



UNIVERSITY *of* LUSAKA

Passion for Quality Education: Our Driving Force

SCHOOL OF LAW

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of Zambia's Children's Code Act No.12 of 2022 in
Addressing Adolescent Social Issues.**

By:

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LLB22114523

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DECLARATION

I, **Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga**, do declare that I am the author of this Dissertation entitled **“EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZAMBIA’S CHILDREN’S CODE ACT NO.12 OF 2022 IN ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT SOCIAL ISSUES.”**

I also declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that I understand what plagiarism entails. I am aware of the University’s policy in this regard, and due acknowledgement has been made where other people’s work has been used. I truly believe that this dissertation has not been previously presented for a degree at the University of Lusaka or any other university.

I therefore bear the full responsibility of the contents, errors, omissions and defects as solely mine.

Signed:

Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga

Date: 12th November 2025

SUPERVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION

I, **MISS TABETHA MUKUKA**, do hereby recommend that the dissertation written under my supervision by **MARJORIE MWANSA MUBANGA**, entitled “**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZAMBIA’S CHILDREN’S CODE ACT NO.12 OF 2022 IN ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT SOCIAL ISSUES.**”

Be admitted to the University. I have carefully checked it and I am satisfied that it fulfils the requirements related to the format as laid down in the regulations covering the thesis.

.....**T. Mukuka**.....

Miss Tabitha Mukuka

.....12th November 2025...

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Dreams never die, they just remain unfulfilled.” From the time I was a little girl, I dreamed and desired to be a lawyer. I spoke about it and imagined it, but people around me thought it was just a little girl’s dream. A lack of career guidance and mass discouragement led my career path to everywhere else, but my dream.

After much travel on life’s journey and getting nowhere, I found myself right where I started. Then, one push at the right moment, at fifty-three years of age, one person who believed in me and in the passion he must have picked nudged me and just said to me and I quote, “Why don’t you go and pursue law, you know that is what you were meant to do, and stop wasting your time everywhere else.” I got up, applied to UNILUS, and four years later, I write this in gratitude to State Counsel Robert Simeza for that push. Thank you.

To the One who gives us the ability to create wealth and to do all things, I say to God be all the glory, because if it had not been for Him, I would not be here.

To my support team, my son, Michael, for showing me how to use technology to create questionnaires. My daughter, Chibwe, for always being available to help. My son, Mapalo, for being my challenger and running mate during my four-year study. And my son in law Zvikomborero for joining in to support and encourage me to see this through.

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It is never too late to pursue your dream! I am doing it at fifty-six years!

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. Philippians 4:1

DEDICATION

To my grandfather, the late Lawrence Chipende, I wish you had lived long enough to see this come to pass. You always called me your lawyer when I had no clue what it was about. You believed in me when no one else did. You loved me with a father's love, and you were the father who was absent, yet you taught me to never allow anyone to think less of me than what I was worth. Today, I dedicate this to you. Even in death, you are still loved.

To all adolescents out there, may the choices you make lead you to your destiny and not destruction. It is not about what you have lived, but what choices you make from here forth. Your lived experiences are just a point of reference and your stepping stone to what lies ahead. Choose life.

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Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022

The Constitution (Amendment) No. 2 of 2016

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Bill of Rights Part III of the Laws of Zambia

CONVENTIONS

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LIST OF CASES

Republic v Mwau (Kenya)

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to evaluate how the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022 is working or if not working to protect adolescents and how it is responds to the social challenges they face. The Act was introduced as a way of aligning national child-protection laws with international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Even with such enactment, there are still questions about its real impact on the lives of young people.

In trying to establish this, literature from previous research done together with primary data collected from adolescents, community leaders, educators, and child-protection officers, was used. Some findings revealed that while many stakeholders acknowledge the Act's value, its implementation remains uneven. About 65 percent of adolescents had heard of the Act, and fewer than one-third could describe any of its provisions. The following factors were identified as limitations to the low percentage of those who actually had ability to describe its provisions, limited awareness, resource constraints, and the persistence of cultural norms. Other factors are, Family and community structures which play an important but inconsistent role, with schools and NGOs contributing to sensitisation, in a limited way.

The research concluded that the Children's Code Act clearly provides a strong legal foundation, though its success will depend on how these legal promises are translated into practical, community-based action. It further recommends awareness programs that are stronger, capacity-building for enforcement agencies, and inclusion of families, schools, and traditional leaders to make the Act truly responsive to adolescents' needs.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical stage in human development, characterized by significant physical, emotional, and social changes.¹ In Zambia, as in many other countries, adolescents face various challenges that can hinder their growth and lead to long-term adverse outcomes. Issues such as juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, early sexual activity, and school dropout rates have become increasingly prevalent in recent years, posing serious threats to the well-being of young people and the broader community.² These challenges have been linked to a multitude of factors, including poverty, peer pressure, family dynamics, and insufficient access to education and healthcare.³

Zambia introduced the Children's Code Act in 2022 in response to these challenges, a landmark legal framework aimed at protecting children and promoting their rights in alignment with international standards.⁴ The Children's Code is meant to consolidate and harmonise all laws related to children's rights, including child protection, welfare, and development. It provides a comprehensive legal framework aimed at safeguarding children from exploitation, violence, neglect, and any form of abuse. The Children's Code is aligned with international conventions, such as the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** and the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)**. It advocates for the right to education, health and protection from harmful practices like child marriage and trafficking. However, the effectiveness of this legislation in tackling these issues has yet to be fully explored. This research aims to fill that gap by assessing how well the Children's Code Act addresses adolescent social decay and the extent to which its implementation has had a tangible impact on improving adolescent outcomes.⁵

¹ UNICEF, *Adolescence: A Critical Stage of Human Development* (UNICEF 2020) 15

² Zambia, *National Youth Policy* (2015) 24

³ Ministry of Education, *Report on School Dropout Rates* (2021) 10

⁴ Children's Code Act, No.12 Of 2022, s5

⁵ Ibid

The key component of this investigation is the relationship between legal reforms and evolving social norms. While the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022, represents a progressive shift towards better protection of children's rights, its effectiveness also depends on how it interacts with existing societal values, cultural beliefs, and local practices.⁶ Therefore, this research will not only evaluate the direct impact of the Act on adolescents but also examine how social attitudes and norms surrounding youth behaviour may influence its successful implementation. It will further provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities in using legal reform as a tool for social change, particularly in the context of Zambia's ongoing efforts to combat adolescent social decay.⁷ Furthermore, the study will contribute to the broader discourse on child protection and youth development policies in Sub-Saharan Africa, offering recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of legal frameworks in addressing adolescent issues.⁸ As Zambia continues to align its national laws with international human rights standards, is there a possibility that evolving social norms, which emphasize freedoms and rights for youth, might inadvertently contribute to shifts in behaviour that are perceived as social decay?

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The increasing prevalence of social decay among adolescents in Zambia indicates a significant gap in the country's legal and social framework for addressing the challenges facing its youth.⁹ Despite the enactment of the Children's Code Act of 2022, particularly **sections 3 and 4**, which provide guidelines on the protection of children's rights and the establishment of a supportive environment for their development, these provisions seem insufficient in curbing the rising rates of social issues among adolescents. This inadequacy highlights a disconnect between legal mandates and the practical application of policies, as well as a failure to effectively intervene in the lives of vulnerable youths, potentially exacerbating the social challenges they face. Therefore, there is an urgent need to critically evaluate the implementation of the

⁶ D. Chirwa, *Social Norms and Child Protection in Zambia* (Zambian Journal of Social Policy 2022) 53

⁷ J. Lungu, *Challenges in Adolescent Protection in Zambia* (Zambian Journal of Social Policy (2022) 53

⁸ Ibid, 55.

⁹ Ministry of Education, Report on Juvenile Delinquency and School Dropout Rates (2021) 15

Children's Code Act, 2022, with particular attention to section 3 (1) which states *"that a child's best interest is the primary consideration in a matter or action concerning the child, whether undertaken by a public or private body"* and section 4 which lays down the principles in achieving Children's rights, to ensure that it effectively mitigates adolescent social decay and provides a framework for sustainable youth development. This research will examine whether these reforms, while designed to protect and empower children, have inadvertently created a gap between traditional societal structures and modern legal frameworks, thereby contributing to the challenges facing the youth population. Specifically, the study will investigate whether the increasing freedom granted to children through evolving legal reforms and shifting social norms has led to a breakdown in traditional values, contributing to the rise of delinquency, early sexual activity, substance abuse, and school dropouts.

1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Children's Code Act, 2022, in addressing juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and early sexual activity among adolescents in Zambia as perceived by stakeholders
2. To investigate how traditional societal norms influence or hinder the implementation of the Children's Code Act of 2022 and the resulting impact on adolescent behaviour.
3. To explore how family structures, community engagement, and knowledge of human rights frameworks influence adolescents' lived experiences under the Children's Code Act of 2022 in Zambia.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of this study are:

1. How do adolescents, caregivers, and community stakeholders perceive the impact of the Children's Code Act of 2022 on issues such as juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and early sexual activity in Zambia?

2. In what ways do traditional societal norms influence or conflict with the implementation of the Children's Code Act, and how do these tensions affect adolescent behaviour?
3. How do family dynamics, community involvement, and awareness of human rights frameworks shape the lived experiences of adolescents under the Children's Code Act in Zambia?

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on child protection and adolescent development in Zambia, with a specific focus on evaluating the effectiveness of the Children's Code Act of 2022. Despite the Act's progressive intentions to emphasize the best interests of the child and the principles for achieving children's rights, highlighted in sections 3 and 4, there remains a visible gap between provisions and actual outcomes for adolescents. This disparity is evident in the persistence and possible increase in cases of juvenile delinquency, early sexual activity, substance abuse, and school dropouts.

Secondly, the study will provide empirical insights into how legal reforms can inadvertently clash with traditional societal structures and values, if not adequately contextualized and implemented. In Zambia, family, community, and customary norms have historically played a key role in shaping adolescent behaviour. The research will critically assess whether increased freedoms introduced through modern child rights legislation may be contributing to a weakening of traditional support systems, thus exacerbating social decay among the youth.

Thirdly, by highlighting the practical challenges in enforcing Sections 3 and 4 of the Children's Code Act, the research may inform targeted revisions of the Act, the development of more culturally grounded implementation strategies, and the design of complementary community-based interventions that bridge the gap between formal law and lived realities. Thus, the findings of this study will be valuable for policymakers, educators, social workers, and child protection advocates.

Lastly, the study seeks to advance sustainable youth development by suggesting practical, evidence-based solutions that align legal mandates with the social needs of

Zambia's adolescents. Ultimately, this will facilitate the realization of children's rights in a way that is both effective and culturally responsive.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (EST), which conceptualises child development as shaped by multiple layers of environmental influence, serves as the foundation of this study. The framework recognises that adolescent behaviour is not determined by individual choice alone, but emerges from the interaction of family, peers, schools, communities, cultural norms, and legal structures. As the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022 covers issues of family law, juvenile justice, education, and social protection, this makes EST particularly relevant for evaluating it. By adopting EST, the study situates the effectiveness of the Act within Zambia's broader social-legal and cultural ecology.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study is designed to focus on the evaluation of Zambia's Children's Code Act, 2022, with particular emphasis on its effectiveness in addressing adolescent social issues. The primary population of interest will be adolescents (ages 10-19), their families, and key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Children's Code Act, such as local government officials, law enforcement agencies, educators, healthcare providers, and youth-focused NGOs. It will also consider the perspectives of parents, caregivers, and community leaders.

The primary focus will be on the period from the enactment of the Children's Code Act in 2022, through to the present. This timeframe will allow for an assessment of early-stage implementation and the immediate effects of the Act. However, historical data on adolescent social challenges prior to the law's implementation will also be included to provide a baseline for comparison.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

"Children's Code Act, No.12 of 2022": A comprehensive piece of legislation enacted in Zambia to protect the rights of children, ensure their well-being, and provide a legal

framework for addressing issues related to child protection, welfare, and juvenile justice

Adolescent: A young person in the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, typically ranging from ages 10 to 19.

“Juvenile Delinquency”: Engagement in criminal or antisocial behaviour by individuals under the age of 18. This can include a wide range of activities, such as theft, vandalism, drug-related offences, and violence.

“Substance Abuse”: The harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.

“Early Sexual Activity”: having sexual intercourse at or before the age of 18.

“School Dropout”: Students who leave school before completing a specific level of education.

“Legal Reforms”: Process of examining existing laws, regulations, and policies to advocate and implement change in the legal system

“Social Norms”: Unwritten, informal rules that define acceptable and appropriate actions within a society or community.

“Adolescent Social Decay”: The deterioration of social norms and values among adolescents.

“Public Awareness Campaigns”: Educational initiatives designed to educate and inform the general public about important issues.

“Enforcement Mechanisms”: methods through which laws and regulations are implemented, monitored, and upheld to encourage compliance.

“Evolving Social Norms”: shifting rules that guide behaviour in society.

“Juvenile Justice System”: Systems of laws, policies and procedures intended to regulate the processing and treatment of juvenile offenders.

“Vulnerable Adolescents”: Those at greater risk of experiencing negative outcomes due to various factors in society

“ACRWC”: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

“CRC”: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of adolescent social decay has been extensively studied across various disciplines. And these studies have indicated different aspects of challenges which show both the individual and structural factors that contribute to these issues. This part of the study brings out insights into the effectiveness of legal frameworks, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the role of social norms and policies in addressing adolescent behaviour and outcomes.

Studies have demonstrated that juvenile delinquency is often linked to factors such as poverty, family dysfunction, peer pressure, and lack of access to education and social support systems. According to Gorman-Smith & Tolan argue that children who grow up in environments marked by violence, neglect, or limited opportunities are at a higher risk of engaging in criminal behaviour.¹⁰ Therefore, the existence of Legal reforms are seen as an important part in addressing these issues. This is done by way of providing a more protective and rehabilitative framework for young offenders.

According to **DeLisi**, juvenile justice systems that focus on rehabilitation rather than punishment tend to have more positive long-term outcomes for youth.¹¹ Similarly, findings by the United Nations support a child-centred approach to juvenile justice.¹²

Substance abuse, a major concerning issue affecting adolescents globally, has been seen through research to indicate that early exposure to drugs and alcohol is often influenced by environmental and social factors, such as family history, peer group behaviours, and socioeconomic status.¹³ According to studies done on the effectiveness of prevention programs, emphasis placed on legal measures, in conjunction with education and intervention programs, can significantly reduce

¹⁰ Gorman-Smith D and Tolan PH, ‘The Role of Exposure to community violence and developmental problems among inner-city youth’ (2003) *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology* 32 (2)226.

¹¹ Delisi M, ‘Career Criminals in Society’ (SAGE Publications 2005).

¹² United Nations, *Guidance Note of the Secretary-General: UN approach to Justice for Children* (2014).

¹³ Kendel DB, ‘Stages in Adolescent Involvement in Drug Use’ (2002) *Science* 190 (4217) 912

adolescent substance use in Zambia. **Phiri** in his findings noted that, while drug and alcohol consumption among adolescents remains prevalent, there is increasing recognition of the need for comprehensive policies that integrate legal and educational strategies.¹⁴ Section 20 of the Children's Code Act's provisions on substance abuse prevention reflect a growing awareness of the need for different sectoral approaches. However, this needs to be examined in line with cultural norms and local enforcement practices, so as to see the influence of the effectiveness of the Act in curbing adolescent substance use.¹⁵

Another factor of concern among adolescents is that of early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy which poses risks of negative health outcomes, including unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and school dropout.¹⁶ Research suggests that sexual education implemented together with legal protections, could significantly reduce this factor.¹⁷ While section 11 of the Children's Code Act provides a foundation for improved access to sexual and reproductive health education, its success may be hindered by cultural taboos and opposition from conservative sectors of society.¹⁸

One significant contributor to long-term social and economic challenges for adolescents in Zambia is adolescent school dropout. This could often be associated with early pregnancies, poverty, and lack of access to education.¹⁹ The Act acknowledges education as a critical right and seeks to eliminate barriers to school retention.²⁰ The legal reforms that target early pregnancy and child labour have been shown to improve educational outcomes²¹ and policies that support vulnerable

¹⁴ Phiri M, 'Drug and Alcohol use among urban youth in Zambia: An exploratory study' (2002) *Zambia Social Science Journal* 6 (1) 45

¹⁵ Mwansa J, 'Culture and Drug Prevention in Zambia: A Community-Based Approach' (2019) *African Journal of Drug Policy* 3 (1) 78

¹⁶ Zulu EM, Dodoo FN-A and Ezech AC, 'Sexual Risk-Taking in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya, 1993-98' (2002) *Population Studies* 56 (3) 311

¹⁷ Kirby D, 'Sexuality and Education: Theory and Practice' (Pearson Education 2007).

¹⁸ Chirwa WC, 'Cultural Taboos and Reproductive Health in Southern Africa' (2016) *African Studies Review* 59 (1) 33.

¹⁹ Mugisha F and Rwodzi C, 'Determinants of School Dropout in Zambia: A case study of urban and rural communities' (2018) *Zambian Journal of Education* 10(2) 14.

²⁰ Children's Code Act 2022

²¹ Bhan G, 'Gender, Child Labour and Schooling: An intersectional perspective' (2019) *Development Policy Review* 37 (4) 491.

students, such as flexible school arrangements and financial support, are directly correlated to reduced dropout rates.²²

In order for any legal reform to be effective it is influenced by prevailing cultural beliefs and social norms as these tend to be deeply rooted, and can either support or obstruct the implementation of laws. **Banda** in his argument states that aligning legal reforms with evolving social values is crucial for success.²³ Implementation can be challenging in rural areas where legal awareness is low therefore there is need for public education campaigns and community-based engagement.²⁴

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 Research Approach

This research shall adopt a qualitative methodology. It will review, appraise, and critique existing laws, decided cases, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, legal commentaries, policy briefs, government reports, NGO publications, and dissertations or theses relevant to child law and adolescent development. Information will be collected from both primary sources- such as legislation and case law- and secondary sources, including academic literature that examines the social, cultural, and legal dimensions of adolescent welfare.

1.8.2 Research Design

This research shall make use of the evaluative research design as it aims to evaluate Zambian law on the subject matter.

1.8.3 Sample Size

This research shall target individuals who possess significant knowledge and expertise on issues concerning adolescent social development, juvenile justice, and the implementation of Zambia's Children's Code Act, 2022.

²² Phiri M (n 5)

²³ Banda C, 'Legal Pluralism and Child Protection in Zambia' (2021) *Zambian Law Journal* 43 (2) 67.

²⁴ Mwaanga T, 'Grassroots Legal Literacy and Child Rights in Zambia' (2020) *Community Law Review* 8 (1) 103

1.8.4 Sampling Technique

This research shall use purposive sampling aimed strategically at individuals who have direct experience, knowledge and expertise on the subject matter.

1.8.5 Ethical Considerations

The research shall endeavour to abide by all relevant ethical guidelines established by the University of Lusaka, as well as all relevant laws from the beginning to the end of this research.

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter One

This chapter is the introductory part of the dissertation, which introduces the statement of the problem as well as the background of the study.

Chapter Two

This chapter will look at the conceptual and theoretical foundations of the study by applying Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to explain adolescents' behaviour and wellbeing.

Chapter Three

The Chapter will look at how traditional norms have an influence in the enforcement and the acceptance of the Act

Chapter Four

This Chapter will go on to outline the mediating role of the family structure, community engagement, and human rights awareness to see how these shape adolescents' experiences under the Act

Chapter Five

The Chapter will make recommendations aimed at improving implementation of the Children's Code Act

CHAPTER TWO

THE EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CHILDREN'S CODE ACT 2022 ON ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR AS PERCEIVED BY STAKEHOLDERS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter, reviews the legal and empirical literature surrounding the Act. The focus will be on how its provisions respond to adolescent social issues and how stakeholders interpret and implement them in practice.

The chapter will outline the theoretical perspectives, regional and International legal frameworks, as well as recent empirical studies. It situates the Act within Zambia's evolving child protection framework and highlights the progress achieved, identifies gaps that remain, and establishes a conceptual foundation for assessing the Act's effectiveness.

The Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (EST) is used as the guiding framework, which offers a particular perspective to understand how adolescents' experiences are shaped by the interconnection of family, community, institutional, and cultural factors.

2.1 BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY (EST)

EST provides a comprehensive and context-sensitive approach which views human development as occurring within a web of interconnected environments – from immediate surroundings like family and school to wider societal and cultural context.

The model includes five nested systems:

- The *microsystem*, where direct interactions with family, peers, and teachers occur;
- The *mesosystem*, which reflects how these settings interconnect, such as the relationship between parents and educators,
- The *exosystem*, encompassing institutions that indirectly influence the child, like workplaces or media,
- The *macrosystem*, which embodies cultural values, laws, and traditions, and

- The *chronosystem*, which captures how time, historical change, and life transitions affect development.²⁵

EST aligns well with the Zambian context, in that adolescent behaviour and wellbeing are influenced not only by personal or family factors but also by community expectations, legal norms, and cultural traditions. The theory allows the study to locate adolescents' experiences within the socio-legal environment that the Children's Code Act seeks to transform.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE THEORETICAL APPROACHES

There exist other alternative frameworks which complement this analysis. These are, **Social Learning Theory** which emphasises behaviour acquired through observation and reinforcement,²⁶ while a **Rights-Based Approach** grounds child protection in human rights law as reflected in the UNCRC and ACRWC.²⁷ These alternative approaches highlight valuable aspects of child development and legal protection, though each is limited when applied in isolation: Social Learning Theory pays less attention to cultural and structural factors, while a Rights-Based Approach risks overlooking the daily realities that shape law enforcement. EST bridges these perspectives as it allows both rights and lived experiences to be examined concurrently.

2.3 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON ADOLESCENT SOCIAL ISSUES

Adolescents face challenges that cut across social, cultural, and economic lines- including early sexual activity and child marriage;²⁸ Substance use and abuse;²⁹

²⁵ Bronfenbrenner U, *The Ecology of Human Development* (Harvard University Press 1979).

²⁶ Bandura A, *Social Learning Theory* (Prentice Hall 1977)

²⁷ UNICEF, *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming for Children* (UNICEF 2014).

²⁸ UNFPA, *Motherhood in Childhood: Facing the Challenge of Adolescent Pregnancy* (State of World Population Report 2013).

²⁹ WHO, *Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health* (World Health Organization 2018).

Mental health concerns;³⁰ School dropout;³¹ and various forms of neglect or exploitation.³² These issues are at the heart of the United Nations *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), adopted by member States in 2015. In particular, SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 5 (Gender Equality), which call for integrated and multi-sectoral responses to protect adolescents.³³

2.3.1 Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency is often a deep-rooted reflection of the social and economic inequalities in society and are often linked to poverty, family instability, peer influence, and school dropout.³⁴ In Sub-Saharan Africa, many countries have moved away from punitive, toward rehabilitation-focused systems. This is seen in South Africa's *Child Justice Act (2008)* which introduced diversion programs and restorative justice mechanisms,³⁵ and Kenya's *Children Act (2022)* which strengthened child protection courts and improved rehabilitation services.³⁶ These examples demonstrate that legislative reforms, when combined with social services, can reduce recidivism and improve reintegration-a principle embedded in part VI of the Zambia's Children's Code Act, which mandates diversion and rehabilitation for Juvenile offenders.³⁷

Similarly, Zambia's *Children's Code Act* (Sections 58 – 84) echoes these principles through provisions for diversion, community rehabilitation, and child-friendly courts. This aims to prioritize the **best interests of the child**, section 3 and 4 of the Act, consistent with both domestic law and the CRC;³⁸ **Child-friendly courts**, section 65 - 70 of the Act, to safeguard the dignity of adolescents and reduce traumatising;

³⁰ WHO, Adolescent Mental Health (Fact Sheet, 2021) <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health> accessed 5 August 2025.

³¹ UNESCO, Leaving No One Behind: How Far on the Way to Universal Primary and Secondary Education? (Global Education Monitoring Report 2020).

³² UNICEF, Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (UNICEF 2020).

³³ United Nations, Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly Resolution 70/1, 2015).

³⁴ Deborah Gorman-Smith and Patrick H Tolan, 'The Role of Exposure to Community Violence and Developmental Problems Among Inner-City Youth' (1998) 69 *Development and Psychopathology* 101

³⁵ Ann Skelton, 'The Child Justice Act: A Detailed Consideration of Sections 1 to 31' (2010) 13 *Potchestroom Electronic Law Journal* 1

³⁶ Republic of Kenya, Children Act (No. 29 of 2022)

³⁷ Republic of Zambia. Children's Code Act (no.12 of 22) s58

³⁸ *State v Banda* [2017] MWHC 56 (Malawi High Court).

Community-based rehabilitation, section 98 - 103 of the Act, as an alternative to custodial sentences. However, while the legal foundation is strong, reports suggest that awareness and consistent application remain limited, especially in rural areas.³⁹ This underscores the gap between legal ideals and institutional capacity.

2.3.2 Substance Abuse

Substance abuse, as already alluded to, remains one of the most pressing health and social challenges among adolescents in Zambia. This factor as previously stated has been linked to socioeconomic hardship, weak parental supervision, peer dynamics, and lack of recreational outlets.⁴⁰ Comparative experiences have shown that combining school-based programs with strong law enforcement can significantly reduce alcohol use among young people.⁴¹

Section 20 of the Act prohibits the sale of alcohol and drugs to minors and places shared responsibility on families, schools, and communities to prevent substance use. Yet, enforcement remains uneven. **Phiri** found that while adolescent drug and alcohol use remains prevalent. Public awareness of its risks is growing.⁴² The Children's Code Act addresses substance abuse by: Criminalising the supply of drugs and alcohol to minors; Strengthening parental and community responsibilities; Promoting health education and preventive interventions

In *DPP v Chanda* ⁴³, a shop owner was convicted for selling alcohol to adolescents near a school. This illustrates that legal deterrents exist, though they are inconsistently applied.⁴⁴ Comparative regional jurisprudence, such as *Republic v Mwau* ⁴⁵ (Kenya), reinforces the necessity of active enforcement for effectiveness.

³⁹ Ministry of Education (Zambia), School Health and Nutrition Report (2021).

