

## **Shona taboos: the language of manufacturing fears for sustainable development**

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### **Abstract**

This article discusses the system of taboos or avoidance rules that the shona people of Zimbabwe engage as a way of influencing members to conform to society's values and norms. Hence, the language of intimidation used in the taboos are meant to guarantee conformity by threatening people with unpleasant consequences should they disobey the rules. For the purpose of this discussion, taboos are placed into categories according to the kind of 'fear' that is instilled into the children who may violate the rules. And thus this article argues that Shona elders take advantage of children's love for their mothers, their spouses, their love for children and their love for themselves, to instill in them the fear that if they do not conform to societal expectations very unpleasant things will happen to those that they love. The author acknowledges that this indigenous way of educating and knowing is now being marginalized, however, he argues for its preservation since it is as a potentially effective tool in the fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic