

**SCHOOL AND HOME FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE AMONG FEMALE SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN
LUSAKA: THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS, PUPILS AND PARENTS**

BY

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Masters of Education in Educational
Psychology**

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DECLARATION

I, **Sumbwanyambe Likando**, hereby solemnly declare that, this dissertation represents my own work and that the works of others have been appropriately acknowledged. I further declare that this dissertation has never been submitted for the award of any academic paper at the University of Zambia or any other University.

Signature (Candidate) Date: 2017

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of **Sumbwanyambe Likando** has been approved for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Psychology by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at establishing school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female secondary school pupils of Lusaka District in Zambia. The objectives were to: Find out the views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils in three girls only government secondary schools; identify academic interventions put in place in homes to enhance female pupil academic performance; and establish the academic policies in three girls only secondary schools that enhance academic performance. A descriptive research design under qualitative approach was used to conduct this study. The study sample was 54, comprising: 15 teachers, 24 pupils and 15 parents. Data was collected through interview guides, naturalistic observation schedules and Focus Group Discussions guide and analyzed using thematic analysis.

The study findings revealed both school and home factors to have negatively affected the female pupil academic performance. School factors included: lack of library facilities in schools, inadequate teaching and learning materials as well as teacher and pupil absenteeism. The home factors included: abuse of gadgets like phones and internet facilities, peer pressure, lack of electricity and inadequate money to purchase candles for lighting purpose. In terms of academic policies, the study revealed the following: the homework policy, absenteeism policy, open day policy, and repeat a grade policy, guardian collection of report cards, price giving policy and continuous professional development meetings policy. As regards home academic interventions, the study revealed the following: control of pupils play and television time, offering scaffolding and counseling to pupils, purchasing school materials as well as parents checking and signing pupils' note books.

Bordering on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: The government through the MoGE should ensure that all girls' government secondary schools are well funded in order for them to have well stocked library facilities and adequate teaching and learning materials. The MoGE should also use PTA meetings to encourage parents to take kin interest in their children's school work by keeping check on their notes as well as homework; this will stimulate pupils' internal motivation to work hard.

Key words: School, Academic performance, MoGE, Quality education and Factors

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother Mrs. Namutula Catherine Musambo Likando, my sisters and brothers for their help and support throughout my study.

To my best friend Kalaluka Mututwa for his unending support and encouragement even in times when he was overwhelmed by ZIALE, thank you so much.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to my Father in heaven for the bountiful blessings he has bestowed upon me.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| 3Rs | Reading, Writing and Arithmetic |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| ECZ | Examination Council of Zambia |
| EFA | Education For All |
| EoF | Educating our Future |
| GRZ | Government of the Republic of Zambia |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| MoGE | Ministry of General Education |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| PSEA | Pennsylvania Education Act |
| PTA | Parents-Teachers Association |
| SEB | Socio-Economic Background |
| SES | Socio-Economic Status |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNESCO | United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organization |
| USA | United States of America |
| WAIS | Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence |

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, limitation and delimitation of the study, operational definitions used in the study and ends with a summary of the chapter.

1.2 Background of the study

Evidence shows that education plays an important role in the multi-dimensional development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living (Silver, 1999). Okumu (2008) defines education as a fundamental human right as well as a catalyst for economic growth and human development.

In Zambia like other parts of the world, the educational system is primarily formal academic and is hierarchically divided into three different levels which include seven years of primary education, five years of secondary education and four years of undergraduate university standard tertiary education (Ministry of Education, 1996). Upon completion of primary school, an individual goes directly into a secondary school however in places where there are no secondary schools, the Zambian government has made effort to establish basic schools by upgrading the primary schools, and this allows pupils unable to access secondary school to continue their schooling up to grade 9 (MoE, 1996). The academic pathway in today's secondary school curriculum in Zambia is dominantly examination oriented with great emphasis placed on passing examination (Curriculum framework, 2013).

World over, the issue of learners' academic performance in schools has been of concern ever since education begun (Carmody, 1999). Many countries have come to realize that learners are the heart of the educational process and that without good performance all innovations in education would be futile. However in looking at a learner's academic performance, Anderman (1999) stresses the need for relevant authorities not only to consider learners' school environments in developing strategies to enhance academic performance but also of paramount importance is the learner's home environment as it is the primary instrument of education. Silver (1999) acknowledges that every child is an individual, developing at his or her own pace and differing in needs, abilities, interests, cultural influence, learning patterns, and behaviors, hence as children come into school, they come in with various traits and in enhancing their

academic performance, they should be looked at as individuals with unique abilities, personalities and knowledge.

According to Carmody (2013), in Zambia, formal education is predominantly owed to the works of Christian missionaries. Carmody (1999) states that Missionary education begun around 1891 to 1924, during the pre-colonial times. Missionaries received government subsidies from the protectorate government after 1924 so that they take part in a system of regulated teacher training, from this, catechetical centers were developed which practiced formal education (Carmody, 2013). However even when formal education developed, it was culturally perceived to be only for a boy child, parents were convinced that there was no relevance in educating a girl child as her place was the kitchen. Conversely not only parents saw no importance in taking their girl child to school, also the girls themselves saw no need in going to school, as they desired to stay at home assisting their mothers with taking care of homes and organizing themselves for marriage (Snelson, 1974).