⁴⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), World Drug Report 2023 (UN 2023)

⁴¹ Neo Mookodi, 'Youth Alcohol Use And School-Based Interventions in Botswana' (2017) 4 African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies 55.

⁴² John Phiri, 'Adolescent Substance Use in Zambia: Trends and Policy Responses' (2019) 7 Zambian Journal of Public Health 45

⁴³ African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (adopted 11 July 1990, entered into force 29 November 1999) OAU Doc CAB/LEG/24.9/49 (ACRWC) art 17.

⁴⁴ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations: Zambia (2021) UN Doc CRC/C/ZMB/CO/5-6.

⁴⁵ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3 (CRC).

Despite these provisions, enforcement challenges and resource constraints remain underexplored and vary, particularly where cultural attitudes towards alcohol are permissive.⁴⁶

2.3.3 Early Sexual Activity

Early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy continue to threaten adolescents' health and educational progress.⁴⁷ Uganda demonstrates that coupling legal protection with comprehensive sexuality education yields measurable improvements.⁴⁸ and section 18 and 19 of Zambia's *Children's Code Act* criminalises child marriage and sexual exploitation while encouraging age-appropriate sex education.⁴⁹ this was demonstrated in the case of *State v Kunda (2023)*⁵⁰ where a father was prosecuted for facilitating his daughter's early marriage, but community settlements often bypass the courts. Persistent cultural and religious resistance reveal the tension between modern legal frameworks and traditional values.⁵¹

2.3.4 School Dropout

Education continues to be the strongest safeguard against vulnerability, and regional evidence links school dropout to child labour, early marriage and a few other factors.⁵² In Malawi, flexible learning arrangements have improved retention rates for adolescent mothers.⁵³ Section 10 of Zambia's *Children Act* affirms the right to education, yet challenges persist due to resource disparities and socio-economic barriers.⁵⁴

⁴⁶ Children's Code Act (n4) s189

⁴⁷ World Health Organisation (WHO). *Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health* (WHO 2022)

⁴⁸ Grace Byamugisha, 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Teenage Pregnancy Reduction in Uganda' (2018) 12 *African Journal of Reproductive Health* 34

⁴⁹ ACRWC (n 45).

⁵⁰ *State v Kunda* [2023] Kabwe Magistrates' Court (unreported).

⁵¹ *Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security v Minister of Social Development* 2001 (1) SA 46 (CC) (South Africa).

⁵² International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward* (ILO 2021)

⁵³ Joseph Chimombo, 'Improving Education for Adolescent Mothers in Malawi' (2018) 9 *Malawi Journal of Education and Development* 77.

⁵⁴ Ministry of Education (Zambia), *Education Sector Performance Report 2022*

2.4 STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

How stakeholders perceive, understand and implement legal reforms will determine the success of legal reforms. Teachers, social workers, community leaders, and parents play a very important part in translating policy into practice. Studies from Kenya and South Africa reveal that limited training, scarce resources, and conflicting customary norms can hinder enforcement. While in Zambia, there is still improvement needed in empirical evidence. This gap makes stakeholder perspectives essential to the evaluation of the actual effectiveness of the Act's.

2.5 ZAMBIA'S LAWS AND POLICIES

Zambia has long demonstrated a commitment to child rights through policies like the *National Youth Policy* (2015), the *Education Act* (2011), and the *Anti-Gender-Based Violence Act* (2011). Prior to 2022, these efforts were scattered across multiple laws, leading to inconsistencies.⁵⁵ With the unification of the *Children's Code Act* (2022) harmonised these frameworks, aligning Zambia's domestic law with the UNCRC and ACRWC.⁵⁶

2.6 THE IMPACT OF THE CHILDREN'S CODE ACT (2022)

The Act represents a shift toward a rights-based and child-centred approach which strengthens protection against harmful practices, expands access to education and health services, and promotes restorative justice. However, as civil society organisations like Save the Children Zambia note,⁵⁷ that effective implementation

⁵⁵ Juveniles Act (CAP 53). Marriage Act (CAP50), Education Act (No.23 of 2011)

⁵⁶ African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (adopted 11 July 1990, entered into force 29 November 1999) OAU Doc CAB/LEG/24.9/49 (African Children's Charter)

⁵⁷ Save the Children Zambia

continues to face challenges-particularly under-resourced welfare departments and limited community awareness.⁵⁸

2.7 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NORMS AND CULTURAL FACTORS

Despite legal reforms, social norms and cultural practices remain forces in shaping adolescent behaviour.⁵⁹ In many communities' gender expectations, initiation ceremonies, and parental authority continue to influence decisions more deeply than statutory law.⁶⁰ Therefore understanding these norms is critical because they can either reinforce or undermine the goals of the *Children's Code Act*.⁶¹

2.8 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LEGAL AWARENESS

Experiences from countries like Malawi and Lesotho show that reforms succeed when communities understand and internalise them.⁶² This may require integrating chiefs and traditional leaders into implementation efforts and improved compliance.⁶³ In Zambia, however, awareness of the Children's Code Act remains uneven, with rural areas often lagging behind.⁶⁴

2.9 IDENTIFIED LITERATURE GAPS

- Lack of post-2022 empirical data assessing the Act's effectiveness;
- Limited studies exploring stakeholder perceptions;
- Scarcity of comparative research linking reforms to adolescent behaviour;
- Minimal attention to rural-urban disparities in implementation.

⁵⁸ Save the Children Zambia, Implementation of the Children's Code Act: Civil Society Reflections (Save the Children 2023).

⁵⁹ UNFPA Zambia, Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy 2020–2024 (UNFPA 2020).

⁶⁰ Plan International, State of Girls' Rights in Africa (Plan 2020).

⁶¹ Child Rights Forum Zambia, Cultural Beliefs and Child Protection: A Policy Brief (CRF 2022).

⁶² Banda (n44)

⁶³ UN Women, Working with Traditional Leaders to End Child Marriage (UN Women 2021).

⁶⁴ Save the Children Zambia (n52)

2.10 CONCLUSION

Though the reviewed literature reveals that Zambia's *Children's Code Act* (2022) provides a strong legislative foundation for adolescent protection, the effectiveness of its provisions depends on social awareness, institutional support, and cultural acceptance. Application of Ecological Systems Theory, connects law, community, and lived experience, which leads to an understanding not just of what the Act says, but how it works in the lives of adolescents.

CHAPTER THREE

THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL SOCIETAL NORMS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN'S CODE ACT, 2022 AND THE RESULTING IMPACT ON ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Zambia's legal and social landscape underwent mass transformation after the enactment of the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022. For the first time, child-related laws that had previously been scattered across various statutes were consolidated into one comprehensive framework. The Act succeeded in modernising national legislation, as well as aligning it with Zambia's international obligations under the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** and the **African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)**.⁶⁵

Its objectives surpass the legal reform as they seek to confront deeply rooted social challenges affecting children and adolescents, such as child marriage, juvenile delinquency, and exposure to abuse. However, the success of such legislation cannot be measured simply by its presence on paper. Zambia operates within a dual legal system, where statutory law coexists with customary law and long-held social norms. These customs still shape family life, discipline, gender roles, and child-rearing practices. In this environment, traditional beliefs often mediate, reinterpret, or even resist statutory provisions, influencing how adolescents grow, behave, and relate to authority.⁶⁶

This chapter will explore how these traditional norms intersect with the implementation of the Children's Code Act, assessing both their supportive and obstructive roles in promoting adolescent welfare and protection.

⁶⁵ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1577 UNTS 3 (UNCRC); African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

⁶⁶ Chirwa M, '*Legal Pluralism and Child Rights in Zambia*' (2021) 14 *Zambia Law Review* 78.

3.1 TRADITIONAL NORMS AS A SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORK

While cultural practices are sometimes seen as barriers to modern legal reforms, many traditions within Zambian society actually reinforce the protective aims of the Children's Code Act. One of the most significant examples is the **extended family system**—a defining feature of Zambian culture. In many communities, when parents are unable to provide care, relatives step in to offer support and guidance. This informal safety net mirrors the Act's provisions on guardianship and alternative care, showing that the spirit of child protection has long been embedded in local practice.⁶⁷

Moreover, values such as communal **solidarity, respect for elders, and moral instruction** continue to serve as vital moral anchors for young people. These traditions nurture a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, echoing the Code's emphasis on moral and social development.⁶⁸ When such cultural strengths are positively harnessed, they can complement statutory efforts to reduce juvenile delinquency and promote the holistic growth of adolescents.

3.2 TRADITIONAL NORMS AS BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

Not all traditions align with the protective vision of the Children's Code Act. Some long-standing practices remain deeply at odds with its principles, creating significant challenges for effective enforcement.

3.2.1 Child Marriage and Initiation Rites

Section 18 (2) of the Act unequivocally prohibits marriage under the age of 18.⁶⁹ However, in reality, **child marriage** persists in various communities, often as a result of poverty, gender inequality, and traditional expectations.⁷⁰ According to UNICEF,

⁶⁷ Mwila C, *Customary Law and Child Welfare in Zambia* (UNZA Press 2019) 44.

