. The resentment from the community members can also contribute to issues such as xenophobic attacks, maltreatment, isolation and criminal activities committed against Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors.

The above argument clearly shows that the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were extremely worried by the police and soldiers who were always chasing them, arresting and deporting them back to Zimbabwe. A report by the Human Rights Watch (2003) entitled “Charges with Being Children: Egyptian Police Abuse of Children in Need of Protection”, portrays a disappointing picture of the behaviour of Egyptian police towards unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Egypt. Besides the fact that police routinely arrest and detain children who need protection and not harassment, these children are subject to extortion, beatings, verbal abuse and being transported in vehicles that are unsafe and that transport adult criminals as well (Human Rights Watch, 2003). In the same vein, a study by UNICEF (2005), includes short life histories of street children who were exposed to the brutality and corrupt practices of the police. In addition, Ammar also pointed out that, in recent years; street children have witnessed a number of episodes of police brutality in Egypt (Ammar, 2009).

Raffaelli et al.,’s (2001), study on “How Brazilian street children do experience the street” also revealed that street children in Brazil stated how authority officials mistreated them. They stated that police officers hit, assaulted and murdered some of the street children. In as far as the attitude of people towards the street children, Bearak (2009) said that street children said that people were generally rude, aggressive, mean,

insensitive, suspicious and afraid of the street children because they think street children were going to rob them. The street children also stated that as young as they were, they were also faced with xenophobic attacks.

4.3.3.2. Whether they have ever stayed in a shelter

When asked if they have ever stayed in a shelter, 70% of the respondents agreed that they once stayed in shelters. While the other 30% said they have never lived in a shelter. The extract below attests to:

“Yes”, said Respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8.

“No”, said Respondents 7, 9 and 10.

The above responses imply that most of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who lived on the streets have once stayed in shelters. But the above statements show that they ultimately left the shelter. They might have experienced push and pull factors which led them to resort living on the streets.

According to Bearak (2009), Bezuidenhout (2015), Eshia (2010), Magqibelo (2016), UN (2014) Zhang (2010) some children were pushed to the streets due to lack of supply of essential needs such as enough food in shelters, maltreatment by caretakers and following rules and schedules in shelters. Others were pulled to the streets due to the desire of freedom, self-control, earning money through work and peer pressure.

4.3.3.3. Preference of living on the streets than shelters

When the respondents were asked as to why they preferred living on the streets than in the shelters, 70% of the respondents said they once lived in shelters but left due to different reasons. Meanwhile, the other 30% said that they never lived in shelters. This group further said that they were not willing to stay in the shelters at all. They further said that they were also not interested in staying in the shelters because have heard about the disadvantages of staying in shelters.

There are many shelters and churches in Musina Town that take in unaccompanied minors from Zimbabwe and other countries. These shelters offer accommodation, meals, recreational programmes, reconnection with their families and also get them

registered for education in government schools. Living under certain rules and following routines seem to be the biggest challenge for the respondents because they just want freedom and self-control. Most of them indicated that shelters were not a good place because there was no much freedom, the caretakers were very abusive and sometimes there was a serious shortage of food.

Hereunder is a comment from a respondent answering on the question of preference of the streets over shelters:

“I have never stayed in a shelter because they refused me to stay there because I have two children. I am staying on the streets because I have no other choice”, said respondent 7.

Respondent 7 stated that when she went to a shelter to seek for help she was not allowed to stay because she had two children with her. The shelter that the respondent went to does not allow minors who come in with their children.

This implies that the respondent had preferred to stay in a shelter but was not taken in because of the shelter’s rules. The respondent was allowed to stay in the shelter because of the fact that she had children that she wanted to stay at a shelter together with. This left her with no choice but to resort to the streets. This is tantamount to discrimination. Consequently, such a discrimination also contributes to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

To support this, some unfunded shelters for unaccompanied minors turn away young mothers with their children due to their inability to provide for the infant’s needs (Lockhart, 2008). This leaves young mothers and their children resorting to staying on the streets which also contribute to the increase of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

Another respondent gave a similar response:

“I once stayed at a shelter which is found in church. I left because I wanted to stay with my boyfriend. I then got two children and he was not supporting them. I decided to leave him and return to the shelter where I

was denied to stay with my children. All shelters do not allow a person to come with children so I ended up on the streets”, said respondent 4.

Respondent 4 said she once stayed in a shelter which was within the church yard. The respondent further stated that she left the shelter because she wanted to stay with her boyfriend. When the respondent became pregnant and ended up with two children, the boyfriend was not performing his duties as the father of the children. The respondent then decided to leave the boyfriend and return back to the shelter where she used to live in. Unfortunately, when she got to the shelter she was denied access to the shelter because she had brought children along with her. Since she could not get rid of her children she was left with no choice but to resort to living on the streets.

The above information shows that not all street children prefer staying on the streets than in shelters. The respondent once stayed in a shelter and left to stay with her boyfriend. When things did not go well with the boyfriend, the respondent was willing to go back and stay at a shelter. However, she was not allowed to stay in a shelter because she had children with her. This left her with no option but to go back to the streets. This implies that some rules in some shelters may also contribute to the prevalence of unaccompanied minors living on the streets.

The views expressed by respondent 4 also revealed that some children left shelters because they wanted freedom. They wanted to escape from dependency, living under rules and routines. Some of the girls also left the shelters so that they could live with their boyfriends. This also contributed to issues such as teenage pregnancy, partner abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and lack of access to shelter for teen mothers. To support this assertion, Bearak (2009) stated that some street children escape their homes in search of freedom and the desire to be independent which sometimes can be due to peer pressure.

Speaking of rules in some shelters that may lead other unaccompanied minors resorting to the streets. Another respondent gave a similar comment:

“I use to stay at Roman Catholic Shelter but we were sent away because they said the shelter was for Zambians only. I now prefer staying on the

streets. I have lost interest in shelters, I think I am settled here on the streets”, said respondent 5.

Respondent 5 indicated that she once stayed at a Roman Catholic shelter but she was sent away together with other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. The reason for chasing them away from the shelter was that the shelter was meant for Zambian nationals only. Which meant that Zimbabweans and other foreign nationals were not allowed to stay as it was only reserved for the Zambian nationals only. However, no reason was given as to why the shelter was reserved for the Zambian nationals only. But what is important is that such a decision disadvantaged Zimbabwean nationals. It was not surprising to hear the respondent saying that she then lost interest in shelters because of what happened to them. She thought she could just live on the streets. This means she might never bother herself by looking for another shelter or proper place to stay.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that there were rules that discriminated in terms of one’s nationality in some shelters in Musina Town. Such discrimination left unaccompanied minors from other countries left out. When these Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors chased away from shelters, it was frustrating and devastating for them. Some ended up losing hope in shelters and resorting to living on streets. This can be seen as a contributory factor to ever escalating prevalence of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism.

Besides the discriminatory rules applied in other shelters in Musina Town, there were also challenges that might have forced unaccompanied minors to leave the shelters and opted to live on the streets. Some of those challenges were confirmed in the responses below:

“I do not really prefer streets over shelters. But, I left the shelter because the government was no longer providing us with food. We only ate once at 10am every day and the workers were no longer getting paid”, said Respondent 1 and 2.

In the above extract, respondent 1 and 2 both once stayed in a shelter in Musina Town. The respondents stated that they only left the shelter because the government was failing to sustain the shelter. The government's failure to sustain the shelter manifested in the government's failure to pay the staff working at the shelter. This was evidenced by the workers who often complained about not getting paid. The government's inability to sustain the shelter was demonstrated by the shortage of food. Hence, the unaccompanied minors were at times given only one meal ration for the whole day.

From the respondents' comments, it shows that failure to maintain and sustain shelters might have also contributed to the phenomenon of streetism in Musina Town. This implies that children who stayed in such conditions had no choice but to leave the shelter. Obviously, there were no community members readily available to take such unaccompanied minors into their homes. In the absence of any alternative accommodation, these unaccompanied minors were forced to live on the streets and also beg for food. One meal per day can never sustain a person for the whole day. So the respondents could not survive from just one meal per day. It led them to start working by doing petty jobs and begging on the streets in order to fend for themselves. Other problems arose when one worked and did not get paid. It may affect one's level of performance especially if the worker had not volunteered to work. The fact that workers were sometimes not being paid their salaries might have also led to the dereliction of duties by the staff as they were not motivated. Unaccompanied minors were the ones who suffered as a result of this. This implies that the phenomenon of streetism in Musina Town is also partially attributed to poor services in shelters.

To support the foregoing argument, Magqibelo et al., (2016) stated that another contributory factor to the prevalence of unaccompanied migrant children resorting to streetism is struggling shelters that fail to support these unaccompanied minors. Children end up leaving the shelters when they encounter challenges such as lack of enough food to eat.

Another respondent also stated the challenge that he went through while living in a shelter. That challenge seemed to have led him to opting to stay on the streets. It is testified on the comment below:

“I use to prefer shelters more but when they stole my asylum permit I decided to leave”, said respondent 3.

Respondent 3 agreed that he used to prefer staying in a shelter than the streets. The respondent also stated that someone at the shelter stole his asylum permit. This made him very sad to such an extent that he decided to leave the shelter and made the streets of Musina Town his home.

An asylum permit is one of the most important document to an unaccompanied minor because it determines the minor’s legal status in a foreign country. When respondent 3 lost his asylum permit he surely lost hope on his safety at the shelter. He felt vulnerable because he thought he was going to be arrested when police come to check for those without proper documents. This could have driven him away from the shelter. He finally ended up in the streets because of his fear that he might be arrested for not having proper documents (asylum permit).

While some respondents actually experienced the challenges in shelters, others have just heard about the challenges from friends and never wished to stay in a shelter as it was the case with respondent 9 who said that:

“I do not prefer staying in a shelter. I will never go there. I heard others saying there is no food in shelters”.

When asked if he preferred staying on the streets than in a shelter, respondent 9 indicated that he preferred to stay on the streets than in the shelter. The respondent strongly stated that he would never go to a shelter because he had heard others saying that there is no food in the shelters.

When one hears that there is no food in shelters, the interest for shelters can easily fade because food is an essential need. This implies that some shelters in Musina Town are going through food supply challenges which leaves those unaccompanied minors who stay in the shelters suffering. As a result, some of them end up leaving the shelters with the hope of begging for food on the streets. On the other hand, those on the streets are also not motivated to go to the shelters because of the stories of shortage of food in the

shelters. This suggests that the knowledge of lack of food in shelters can also fail to motivate the street children to leave the streets since they think that they may not get food. Consequently, lack of or insufficient food at shelters may encourage unaccompanied minors to leave the shelters and end up in the streets. It is the situation of this nature which exacerbates the prevalence of streetism in Musina Town. This argument is in line with Magqibelo et al's (2016) view that unaccompanied migrant children resort to streetism as a result of shelters failing to support unaccompanied minors staying in shelters. This is the case because when children do not get enough food, they are most probably going to think of going to the streets with the hope of begging for food.

Another respondent gave a different reason for not interested in staying in the shelter:

“I have no interest in staying in shelters. I prefer being independent and free”, said respondent 10.

The respondent above stated that he had no interest in staying in the shelter. This means he preferred the streets more than the shelters. The respondent further stated that he preferred being independent than being dependent. To this respondent, staying in the shelter was a sign of being dependent on what the shelter can provide. Freedom was also very important to this respondent. He felt that staying in the shelter also curtailed his freedom. This implies that some unaccompanied minors might have no interest in staying in the shelters not because of the knowledge or experiences in the challenges faced in the shelter, but because of their desire for their own freedom and independence. Such unaccompanied minors did not want to be controlled by adults or guardians. Such children would often try to avoid finding themselves in a setting where they are watched, guided and expected to follow routines. Such an attitude may lead to children running away from their homes and even from shelters in search for freedom and self-control. Consequently, children who run away from their homes and shelters in search for freedom and independence also add up to the increasing number of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

Respondent 6 and 8 also gave a similar comment:

“I prefer staying on the streets because I once stayed in a shelter but I decided to leave. I was still immature because I always ran away with friends continuously then the matron chased us away. I just didn’t like to be controlled like a little child. I desired freedom and going out with boys”, said respondent 6 and 8.

Respondents 6 and 8 were Zimbabwean female unaccompanied minors living on the streets in Musina Town. Both the respondents agreed that they preferred living on the streets than in a shelter. As a result, they left the shelter. The respondents believed that they were still immature because they made it a habit to always run away with their friends. The matron at the shelter decided to chase them away because of such bad behaviour. The respondents further explained that they did not like to be controlled like little children. This meant that they felt mistreated when they were told what to do by the guardians at the shelter. All what they wanted was their freedom so that they could go around with no one giving them instruction on what to do.

From the extract above, it can be concluded that guidance is very essential for minors because they may end up taking wrong decisions. Generally, children do not like to be controlled or to be governed by rules. They prefer to do things their own way. As a result of peer pressure some may even run away from home just to avoid being under an adult’s supervision. The same applies to unaccompanied minors in shelters. They may be tempted to leave the shelter for freedom and self-control. In the end, these minors decide to stay on the streets so that they could do things as they wish. Their lives may take a turn into chaos since they may get used to staying and doing things without being guided by rules. A child who grows up without being supervised and guided by an adult may develop an antisocial behaviour which may pit him/ her against his/ her own family and members of the community. Once children flee their homes and resort to living on the streets, this may contribute to the escalation of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism.

A study titled: “How Brazilian street children do experience the street” conducted by Raffaelli et al., (2001), supports the responses that were given by the above respondents that street children’s overall feeling of being on the street involves the feeling of freedom, not sticking to any schedule, the feeling of greatness and having a lot of friends and clients. This finding strongly confirms the preference of streets than shelter by unaccompanied minors who live on the street.

4.3.4. Theme 4: Intervention strategies to address the challenges of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism

4.3.4.1. Intervention strategies to curb the phenomenon of unaccompanied 09minors and streetism

All of the respondents (100%) were very much aware of the need for intervention strategies to curb their problem. The respondents seemed to have their own suggestions of intervention strategies that differ from those being implemented and practised by the government and different organisations. All of them were opposed to the use of arrest and deportation as a strategy to alleviate the phenomenon of streetism in Musina Town. They believed that all solutions should be put into practice while they are in South Africa because they cannot survive and earn a living because of the bad economic situation in Zimbabwe. This sentiment is captured as follows:

“All I need is a better job here in South Africa. I need to get papers so that I can work and find myself a better place to stay with all my needs covered or met”, said respondent 1.

Like the respondent above, another respondent gave a similar view:

“If I can get papers, I can work here and support my child”, said respondent 4.

Respondent 1 and 4 said that the best solution for their plight was not to deport them but to allow them to stay in South Africa since they can never find a job back in

Zimbabwe. The respondents believed that if they were to get legal documentation, they would find themselves better jobs and a better place to stay than living on the streets.

From the above, it is clear that respondent 1 and 4 are opposed to the way the authorities are handling the phenomenon of streetism in Musina Town. This is the case because the respondents are vehemently disputing government's efforts of deporting all migrants who are in South Africa illegally. On the other hand, the South African authorities see deportation as the only solution as streetism is an inconvenience and nuisance for the Musina Town officials and local residents since some of the unaccompanied minors are not willing to stay in the shelters available in the area. However, the respondents also believe that their needs can only be met in South Africa and not in Zimbabwe since the economic situation is bad back there.

Two other respondents also gave a related comment:

"I do not wish to go back to Zimbabwe, all I want is a job here in South Africa", said respondent 2.

"If I have enough money I will go back home but just to visit. I want a proper job here in South Africa", said respondent 9.

The respondents above stated that they do not wish to return back to their home country. They believed that the best way to deal with their problem was to allow them to get a job in South Africa.

The above statement made by respondent 2 indicates that he was not willing to go back to Zimbabwe. He thought the only solution is for him is to find a job here in South Africa. On the other hand, respondent 9 stated that if he has enough money he was only going to go back home just to visit and then return back to South Africa. But all he wanted was a job in South Africa.

This shows that the living conditions in Zimbabwe might be very bad in such a way that the unaccompanied minors do not hope to get a job in Zimbabwe. If problems in Zimbabwe cannot be solved it means that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors will continue to migrate to South Africa in large numbers. They will also view staying in

South Africa as the only option for them. In the process, the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town will just get worse. To support this, Zimbabwe has a weak economy and lack of job opportunities which has influenced the migration of Zimbabweans into other countries in search of job opportunities (Chinyakata, 2015).

Another respondent also gave the following comment:

“If I get a proper job I can afford rent and leave the streets. Deportation and staying in shelters is not a suitable intervention strategy for me”, said respondent 5.

The above respondent also stated that the only solution to her problem was if she could get a proper job so that she could get money and be able to pay rent for proper accommodation and leave the streets. She further indicated that deportation and staying in shelters are not suitable intervention strategies for her.

From the response above it can be concluded that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets usually have a different view than those of the government when it comes to intervention strategies to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Some of the respondents avoided being sent to shelters. They were also opposed to being deported back to Zimbabwe as an intervention strategy. All the respondents quoted above seemed not to be willing to go back to school to acquire knowledge and skills that could make them employable. They, instead, preferred to get a better job in order to afford proper accommodation and a better livelihood. This shows that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town were willing to continue to live as working children in order to provide for their needs. This was further supported by other respondents:

“I will never go back home. I just want is to find a better job and live a good life. I want to find myself staying at the location”, said respondent 3 and 7.

“All I want is a good job here in South Africa. I will never go back to Zimbabwe if the economy is still that bad”, said respondent 6 and 8.

However, respondent 10 gave a different view:

“The best solution is for the police to protect us from bad people so that we can live here on the streets in peace. They should stop arresting and deporting us because we are not going anywhere”, said respondent 10.

The respondent above indicated that the best intervention strategy that would suit him and other Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets of Musina Town was for the police to protect all the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors from bad people. He believed that if he could live in peace on the streets, all his problem would be solved. The respondent also wanted the police to refrain from arresting and deporting Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. He further said that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were not going anywhere. This implies that even if they were deported to Zimbabwe they would still make means to come back to South Africa. It is evident that the South African government sees as an intervention strategy to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism, Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors view it as a challenge and want it to be stopped. The police regard deportation as a way of addressing the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. But the respondents see it otherwise. The respondent made it clear that the intervention strategy which was being used by the government and police was not going to succeed because once they were deported they would still find their way back to South Africa. Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets instead seek protection from those who offend them. They believe that if they could live on the streets of Musina Town in peace and under the protection of the police, this could go a long way in reducing their challenges.

To support the above comments which were made by respondent 10, it has been stated by Magqibelo (2016) that multitudes of Zimbabwean illegal and unaccompanied migrants were being deported every month by South African authorities. However, most of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who were interviewed for this study did not

want to go back to Zimbabwe. All they wanted was to find a job in South Africa and work so that they can fend for themselves and their families back home. One other concern was that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were not interested in going back to school. They just wanted to find a job and work. The fact that their focus is on finding a job and working, this means that poverty is rife back in Zimbabwe, hence work is the first thing that comes to their mind (Bourdillon, 2005)..

4.4. Data collected from complimentary Respondents (organisations and residents)

4.4.1. The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

All stakeholders strongly stated that there was a high rate of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. They indicated that this issue had been increasing rapidly and seemed to have started a long time ago. It was also indicated that some of those Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children arrived in South Africa when they were very young. They were found in all genders and age groups. All of the eight complimentary respondents also stated that they seemed to be failing to address this issue because of the rapid increase of the number of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors in Musina Town. The respondents were also worried about the street children's preference of streets over the shelters.

Hereunder are comments from the complimentary respondents:

“There are plenty street children who come from Zimbabwe. They are found in all 12 wards in Musina Town. The majority are between the ages of 8-14 years old. When it comes to gender, male dominate the population of Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children”, said respondent 11.

“The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town is very high. They are found in each and every ward of Musina Town. Most of them are male”, said respondent 12.

The respondents above articulated that there is a high rate of the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The respondents further said Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were found on the streets of all twelve wards in Musina Town. It was also stated that the majority of them were between eight to fourteen years old, and that there were more males than females. This implies that the prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism is very high in Musina Town because Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were said to be found in each and every ward in Musina Town. When it comes to gender, the responses revealed that there were fewer female Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the street of Musina Town. This is supported Bearak (2009), Lockhart (2008) and Magqibelo et al., (2016) who argue that when it comes to gender representation, the majority of street children are male. This situation is probably attributed to cultural sanctions against women since girls are more controlled by their families than boys. Moreover, when girls run away from their families, they often work as servants for other families. Some of these girls engage in sex work under pimps. They get attached to pimps and prefer any other places than the streets in order to avoid being abused by boys on the streets (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). The situation of males being the majority of the street dwellers may be due to the fact that males are physically strong enough to cope on the streets. Otherwise, females are not as strong as their male counterparts. Therefore, they are likely to sacrifice their health by involving themselves in sex work for safe accommodation and food.

Respondent 13 gave a similar comment below:

“It’s a big challenge for Musina community. The number has increased rapidly. In our shelter we have about 17 which were trafficked and unaccompanied. The number of those who are in shelters is very small and decreasing on a daily basis. They seem to prefer the streets more, which makes this phenomenon uncontrollable and challenging. The law states that every unaccompanied child that arrives at a foreign country should be taken to a government’s social worker so that they should try and trace his/her family and deport him/her. If the family can’t be traced

then the child should be given an asylum, allocated at any shelter and there taken care of including getting proper education. These children are being rejected by the social workers which result to this phenomenon rapidly increasing”, respondent 13.

From the extract above, it shows that the prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism is increasing rapidly on the streets of Musina Town. The response above also supports that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors prefer to stay on the streets than in shelters. The respondent stated that there were only few Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors in a specific shelter whereas the streets were flooded with Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. When some shelters and social workers reject Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors, it is also contributing to the increase of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism.

Another respondent gave a similar view:

“They are so many. One can find them everywhere here in Musina Town”, said respondent 17.

This statements imply that the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town as these minors were found almost everywhere in Musina Town. This is supported by Fritch et al., (2009), cited in Magqibelo et al, (2016), who said that there were many, about 1 500, unaccompanied minors from Zimbabwe in Musina, Limpopo Province. Though most of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors have escaped from Zimbabwe to South Africa, some were being born on the streets of Musina Town as stated in the following extract:

“This phenomenon is getting worse on a daily basis, more of these children are escaping from Zimbabwe everyday plus more are even being born on the streets”, said respondent 18.

“The issue of street children who come from Zimbabwe is getting worse. They come in large numbers and are always giving birth which increases

the prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors rapidly”, said respondent 14 and 16.

This shows that some Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town are engaging in early sexual intercourse and end up falling pregnant. This also makes them susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases and teen motherhood which will also lead to an increased condition of poverty. It can be concluded that birth on the streets by Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors also contributes to the increase of streetism.

Another respondent gave a different view as follows:

“This issue is excessive here in Musina Town but churches are trying by all means to control and manage this issue. It is not an easy issue to totally eradicate because the victims are not willing to work with any stakeholders that wishes to assist them. Even when they are deported they still find their way back into South Africa”, said respondent 15.

The extract above shows that it is not easy to totally address the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors because the minors were not willing to cooperate with stakeholders who were ready to assist them. This means that the stakeholders could be coming up with intervention strategies which Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets disapprove. This is supported by the fact that when Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were deported back to Zimbabwe, they still return to South Africa. It was very clear that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors did not wish to go back to Zimbabwe. This also shows that the decisions which were taken on their behalf as solutions to their problem were not effective enough to minimise or eradicate the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

4.4.2. The effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

All the respondents were aware of the effects of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The respondents mentioned

effects that affected both the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets and the community of Musina Town as a whole. Some of these challenges were attested to in the comment below from one of the respondents:

“The disregard of the children’s interests is one of the major effects. When they are forced to go to shelters without looking at the problem individually is also a challenge. Even when the policeman and soldiers arrest them and deport them it doesn’t solve anything because they still return back to Musina Town. The other problem is the fact that there are no permanent solutions to this phenomenon. Their age becomes a problematic factor to some intervention strategies which leave Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors not being issued with asylums because they are below the age of seventeen”, said respondent 16.

The above quotation shows that the disregard of the children’s interests is the main effect of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. This means that when decisions are taken about the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets, their rights and interests were not taken into considerations. It shows that the authorities and different stakeholders take decisions about the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town without the children’s opinions and judgement. This means that the authorities should not have just decided and acted without considering the interests and rights of the children in question. Such children could be consulted and involved or at least consult with organisations that advocate for the rights and interests of the children, especially street children.

Comprehensive solutions may also be taken for all the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets which leaves individual problems unattended. This becomes a major issue because Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors have few similarities but are also individuals with unique needs that require individual attention. This makes it extremely difficult to find permanent and effective solutions for the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

From the response above, it shows that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors were also denied asylum status due to their age which is below seventeen. This implies that when minors desired to stay in South Africa and were not granted legal permission because of their age, this left the issue of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism unresolved. The more authorities deny granting the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors' asylum permit; they are left with no option, but to continue to be in South Africa illegally. In the end they end up roaming the streets searching for jobs and also begging for food in the streets of Musina Town. On the other hand, Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors also cause problems for the community as this is highlighted in the quotation:

“They are very problematic to the community and themselves. They steal fire wood from vendors in order to make a fire during cold nights. They even rob people by snatching their hand bags. They are not afraid to cut open a person’s handbag and remove money and cell phones. They fight a lot among themselves, they stab each other with knives and bottles. They are not even afraid of sexually transmitted diseases because they keep making babies as young as they are. When they get sick it’s very bad, some even give birth there on the streets because they can’t even call an ambulance”, said respondent 17 and 18.

From the extract above, it shows that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town were a source of crime to the Musina Town community and themselves. They were also seen by the respondents as criminals who were more harmful to the community members of Musina Town. From the responses above, the respondents were also labelled as immoral and barbaric due to their engagement in sex at an early age, teenage pregnancy, brutal fights amongst themselves and other criminal activities.

To support the above statements, the general public’s perception is that street children are criminals and they are often subjected to hostile treatment by authorities. However, the police are blamed for abusing street children (Girmachew, 2006; Roestenburg & Oliphant, 2005).

“They commit numerous criminal activities. They steal in people’s houses at night. They rob handbags at the taxi rank. The young girls engage in prostitution for as little as R5”, said respondent 15.

“Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets of Musina Town go through a lot of hardships mainly because they are not protected and cared for. Which also leads them to committing crimes in order to earn a living”, said respondent 11 and 12.

The above extracts imply that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town also contributed to the crime rate at Musina Town. This threatens the safety and stability of Musina Town. When Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town also engaged in prostitution, it may also lead to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancy, teen motherhood and other challenges that come with prostitution. Unaccompanied minors who are also affected by streetism are vulnerable to criminal activities which are influenced by the need to earn a living (Parkins, 2011; UNICEF, 2012).

Respondent 15 also went further and stated the following:

“A lot of state money is spent on deporting them back to Zimbabwe which is not effective because they always return back to South Africa illegally”, said respondent 15.

The above comment shows that the existence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town also affected the state’s finances because money which was spent on deportation turned to be just a waste of money and effort by the state. This is because after Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are deported back to Zimbabwe, they still come back to South Africa illegally. To support the above statement, Magqibelo et al., (2016) hold the view that deporting Zimbabwean young migrants back to Zimbabwe does not prevent them from unlawfully entering into South Africa regularly. Other respondents also stated that:

“Most Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are undocumented which leaves them with no identity and protection. They are also not safe on the streets but are also a danger to the community because of the criminal activities that they engage in in order to earn a living”, said respondent 13 and 14.

The responses above show the significance of being legally documented as a citizen. Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children are faced with a lot of challenges but fail to be protected and cared for because they entered the country illegally, that is, without legal documents.

4.4.3. Intervention strategies to curb the problem of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism

When asked about the intervention strategies which can be used to curb the problem of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. All eight respondents gave different comments. Two respondents who were local residents gave suggestions based on their own personal views. The other six respondents who were representing organisations also suggested intervention strategies based on their organisations’ policies. The following comments were given by a Musina Town resident:

“I think for this problem to be solved, Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets should allow the people with shelters and churches to take them in because they will be safe and protected there”, said respondent 13, 14, and 17.

Like the above respondent, another resident commented as follows:

“They should go back to Zimbabwe, we are tired of them”, said respondent 18.

From the above responses, all the respondents would like to see Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors out of the streets of Musina Town. The respondents suggested that Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors should either go to churches and shelters or be deported back to Zimbabwe. The above comments also show that Musina Town

residents are not happy with the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on their streets. They see removing the children from the streets as the best intervention strategy because the streets were never meant for habitation. The other reason could be because of the high prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors on the streets which also contributes to a high crime rate wherein these children are victims and sometimes perpetrators. To support the above statement, Chinyakata (2015) suggests that overcrowding and cohabiting on the streets triggers health hazards and also threatens the safety and stability of Musina Town.

On the other hand, another respondent gave a different view:

“Their dignities should be maintained. They should not be treated like criminals and be abused by the law enforcement. They also need to be empowered to take informed decisions with their lives and future. The Department of Social Development should also assist with taking them back to their homes in Zimbabwe and ensure that their needs are met to avoid their unlawful return to South Africa” said respondent 16.

The respondent above spoke on behalf of an organisation which offers shelter and recreational programs for the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors. The respondent indicated that the most important intervention strategies that can curb the problem of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town were respecting the children’s dignity, empowering them and ensuring that their needs were met after they have been deported back at their homes. The organisation which the respondent was representing tried to explore the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors comprehensively in an attempt to find solutions which were effective and sustainable. If the respondents can be empowered to make informed decision, the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism can decrease because many would seek safety and education than work and streetism.

Another respondent gave the view below:

“The Municipality organises an event wherein all unaccompanied street children are invited. In that event, different organisations come and speak to them about their rights and also help them by tracing their families back in Zimbabwe and deport them. This intervention strategy may seem to be effective but the prevalence is still too high and difficult to manage”, said respondent 11.

Like the responded above, respondent 15 gave a similar view:

“Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors lack legal documentation which makes them offenders. The police arrest them and deport them to Zimbabwe because they are in the country unlawfully”, said respondent 15.

The above response shows that there were awareness campaigns wherein the minors were informed about their rights and responsibility. They were also assisted to trace their families back in Zimbabwe for deportation. This implies that a decision to deport the minors back to Zimbabwe was taken whilst ignoring the comprehensive issue and the challenges that come with it that may not be effective in reducing or eradicating the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

“The municipality also assists by reporting all the problems which are being encountered by the community and the unaccompanied street children to the Department of Social Development and other affected stakeholders. Department of Social Development then provides a social worker who assists the minor to get an asylum permit and also be placed in a shelter”, said respondent 12.

The extract above implies that some organisations in Musina Town have effective intervention strategies aimed at addressing the phenomenon of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. It also shows that safety and security were prioritised for the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors because the organisation aimed to remove the minors off the streets and place them in shelters.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the presentation, discussion and analysis of the collected data. Eighteen (18) respondents were interviewed. Ten (10) of them were primary respondents and eight (8) were complimentary respondents. All the respondents were interviewed about the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The questions used for the interviews were drawn from the four (4) main objectives of this study. The questions touched on the prevalence, contributory factors, effects and intervention strategies for the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The findings revealed that there was a huge number of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors living on the streets of Musina Town. It was also revealed that most of the respondents left Zimbabwe and migrated due to its economic problems, poverty and maltreatment from step-parents. Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town experienced difficult life-threatening challenges when crossing the border. The Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors also went through hardships while staying on the streets. The study also discovered that most of them preferred to stay on the streets than in the shelter and also that they were reluctant to go back to Zimbabwe. Most importantly, the efforts being made by the authorities seemed not to be yielding the desired results since the phenomenon of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town appears to be continuing unabated.

CHAPTER 5

5. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

The primary aim of this chapter was to present a general view of the study, outline the findings and the recommendations which can be useful in addressing the phenomenon of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

5.2. Overview of the study

The main aim of the research was to probe the contributory factors of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The study also covered the aspects of the prevalence, effects and intervention strategies of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

The study was divided into five chapters, the first chapter was an orientation of the study and it presented a general introduction, background and context within which the study is conducted. The second chapter basically focused on the literature review. In this chapter, the literature on unaccompanied minors who end up as street children in foreign countries was critically reviewed. The chapter that followed focused on the design and method of the research (research methodology) which have been used to probe the contributory factors of the phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. The study adopted a qualitative research methodology, non-probability sampling wherein purposive and snowball sampling was used to generate a sample of eighteen respondents in Musina Town. Face-to-face interviews were used for data collection. Thematic analysis was used to decode meaning from the statements made by the respondents. The fourth chapter focused on the presentation of the empirical data as well as the analysis and discussion of the findings of the study. The respondents were interviewed about the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town, its' contributory factors, its' effects and intervention strategies which can help to address the problem being

investigated. Chapter 5 which was the last chapter provided the overview of the study, findings of the study, conclusion and recommendations which emanate from the study.

5.3. Summary of the findings of the study

The main findings of the study were as follows:

- ❖ Socio-economic factors were the main contributory factor to illegal migration by children and Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism particularly poverty, domestic abuse and maltreatment of children in families, being an orphan, lack of job opportunities, unaffordability and lack of access to education in Zimbabwe.
- ❖ Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors experience hardships during their migration into South Africa.
- ❖ Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors are extremely vulnerable to physical, criminal and health hazards, especially those who live on the streets.
- ❖ Escalation of the erosion of cultural values and morality due to desperate living conditions in the informal settlements where most of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors stay.
- ❖ Due to poverty Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children end up engaging in criminal activities in order to make more money to earn a living.
- ❖ Poor sustainability of the shelters leads to the abandonment of the shelters by the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors.
- ❖ The desire to seek for freedom and self-control and subsequent stay on the streets by minors creates safety and security challenge for the Musina Town officials.
- ❖ Suspicion and lack of trust of the street children lead to tension between the community members of Musina Town and Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors.
- ❖ Overcrowding of the Musina Town due to the influx of the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors threatens the safety and security of the town.
- ❖ The high prevalence of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors in Musina Town also puts pressure on the education and health services provided by the Musina Town.

- ❖ Teenage pregnancy is very high on the streets and it contributes to homelessness and streetism to the children that are born. It also triggers the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- ❖ Arresting and deporting the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors by the South African Police Service is not effective as a strategy to address the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism.

