Review of: "Exploring the Role of Social, Economic, and Cultural Factors in Community Development: A Social Work Perspective in T/A Chimwala, Mangochi"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The introductory segment appropriately sets the stage for the importance of community development within the field of social work. It highlights the role of social work in driving societal change, which is chiefly important. Even more valuable are these perspectives from focusing on Traditional Authority (T/A) Chimwala (which has not been given much attention in the literature). The objectives for this work are well-defined, offering a structured approach to understanding what this work uniquely provides.

For the methods used, the combination of both primary (questionnaires and interviews) and secondary data provides a comprehensive view of the subject matter, lending depth and breadth to the research, and it is also commendable that the methods took cognizance of the important ethical concerns, ensuring voluntary participation, privacy, and confidentiality. This is especially crucial given the study's human-centric approach. Clearly identifying the use of SPSS and Microsoft Excel provides transparency on the data analysis front, which is important for reproducibility and verification of results. The choice of the Strengths-Based Perspective aligns with the core principles of social work. It's commendable that this framework was employed. While the study mentions combining both probability and non-probability methods, more specifics would be useful. For instance, which specific methods (e.g., random sampling, purposive sampling) are utilized? Also, a more detailed background or significance for choosing T/A Chimwala would be much appreciated.

The findings section of the paper offers rich insights into the myriad factors influencing community development in T/A Chimwala, grounded in both empirical data and academic literature. It does an excellent job with this. The emphasis on cultural competence and the role of societal structures rings particularly true. Each identified factor is not only detailed in terms of its significance to the community but is also contextualized with references to prior research. This grounding of findings in existing literature adds credibility. I appreciate the findings and their interpretations, especially how they effectively bridge social work concepts, such as "social justice" and "cultural competence," with community development challenges. Also, the visual depictions supplement the textual data, which enhances comprehensibility here. A striking 56.7% associated religion as a direct impact on community development. Given the multiplicity of factors that influence community development, it would be worthwhile to further explore the nuances of this percentage. What facets of religion in particular contribute to this impact? (Same as the 10.0% association of education as a direct factor affecting community development. This seems contrary to global understandings of education's centrality in development). There may be a need to delve a little deeper, if possible. Generally, the research offers a holistic view of the various elements influencing community development in a context that is understudied, which is a much valuable contribution. The approach of linking

literature gaps with the Strengths-Based Perspective also offers a fresh lens to view community development and how to make interventions.

I commend the authors for their work.