⁶⁸ Mwansa O. S, 'Traditional Authority and Child Protection in Zambia' (2020) 9(1) *Zambian Journal of Law* 33.

⁶⁹ Children's Code Act 2022, s 18.

⁷⁰ Human Rights Watch, '*Ending Child Marriage in Zambia*' (2018)

29% of Zambian girls are married before reaching adulthood.⁷¹ Such marriages not only violate statutory law but also cut education short, expose young girls to health risks, and curtail their emotional and social development.

Similarly, despite their cultural meaningfulness, traditional **initiation ceremonies** sometimes introduce adolescents prematurely to sexuality and marital roles.⁷² While these rites were initially intended to prepare young people for adulthood, their content occasionally conflicts with the protective spirit of the Act. When adolescents are taught about womanhood or manhood in ways that promote early sexual activity or gendered submission, it can result in a subtle but powerful undermining of the law's objective.

3.2.2 Corporal Punishment and Disciplinary Practices

Section 22 of the Children's Code Act discourages all forms of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment, including corporal punishment.⁷³ Yet, physical chastisement remains widely accepted as a traditional method of discipline. Many parents and elders throughout generations have chosen to believe that strict physical correction builds character and respect.⁷⁴ 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.'⁷⁵ This cultural conviction often clashes with modern child protection standards, weakening the practical enforcement of the Act. The persistence of such disciplinary actions contributes to cycles of fear and violence within adolescents, shaping their behaviour in ways that contradict the law's vision of nurturing, non-violent guidance.⁷⁶

⁷¹ UNICEF, '*Child Marriage: Latest Trends and Future Prospects*' (2021)

⁷² Tembo M. S, '*Traditional Ceremonies and Adolescent Socialisation in Zambia*' (2020) 15(2) *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 132.

⁷³ Children's Code Act 2022, s 22.

⁷⁴ Banda J, '*The Role of Corporal Punishment in African Education Systems*' (2017) 5(2) *African Human Rights Law Journal* 211.

⁷⁵ Bible verse proverbs 13:24

⁷⁶ Musonda G, '*Discipline and Violence: The Hidden Costs of Corporal Punishment in Zambia*' (2019) 18 *Zambia Social Science Review* 101.

3.2.3 Gender Norms and Patriarchal Authority

Another formidable barrier worth mentioning is patriarchal structures. In many communities, authority is concentrated in the hands of men, leaving women and children with little to no say in decision-making.⁷⁷ This dynamic often limits the autonomy of girls, particularly seen in education, reproductive health, and marriage choices.⁷⁸ As a result, and regardless of how well articulated statutory rights are, they can be easily overshadowed by cultural perceptions that define a girl's value through domestic roles or early marriage. True progress, therefore, requires a cultural shift in how gender and authority are understood within families and communities, and not only legislative enforcement.

3.3 THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN LAW AND CULTURE IN SHAPING ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR

Ultimately, the **Children's Code Act** functions within the living fabric of culture and does not operate in isolation. Its effectiveness is dependent upon how successfully it engages with and transforms long-standing traditions. Adolescents are socialised in families, schools, and communities where norms determine what is acceptable or shameful, admirable or forbidden; they do not grow up in the courtrooms or legislative chambers.

Statutory law gains traction and legitimacy when it resonates with positive traditions. It encounters resistance or quiet neglect when it contradicts cherished customs.⁷⁹

This dynamic explains much of the 'implementation gap' that exists between the law's ideals and the realities of daily life.⁸⁰ Deliberate cultural engagement through discussion with chiefs, headmen, and traditional counsellors who shape community

⁷⁷ Kameri-Mbote R, 'Gender, Culture and Human Rights in Africa' (2007) 2 *East African Law Journal* 67.

⁷⁸ Lungu R, 'Patriarchy and the Law: Obstacles to Gender Equality in Zambia' (2019) 12(3) *African Feminist Studies* 88.

⁷⁹ Phiri C, 'Adolescence, Culture and Law in Zambia' (2020) 7 *Zambia Journal of Child Studies* 45.

⁸⁰ Mwansa O. S, 'Bridging the Implementation Gap in Child Rights Legislation' (2021) 8(1) *Zambian Journal of Law* 15.

values is vital in bridging that gap. It calls for awareness programs that explain the Children's Code Act in relatable ways, linking its goals to the moral values people already uphold. The law can only have a meaningful and sustainable impact on the behaviour of adolescents when it is understood and owned at the community level.⁸¹

3.4 IDENTIFIED LITERATURE GAPS

There are still evident gaps in the existing literature despite growing interest in Zambia's child protection framework. The first is a lack of post-2022 empirical research evaluating the Children's Code Act's actual impact on adolescent behaviour. Secondly, in addition, few provide a systematic, evidence-based analysis of how these traditions either support or hinder the implementation of the Act, although many acknowledge cultural influences like initiation rites, child marriage, and gender norms.⁸²

Thirdly, most research overlooks the voices of adolescents themselves, the very individuals that the law seeks to protect, and instead reflects the perspectives of policymakers, legal experts, or NGOs. Their lived experiences remain underexplored, creating a biased understanding of the Act's effectiveness.⁸³ Furthermore, research rarely examines how enforcement agencies such as the police, social workers, teachers, and the courts interpret and implement the law in practical contexts.⁸⁴ It is challenging to assess the Act's long-term influence because longitudinal studies tracking adolescent outcomes over time are scarce.⁸⁵

⁸¹ UNICEF Zambia, '*Engaging Traditional Leaders in Child Protection*' (2022)

⁸² Gilbert Mwanza, '*The challenges Zambia is facing in implementing the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022*' (Linked, Jan 2025)

⁸³ UNICEF Zambia, *Adolescent Development and Participation in Zambia: Situation Analysis* (UNICEF, 2023)

⁸⁴ Undikumbukire Project Zambia (UP Zambia), *Advocacy – Justice System Transformation* (UP Zambia, 2024)

⁸⁵ Save the Children International, *Zambia Country Report: Child Rights and Protection 2023* (Save the Children, 2023)

Lastly, the literature reveals an urban-rural divide and a lack of comparison across regions. Few analyses explore how the Act functions in rural areas where traditional authority is most prevalent,⁸⁶ or how Zambia's child protection strategies measure up to those of neighbouring countries in Southern Africa. The depth of knowledge needed to improve implementation is limited by these omissions.⁸⁷

3.5 CONCLUSION

In the application of the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022, traditional societal norms continue to serve as both a foundation and a frontier. On one hand, the protective nature of the law is reinforced by the extended family systems and communal values of care and responsibility. However, its main objectives are undermined by practices such as child marriage, initiation rites, corporal punishment, and patriarchal dominance, and expose adolescents to ongoing risk. The **effectiveness of the Act**, therefore, depends not on cultural change and not merely on legislative strength. Inasmuch as laws are written, they must also be lived. For the Act to truly safeguard adolescents, enforcement must be accompanied by community education, traditional leader engagement, and continuous dialogue between statutory and customary systems. When the law and culture begin to speak the same language, Zambia's young people can thrive in environments that nurture, protect, and empower them toward their full potential.

⁸⁶ Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (Zambia), *Child Protection Strategy 2022–2026* (GRZ, 2022)

⁸⁷African Child Policy Forum, *The African Report on Child Wellbeing 2023: The African Child and the Law* (ACPF, 2023)

CHAPTER FOUR

MEDIATING FACTORS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN'S CODE ACT 2022

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Family structures, community engagement, and knowledge of human-rights frameworks are examined as mediating factors in the implementation of the Children's Code Act, and how these factors shape adolescents' lived experiences in Zambia. This chapter builds on the legal and conceptual foundations established in earlier chapters, and translates them into everyday realities faced by young people. The Act represents a significant legislative milestone which brings together various child-related statutes and aligns them with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).⁸⁸ However, the success of this in practice is mainly determined by the social contexts in which the adolescents live..

Building on the EST, the chapter situates adolescents within interacting spheres of influence: the family, community, institutions, and broader cultural and legal norms.⁸⁹ These layers together determine whether adolescents experience the Children's Code Act as a living instrument of protection or as a distant legal framework.

4.1 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

The EST conceptualises human development as occurring within a set of nested systems that continuously interact to shape individual outcomes.⁹⁰ This framework is particularly useful for understanding how legal reforms, are translated-or fail to translate- into lived realities across Zambia's diverse social settings.