5.4. Recommendations of the study

Hereunder follows the recommendations based on the findings of the study:

5.4.1. Policy formulation

For countries like Zimbabwe to curb migration as a whole, policy makers should also put their focus on investing more on education and employment in order for migration to reduce due to lack of quality and affordable education and also lack of job opportunities.

Policy makers in South Africa (NGOs, Departments and Agencies working for and with children) and international organisations that target issues of unaccompanied/illegal migration and streetism should ensure that they effectively address the problem of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Before any programme for children can be planned, children's views must be considered because children's actual needs may turn out to be different from the needs that adults desire for children. This also refers to deportation as an ineffective strategy to overcome the reduction of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina.

5.4.2. Non-discriminatory access to shelters

Shelters in Musina Town should be within reach and accessible to unaccompanied minors regardless of their diversity. No child should be discriminated against based on nationality, age and other differences. Staff members and care-takers in shelters should be trained and monitored on fair treatment and prioritising children's needs.

- **Service delivery to shelters**

The government and relevant stakeholders should provide sufficient and sustainable services to shelters. This should be done to avoid children leaving and avoiding staying in shelters due to not receiving enough food and other inadequate necessities.

5.4.3. Border security

To minimise the entry of unaccompanied and illegal migrants, a strict and tight security at the border should be ensured. All illegal means used to cross the border should be investigated to come up with effective preventative measures. Border security staff members who accept bribes should be monitored and dealt with.

5.4.4. Xenophobic tensions

Awareness campaigns about human rights and against xenophobia should be initiated, implemented and sustained by involving all the people and structures.

5.4.5. Future research

Further research should be conducted on the phenomenon of unaccompanied migration and streetism in order to address the phenomenon itself and the challenges that come with it. Conducting more research is significant because the focus of the study was only based on Musina Town in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The sample size of the study was very small of which its findings cannot be applied to South Africa as a whole. The study also focused only on Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors in Musina Town leaving out other unaccompanied minors from other countries.

5.5. Conclusion

The phenomenon of unaccompanied minors and streetism will always exist in the world because minors just like any other age group will keep on moving from one place to the other searching for better living conditions. This makes it a very critical issue due to difficult challenges that are encountered by the minors when they migrate unaccompanied and end up living on the streets. It is also alarming to discover that different stakeholders and institutions are failing to initiate effective intervention

strategies to deal with the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town.

The study probed the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism is mainly contributed by political and economic factors in the home country and also in the host country.

Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors who live on the streets of Musina Town bring about many challenges that affect them and the community as a whole, for example, overcrowding, crime, moral degeneration, health hazards, prostitution, sexually transmitted diseases, high teen pregnancy rate and littering in Musina Town. Xenophobic tensions between the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and local residents have a serious bearing on the town's safety and security.

Effective intervention strategies are necessary in order to address the issue of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism which affect the Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors themselves and the community. This can be done through the collaboration of all the relevant stakeholders when initiating informed intervention strategies to curb the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town. An association between South African authorities, political, community and religious leaders can assist in identifying and addressing the issue of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism as well as other challenges that emanated from Zimbabwean unaccompanied migration and streetism.

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7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

PROBING THE CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO THE PHENOMENON OF ZIMBABWEAN UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND STREETISM IN MUSINA TOWN

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PRIMARY AND COMPLIMENTARY RESPONDENTS

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Date of interview: _____

Place of interview: _____

RESEARCH QUESTIONS ON PROBING THE CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS OF THE PHENOMENON OF ZIMBABWEAN UNACCOMPANIED MINORS AND STREETISM IN MUSINA TOWN

Primary respondents (Zimbabwean unaccompanied street children)

Theme 1: The prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

- | |
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| <p>1. Are there many Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors staying on the street in Musina Town?.....</p> |
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2. How did you get to Musina Town?

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3. Why did you choose to stay/ settle in this town?

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Theme 2: Factors which lead to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

1. What are the main contributory factors to Zimbabwean unaccompanied migration and streetism here in Musina Town?

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Theme 4: Intervention strategies that will address the challenges of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town

1. Which strategies can be used to curb the problem of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?

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Complimentary respondents (Musina Local Municipality officials, Welfare organisation’s officials, SAPS, Musina residents and Churches)

1. What is the prevalence of the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town?

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A large rectangular area containing 15 horizontal dotted lines, intended for writing or drawing.

APPENDIX B: CONSENT LETTER

I am Netshidongololwe Tshilidzi Petunia of the following student number: 11582527. I am a student at the University of Venda currently studying for a Master of Arts degree (Youth in Development). The topic of my research is: **Probing the contributory factors to the phenomenon of Zimbabwean unaccompanied minors and streetism in Musina Town**. This letter serves as an invitation for you to participate in this study. Your participation will be on a voluntary basis and you will be allowed to withdraw at any time from the study as you wish. Please be informed that every information that you will provide will remain confidential.

Researcher's

signature.....

Date.....

I have read and understood the contents and terms of this invitation to participate in this study. I hereby declare that I am voluntarily participating in this research.

Respondent's

signature.....

Date.....