⁸⁸ UNICEF Zambia, 'Child Protection' (UNICEF, 2024)

⁸⁹ World Vision Zambia, 'Faith Leaders and Child Protection: Technical Brief'

⁹⁰ Bronfenbrenner U, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (Harvard University Press 1979)

4.1.1 Adolescents' Immediate Environments - Microsystem

According to the EST, the Microsystem encompasses the adolescent's immediate environment, including family, school, and peer groups.⁹¹ In Zambia, the family remains pivotal in these settings, directly influencing care, discipline, and emotional support.⁹² Part IV of the Children's Code provides for parental responsibility and custody which are applied within this sphere. This is where the quality of caregiving determines the extent to which statutory protections are realised.⁹³

4.1.2 Interconnections - Mesosystem

The mesosystem of the EST, refers to the linkages between microsystems and mesosystems. ⁹⁴ In practice, these include interactions between families, schools, traditional leaders, and religious institutions. These relationships shape how cases of abuse or neglect are reported and addressed. When families and community actors collaborate effectively, the implementation of the Children's Code is strengthened; conversely, fragmented relationships often result in protection gaps.⁹⁵

4.1.3 Institutions and Justice Mechanisms - Exosystem

The exosystem of the EST includes institutions that indirectly influence adolescents' lives, such as the justice system, social welfare departments, and the media.⁹⁶ Although adolescents may not engage directly with these entities, their policies and actions, including social-worker interventions, diversion programs, and awareness campaigns, have a profound impact on the accessibility and effectiveness of the Children's Code's protection.⁹⁷

⁹¹ *ibid*

⁹² UNICEF Zambia, 'Child Protection' (UNICEF, 2024)

⁹³ The Children's Code Act, No 12 of 2022 (Zambia)

⁹⁴ Bronfenbrenner (n1)

⁹⁵ World Vision Zambia, 'Faith Leaders and Child Protection: Technical Brief' (World Vision Zambia, 2021).

⁹⁶ Bronfenbrenner (n1)

⁹⁷ African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, *Zambia First Periodic Report under the ACRWC* (2024)

4.1.4 Cultural Norms and the Macrosystem

The EST, macrosystem represents the wider cultural, economic, and ideological context in which adolescents develop. This encompasses societal values, traditions, and belief systems that indirectly influence all other systems within the EST framework.⁹⁸ In Zambia, cultural norms and customary practices play a significant role in shaping how the Children's Code Act is understood and implemented. While the Act seeks to promote universal rights and protections for children, the impact is filtered through deeply rooted traditional expectations. Respect for elders can sometimes hinder cases of child abuse because a child will be reprimanded for accusing an elder. Furthermore, a child forced into early marriage may not have a say because that is what culture demands. To go even further, the mere discussions of sexuality or reproductive health may be regarded as taboo thereby discouraging open dialogue with adolescents. In the end all these may limit the practical effectiveness of the Act's provisions on protection from harmful practices and access to education as outlined in sections 10 and 18. Similarly, patriarchal norms-though evolving-continue to affect the enforcement of rights related to equality and participation Bill of rights in the constitution of Zambia), as boys and girls may not be granted equal freedom to express their opinions or pursue education beyond certain levels.⁹⁹

At the same time, cultural and religious institutions can serve as powerful allies in promoting the values of the Children's Code Act. Churches, mosques, and traditional leadership structures hold significant moral authority in most communities and are often better positioned than formal state institutions to mobilise local support for child protection. The inclusion of traditional leaders in sensitisation and community dialogue initiatives has, in several instances, led to greater acceptance of statutory child-protection measures. Therefore, while the macrosystem can present barriers, it also offers essential entry points for aligning cultural values with human rights principles enshrined in the Act.

⁹⁸ Bronfenbrenner (n1)

⁹⁹ The Children's Code Act

4.1.5 Change over time - Chronosystem

The last level of the EST, the chronosystem captures the dimension of time. This level recognises that both individuals and societies evolve, and that these temporal shifts influence how adolescents experience protection, rights, and participation under the Children's Code Act.¹⁰⁰ Both generational change and historical context significantly shape how child protection frameworks are understood and implemented.

Since independence, Zambia's child welfare policies have progressively shifted from welfare-oriented approaches toward rights-based frameworks. The enactment of the Children's Code Act in 2022 reflects this evolution. This transition demonstrates a wider transformation from viewing children as passive dependents to recognising them as individuals with rights and having capability to participate in matters affecting them.¹⁰¹

Attitudes are also changing at family and community levels, in that younger parents, especially those exposed to education and media sensitisation, increasingly adopt positive parenting methods and show openness to discussions around children's rights. However, some traditional authority structures still influence how these changes evolve. The chronosystem thus illustrates that the effectiveness of the Children's Code Act depends not only on institutional structures but also on the society's capacity to adapt over time. What this means therefore is that social norms, policy priorities, and community practices must continue evolve to keep up with emerging realities in adolescent life, such as technology use, peer influence, and exposure to global culture.

4.2 FAMILY STRUCTURE

As previously stated, family is the primary unit of care and protection for adolescents, which provides the first layer of social support and constitutes the frontline of child protection.¹⁰² In Zambia, however, family structures vary from nuclear and extended families to polygamous, single-parent, and child-headed households. This diversity

¹⁰⁰ Bronfenbrenner (n1)

¹⁰¹ The Children's Code Act

¹⁰²

results in uneven experiences of the protections guaranteed by the Children's Code Act. This is so in that stability, and functionality of a family directly influence how adolescents experience the rights as provided in the Act.

4.2.1 Common Family Forms and Caregiving Realities in Zambia

Zambia's adolescents live within diverse family arrangements, with each presenting distinct protective capacities and challenges. While extended families can serve as important safety nets, providing additional caregivers and support networks, they may also diffuse responsibility, which leaves adolescents vulnerable when no single adult assumes clear oversight. Nuclear families on the other hand, often benefit from more focused caregiving, though they may lack the broader support systems that extended families offer in rural areas.¹⁰³ Single-parent families are another form of family structure which face economic and supervisory challenges. These can limit adolescents' access to care and protection which the Act provides for as rights of every child. adolescents in these settings have limited access to statutory protections and heightened exposure to exploitation.¹⁰⁴

4.2.2 Intersections Between Family Dynamics and the Children's Code

The Children's Code Act foregrounds parental responsibility, safeguards for children in conflict with the law, and mechanisms for alternative care.¹⁰⁵ These provisions presume the presence of functional and engaged caregivers. Now, where families are fragmented, overstretched, or unaware of their responsibilities under the Act, these statutory protections are less likely to be accessed or enforced. This gap between legal expectation and social reality illustrates the critical role family structures play in mediating adolescent experiences.

4.2.3 Implications for Adolescent Lived Experiences

Family dynamics directly affect quality of protection adolescents receive. Fragmented households, economic strain, and caregiver absence can result in delayed or absent

¹⁰³ Strobe F, Breaking the Net : *'Family Structure and Street Children in Zambia*, 2

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*

¹⁰⁵ The Children's Code Act 2022 s9(1)

reporting of abuse, limited access to alternative care arrangements provided for in part XI, XII and XIII of the Act. this can lead to adverse outcomes including child labour, early marriage, or street involvement.¹⁰⁶ Beyond the household, adolescents' lived experiences are further shaped by community engagement and institutional responsiveness. A strong family foundation alone is insufficient if community actors are disengaged or unaware of children's rights. Similarly, legal protections remain symbolic if adolescents and their caregivers lack awareness of the procedures and mechanisms established by the Children's Code.

4.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a central factor in the implementation of the Children's Code Act, particularly in the rural and peri-urban areas where statutory institutions are often less accessible.¹⁰⁷ Local actors -including traditional leaders, faith-based organisations, and community-based organisations- play dual roles. They can reinforce protective mechanisms or, conversely, perpetuate harmful practices that undermine children's rights.¹⁰⁸ For example, some traditional chiefs have partnered with the government and NGOs to discourage child marriages and promote birth registration, both of which are explicitly addressed under the Act.¹⁰⁹ Conversely, in communities where cultural practices take precedence over statutory norms, adolescent voices are frequently marginalised, and cases of abuse may go unreported.¹¹⁰ In this way, communities function as the bridge between families and formal institutions, significantly influencing whether statutory protections are upheld.

4.3.1 Role of Community Actors

Traditional leaders, faith organisations, NGOs, and other community groups often serve as the first responders in child protection. Successful interventions frequently

¹⁰⁶ JAACAP Open, 'Youth who have lived in Alternative Care in Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe: Mental Health and Violence Outcomes in Nationally Representative Data'

¹⁰⁷ UNICEF Zambia, 'Child Protection'

¹⁰⁸ World Vision Zambia, 'Faith Leaders and Child Protection: Technical Brief' Volume 1; issue 7 (2021)

¹⁰⁹ Ministry of Justice (Zambia), Implementation Guidelines for the Children's Code Act (GRZ 2023)

¹¹⁰ Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), *Community Engagement in Child Protection* (JCTR 2022)

integrate these actors to deliver prevention, referral, and awareness-raising initiatives.¹¹¹

4.3.2 Community Practices versus Statutory Procedures

Community practices though complement statutory protections can sometimes create tension. This can happen in cases where customary dispute resolution is done in a way that is culturally acceptable even if it means going against statutory provision. It may also normalise harmful practices, such as early marriages or corporal punishment, that contravene the Children's Code Act. This duality of the justice system in Zambia illustrates both the potential and the limitations of community engagement in the realisation of children's rights.¹¹²

4.3.3 Impact on Adolescent' Lived Experiences

The quality and inclusivity of community engagement directly shape adolescents' experiences of the Children's Code. Active and rights-aligned engagement fosters early prevention, timely informal support, and increased access to statutory remedies. Conversely, weak or exclusionary engagement results in under-reporting, stigma, and limited access to protective services.¹¹³ In this sense, the community acts as both a gatekeeper and facilitator of adolescent rights, demonstrating that the promise of the Children's Code is realised only when families and communities work together.

4.4 KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORKS

The awareness and understanding of the human rights framework are important in shaping how adolescents experience the protections offered by the Children's Code Act. The Act aligns Zambia with international standards by incorporating provisions from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ARCRWC).¹¹⁴ Research, however, shows that knowledge gaps exist among adolescents, caregivers, and community leaders

¹¹¹ World Vision Zambia (n32)

¹¹² UNICEF: *'UNICEF commends the Government of Zambia on Enacting the Children's Act'* (2022)

¹¹³ UNICEF: 'Child Protection'

¹¹⁴ The Children's Code Act No.12 of 2022

regarding the content and enforceability of these rights.¹¹⁵ This shows how institutions such as schools, civil society organisations, and the media play a critical role in bridging these gaps. Without this awareness, legal reforms remain largely symbolic, as adolescents may lack the knowledge or confidence to demand protection or access.¹¹⁶

4.4.1 Levels of awareness Among Adolescents, Caregivers, and Institutions

State reports and NGO assessments previously done suggest that, while Zambia has made legislative strides, awareness at the household and community level continues to remain uneven.¹¹⁷ Though some public information campaigns exist, their reach and retention vary across regions, socio-economic groups, and cultural settings. This can be attributed to the fact that adolescents in rural or marginalised areas have less access to formal education on rights. This therefore limits their ability to benefit from statutory protections.

4.4.2 Awareness (or Lack Thereof) in Shaping Behaviour and Outcomes

The knowledge or the absence of it can directly influence how rights are claimed and enforced. In situations where caregivers, community leaders, and adolescents are informed about legal protections, there is a greater likelihood to utilise referral pathways, demand state services, and resist harmful practices. On the flip side, limited or inaccurate knowledge often perpetuates reliance on customary practices, resulting in under-reporting of abuse and missed opportunities for protection and justice.

Higher awareness correlates with greater reporting of abuse, more protective engagement with formal child protection mechanisms, and stronger resistance to harmful traditional practices. By contrast, low awareness produces a protective vacuum where statutory safeguards remain inaccessible. Taken together, family structures, community engagement, and human-rights knowledge interact to create

¹¹⁵ Save the Children, *Child Rights Situation Analysis: Zambia* (save the children 2023)

¹¹⁶ African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, *Zambia First Periodic Report under ACRWC* (2024)

¹¹⁷ Human Rights Commission Zambia - ACERWC

distinct pathways of adolescent experience under the Act. Training of frontline actors is necessary but not sufficient: sustained culturally sensitive public education is required to ensure meaningful protection.¹¹⁸

4.5 CROSS-CUTTING DYNAMICS AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

The elements of family structure, community engagement, and human-rights awareness form the foundation of how adolescents encounter and experience the protections of the Children's Code Act. These elements do not operate in isolation; rather, they interact to shape adolescents' daily realities. Each of these elements creates either enabling or constraining conditions that determine whether statutory rights are translated into lived experience.

This section synthesises the three mediating factors-family structure, community engagement, and knowledge of human-rights frameworks- into pathways that shape adolescents' lived experiences under the Children's Code Act. These factors intersect to produce, protective, blocked-rights, and hybrid pathways. Each reflects how the interaction between households, communities, and awareness levels either enhances or undermines the realisation of adolescents' rights.

Protective pathway

Where family structures are functional, community engagement is active, and human-rights awareness is relatively high, adolescents are more likely to experience the Children's Code as a living, protective framework. In such settings, caregivers, community leaders, and institutions collaborate effectively to prevent abuse, encourage reporting, and facilitate access to services such as diversion, counselling, and integration.

Adolescents within this pathway benefit from early intervention and consistent support. Community structures, including faith groups and local NGOs, reinforce statutory protection, while informed caregivers utilise existing mechanisms for redress. The combined effect of these efforts results in improved safety, lower exposure to violence,

¹¹⁸ Child Rights Connect: Zambia CRC 90th Session (2022)

and better services. This pathway reflects the Act's intended vision-where rights are not only guaranteed by law but practiced in daily life.¹¹⁹

Blocked-rights Pathways

In contrast, this pathway emerges where households are fragmented, community structures are weak, and awareness is low. Here adolescents face various layers of vulnerabilities such as neglect, abuse, child labour, early marriages, and limited access to alternative care or justice mechanisms.¹²⁰

In this context cases of abuse often go unreported, not because legal mechanisms are absent, but because families and communities lack capacity or confidence to engage with them. Cultural norms may discourage reporting, especially where perpetrators are relatives or community members. Limited access to information further compounds these barriers, creating an environment where statutory protections remain distant or inaccessible. Adolescents in this pathway experience the Children's Code as a formal text rather than a lived reality.

Hybrid Pathways

Between these two extremes lies a hybrid pathway, where families make an effort to protect adolescents, but structural constraints such as poverty, limited institutional access, or conflicting norms undermine the full application of statutory remedies.¹²¹

These pathways show why legal reform alone is insufficient: structural family realities, the quality of community engagement, and the depth of human-rights knowledge shape whether adolescents experience the Children's Code Act as protective or purely symbolic.

Some examples of how this interaction happens is in scenarios like in a family where abuse may have occurred, and help was sought, the family could face stigma or procedural challenges when engaging formal institutions. Similarly, a community might support child protection initiatives while still upholding practices like early marriage or corporal punishment that contradict the Children's Code.

¹¹⁹ World Vision Zambia (n32)

¹²⁰ Strobe F, 'Breaking the Net: Family Structure and Street Children in Zambia'

¹²¹ UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS fifth periodic report of Zambia

This could lead to an uneven implementation, where adolescents receive partial protection depending on local actors' commitment and available resources. The Children's Code Act can only fulfil its purpose when it is supported by strong family structures, community involvement, and widespread understanding of rights. Effective implementation therefore, depends on the coordination between these elements to ensure that the law is not simply on paper but embedded in social practice.

4.6 POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

In order for the Act to be effective, it will depend on how well it is embedded within Zambia's social structures. This will require strengthening family capacity, promoting community participation, and deepening rights awareness, as well as building stronger collaboration between communities and formal state institutions. This collaboration is important because many child protection cases are first identified or managed informally within communities before reaching statutory systems. Therefore, what is important is to establish clear, coordinated referral pathways that can ensure that local responses align with the law while retaining community trust.

Another factor that is crucial is how strong implementation institutions are and what resources are available to them.

Finally, the cultural diversity of Zambia's culture cannot be ignored. A nation with 72 languages and different tribal cultures, each with its own way of doing things definitely makes implementation of the Children's Code Act very difficult. What this then requires is strategies which must acknowledge this diversity. Rather than positioning statutory law in opposition to tradition, programs should seek constructive dialogue with traditional leaders, integrating child protection principles into culturally relevant practices. In doing this, local ownership and sustainability is established which then ensures that the best interests of the child remain at the centre of decision-making.

4.8 CONCLUSION

The conclusion therefore is that family structure, community engagement, and knowledge of rights are interdependent determinants of adolescents' lived

experiences under the Children's Code Act. The Act creates a strong legal scaffold, while its protective force depends on household capacity, community actors' alignment with rights norms, and meaningful dissemination of human-rights knowledge.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the study's findings in relation to the study objectives set out in earlier chapters. Chapters Two, Three, and Four provided the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical foundations upon which this discussion is built. Together, they established the legislative, socio-cultural, and institutional contexts necessary for understanding the effectiveness of Zambia's *Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022* in addressing adolescent social issues.

5.1 GENERAL CONCLUSION

It has been established in the study that the *Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022* stands as a milestone in Zambia's child protection framework yet, its promise remains partially fulfilled. The reason for this lies in the fact that the Act's transformative potential lies not merely in its legal text but in its lived application within homes, schools, churches, and communities.

Viewed from the EST perspective, adolescent well-being emerges as a collective responsibility shaped by interlocking systems of law, family, culture, and governance. Strengthening these systems requires both institutional commitment and social empathy. Only when the Act's principles are internalised at every level of society will its vision of a safe, just, and nurturing environment for all adolescents be fully realised.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The dissertation comprises five chapters adhering to the University's standard format. Excluding chapters one and five, each subsequent chapter aligns with a specific objective outlined in the proposal. Chapter two, three and four address the first, second and third objectives respectively. The aim of this dissertation was to evaluate the

effectiveness of the Children's Code Act No. 12 of 2022 in addressing adolescent social issues.

5.3 CHAPTER ONE

The chapter laid the foundation of the entire research by identifying the legal issue, shaping research. It provided a theoretical framework to explain factors that shape adolescent behaviour and explain that legal reform in isolation cannot influence the behaviour of adolescents. Other factors like family, community engagement, awareness and acceptance of the Act play a major role in shaping adolescent behaviour.

5.4 CHAPTER TWO

The Chapter offered the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. It demonstrated that while the Children's Code Act aligns with international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), its impact has been limited by gaps in implementation. Legislative progress has not automatically translated into effective protection for children and adolescents' systems.

The EST framework helped explain why this gap persists. It showed that adolescents' behaviour is not shaped by legislation alone, but by the constant interaction between family, school, community, and society at large. This perspective clarified why some adolescents thrive under the Act's protection while others remain vulnerable-their experiences depend largely on how well these surrounding systems function.

5.5 CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three turned the focus to traditional norms and their influence on the Act's implementation. The study found that patriarchal authority, early marriage practices, and corporal punishment remain widespread, particularly in rural communities where

customary systems continue to define acceptable behaviour.¹²² These norms frequently conflict with the Act's child-centred provisions, creating tension between statutory and cultural practice.

Many community leaders and parents still perceive forms of child labour or early marriage as culturally permissible. This dual moral framework places adolescents at a crossroads between the demands of modern legislation and traditional expectations.

5.6 CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four examined the mediating factors and their roles in shaping behaviour. These factors include family, community engagement, and human rights awareness and institutions. The study found that where families and communities had participated in sensitisation and awareness programs, adherence to the Act's values was stronger. In contrast, communities with limited exposure to such initiatives continued to rely on traditional interpretations of discipline, gender roles, and morality.¹²³

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that the Children's Code Act provides a solid legal foundation for protecting adolescents, but its effectiveness is curtailed by inadequate awareness, limited institutional capacity, and cultural resistance. Traditional norms continue to shape adolescent behaviour, sometimes in direct conflict with statutory provisions. Family and community engagement, alongside human rights education, remain central to bridging this divide.

To strengthen the Act's impact, several recommendations emerge:

1. Development of A National Dissemination Strategy

The author recommends that a national dissemination strategy for the Children's Code Act, targeting schools, churches, and youth centres, should be developed so as to evenly reach both the rural and urban sectors of Zambia.

¹²² Banda P, Traditional Norms and Child Protection in Zambia (University of Zambia Press, 2022) 33

¹²³ UNICEF Zambia, Child Protection System Strengthening Report (UNICEF, Lusaka 2021) 18

2. Resources for Training

The author recommends that Government agencies should allocate resources for training law-enforcement officers, social workers, and teachers on the Act's provisions.

Family-focused initiatives such as parenting workshops and counselling should be introduced to reinforce supportive home environments; Community-based child protection committees and equip them to monitor and report violations must be strengthened and peer-to-peer education programs led by adolescents to foster related rights awareness must be encouraged.

3. Integration of Child-Rights into schools

The author recommends that the Ministry of Education should integrate child-rights and responsibilities education into the school curriculum to promote early awareness.

4. Formalised Partnerships

The author recommends a formalisation of partnerships between government and traditional leaders to align customary practices with statutory obligations.

5. Decentralised campaigns

The author recommends that awareness campaigns must be decentralised, leveraging community structures such as churches, youth clubs, and traditional leaders to reach adolescents more inclusively

NGOs should collaborate with local media to create radio and digital campaigns in local languages explaining the Act's relevance to adolescents

Future studies should conduct longitudinal assessments to track behavioural changes among adolescents exposed to awareness interventions; Comparative studies between urban and rural districts could highlight contextual factors affecting implementation and further research should explore the role of faith-based organisations in promoting compliance with the Act at the community level.

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ANNEXURE

SUPERVISION SCHEDULE 2025

L400B

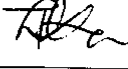
NAME: MARJORIE MWANSA MUBANGA

STUDENT NUMBER: LLB22114523 SUPERVISOR:

Ms. TABITHA MUKUKA...

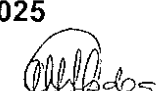
TOPIC:

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Zambia's Children's Code Act No.12 of 2022 in Addressing Adolescent Social Issues.

Stage	Supervisor's Comments	Supervisor's Signature & Date	Student's Signature & Date
Research Proposal	21 February 2025 Approved	21.02.2025 	21 February 2025 
Chapter 1 – Introduction	6 th August 2025 Proceed to Chapter 2	06.08.2025 	6 th August 2025 
Chapter 2 –	27 August 2025 Proceed to Chapter three	27.08.2025 	27 August 2025 
Chapter 3 –	27 th September 2025 You may proceed to chapter four.	27.09.2025 	27 th September 2025 

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Page 1 of 2

Chapter 4 –	15 th October 2025 Proceed to the next chapter.	15.10.2025 	15 th October 2025 
Chapter 5 – Conclusions & Recommendations	29 th October 2025 Find attached chapter five with comments. Attend to them and resend.	29.10.2025 	29 th October 2025 
Abstract, Table of Contents, Bibliography and Appendices	10 th November 2025	10.11.2025 	10 th November 2025 
First Draft	10 th November 2025 Ensure that you click the justify button so that your work is properly aligned, secondly you have exceeded the page limit which is 50 and you have 62 pages. The maximum you can exceed is 55 pages. Thirdly, on the conclusions, you need to give the conclusions chapter by chapter and give general recommendations.	10.11.2025 	10 th November 2025 

Second Draft	12 th November 2025 Kindly fill in the research supervision and send it for signing	2. 11. 2025 	12 th November 2025 
Final Draft			

APPENDIX

Questionnaire for Stakeholders

Description: This questionnaire seeks your views on the Children's Code Act, 2022 and its effectiveness in addressing adolescent social issues. Responses are confidential and for academic purposes only.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Children's Code Act, 2022 in Addressing Adolescent Social Issues

Instructions:

Please tick (✓) where appropriate and write brief answers where spaces are provided. Your responses will remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Section A: Background Information

1. Gender:
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Prefer not to say
2. Age Group:
 - ☐ Under 25
 - ☐ 26–35
 - ☐ 36–45
 - ☐ 46–55
 - ☐ Above 55
3. Stakeholder Category (tick all that apply):
 - ☐ Government official
 - ☐ Legal practitioner
 - ☐ Social worker
 - ☐ Teacher/Educator
 - ☐ Parent/Guardian
 - ☐ NGO/CSO representative
 - ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Section B: Knowledge and Awareness

4. How familiar are you with the Children's Code Act, 2022?

- ☐ Very familiar

- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Not familiar

5. Have you received any training or sensitisation on the Children's Code Act, 2022?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Section C: Effectiveness of the Act

6. In your opinion, how effective has the Act been in addressing the following adolescent issues?

(Please rate: Very Effective, Somewhat Effective, Not Effective, Don't Know)

- Juvenile delinquency
- Substance abuse
- Early sexual activity
- Child marriage
- Child labour

7. Do you think traditional societal norms hinder the implementation of the Act?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

8. If yes, in what ways do traditional norms affect implementation?

○

Section D: Challenges and Recommendations

9. What challenges have you observed in implementing the Children's Code Act, 2022?

• _____

10. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the Act's effectiveness?

• _____

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SIMILARITY OVERALL

15.46%

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SCANNED ON: 15 NOV 2025, 1:21 AM

Similarity report

Your text is highlighted according to the matched content in the results above.

IDENTICAL 0.56% CHANGED TEXT 8.38% QUOTES 0.46%

AI Detector Results

Highlighted sentences with the lowest perplexity, most likely generated by AI.

LIKELY AI 0.00% HIGHLY LIKELY AI 15.46%

Report #29988145

SCHOOL OF LAW Evaluating the Effectiveness of Zambia's Children's

Code Act No.12 of 2022 in Addressing Adolescent Social Issues.

By: Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga

LLB22114523 AN OBLIGATORY ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA IN

PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE BACHELOR OF LAWS (LLB) DEGREE.

2025 1 DECLARATION I, Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga, do declare that I am

the author of this Dissertation entitled "EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZAMBIA

'S CHILDREN'S CODE ACT NO.12 OF 2022 IN ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT SOCIAL ISSUES

also declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that I

understand what plagiarism entails. I am aware of the

University's policy in this regard, and due acknowledgement has been

made where other people's work has been used. I truly believe

that this dissertation has not been previously presented for a degree

at the University of Lusaka or any other university. I therefore

bear the full responsibility of the contents, errors, omissions and defects as solely mine.

Signed:

Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga Signed:

2 SUPERVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION I,

Do hereby recommend that the dissertation written under my super

vision by Marjorie Mwansa Mubanga, entitled "EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS O

F ZAMBIA'S CHILDREN'S CODE ACT NO.12 OF 2022 IN ADDRESSING ADOLESCENT SOCIAL ISSUES. Be

admitted to the University. I have carefully