Snelson (1974) explains that during the colonial time, the then northern Rhodesia government positively discriminated in favor of girls mission boarding schools also favored the education of girls. On the contrary, the Zambia school enrolment had more boys than girls. And from this, it seems true that traditional perceptions of the role of women in society had a major part in the slow appearance of girls in school (Gadsden, 1999). The girls' enrolment levels clearly depicted the desire parents had of sending their boy children to school at the expense of a girl child. Snelson (1974) states that out of the total 16700 enrolments in 1931, girls made up a total of 5350. Further, out of a total enrolment of 42000, the enrolled girls were 11000 at the end of the decade. Guardians and Parents feared that education would destroy marriages for the girl child and that if a girl child is educated she may no longer be willing to accept her traditional place in society (Snelson, 1974).

However, at independence the task of the Zambian Government was to reorganize the education system (Snelson, 1974), thus from the attainment of independence in 1964 to date, the government endeavors to increase the number of schools to deliver equal quality educational opportunities accessible to all citizens (MoE, 1996). Today many countries are part to a number of regional and international treaties that oblige governments to put in place processes and institutions that will improve the delivery of equal accessible education (Carmody, 2013). Nations have taken up the challenge of promoting gender equality. In 1995 during the United Nations (UN) conference held in Beijing, China, member states including

Zambia made declarations towards the promotion of gender equality in all areas of human endeavor at all levels (UNESCO, 2006).

Being a member of UN, Zambia is party to the 1948 universal declaration of human rights where education was declared a right for everyone (UNESCO, 2006). However, UNESCO (2006) further argues that despite the 1948 universal declaration of human rights, by 1990 there were still more than 100 million children including at least 60 million girls with no access to primary schooling and more than 960 million adults, two third of whom were illiterate women. In response to the situation as reported by UNESCO, in 1990 a world conference was held in Jomtien, Thailand. At this conference an agreement was made that by 2000 there would be free primary education and reduction in illiteracy levels as well as reduction in the male-female literacy gap. Despite this pronouncement, by 2000 there were still huge numbers of children who had never attended school and huge numbers of children who would attend school but drop out, as a result, the Dakar conference as a commitment to action, was held in Senegal April 2000 to reaffirm the vision of the world declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 2006).

Table 1.1 shows the six Education for All (EFA) goals the Dakar conference reaffirmed

Table 1: Education for All Goals

| |
|--|
| 1. Expanding and improving comprehensively early childhood care and education, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. |
| 2. Ensuring that by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. |
| 3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs. |
| 4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. |
| 5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to, and achievement in, basic education of good quality. |
| 6. Improving every aspect of quality of education, and ensuring excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. |

Source: UNESCO (2006)

With regards to goal number 5, strategies in Zambia have thus been put to ensure a girl child attains education equivalent to a boy child, such as the 50-50 enrolment policy, where schools by law are compelled to enroll equal numbers of girls and boys at grade one, eight and ten, among many, the introduction of the reentry policy (EoF, 1996)

Currently, prioritizing the enrolment and retention of girls in schools is a critical step in promoting equal opportunities for girls in Zambia. Female education awareness has thus been given high consideration. For the past 14 years, churches have come into open female schools; the government has as well opened female schools as well as turned the then many boys' schools into co-educational schools (Carmody, 2013). The Government has taken quite a number of measures particularly aimed at improving quality of teaching, to enhance pupils' academic achievement in general and females' in particular and realizing the importance of quality education.

Suffice to mention, studies conducted by kamuti (2012) and Qaiser et al (2012), have shown that home environments, starting from family income to parental support have a huge influence on the learner's development and academic achievement. According to Drake (2000) some homes have a lot of activities stimulating children's thinking while others do not have. These activities include books, computers and parents' interest in learner's cognitive development hence, spending time with them to do school work. McFarlane (2011) highlights the fact that learners come into schools as people exposed to different home environments, cultures, beliefs and attitudes. These characteristics play an important role in the academic achievement of individuals and the need, not only to examine the influence of the school environment on academic performance but also the home factors.

In the world of education however, the process of teaching and learning seems to be the most complex activity. In reference to the Ministry of Education National policy document, MoE, (1996), which sets the principles for the development of education in Zambia, education is intended to serve individual social and economic well-being and to enhance the quality of life for all. For an individual and a nation to develop, there is serious need to pay attention to education. However, high academic performance is not only necessary for national development but also for the psychological health of individuals because pupils' self-esteem and motivation increases when they achieve high academic performance, and through high

academic achievement, pupils' sense of self-worth strongly develops enabling pupils to diligently engage in country developing activities (McFarlane, 2011).

In 2012, the then Minister of Education, Dr. John Phiri, indicated he was saddened that most government secondary schools were underperforming compared to mission schools (Zambia Post News Paper, May 9, 2012). All been equal, the arising question is “what home and school factors contribute to poor academic performance among female pupils in government schools?”. Further according to Examination Council of Zambia statistic report (2015), female government schools are underperforming in comparison to mission schools in Zambia. Even though many studies have been done in Zambia on classroom performance of pupils (Monde, 2012; Malambo, 2012; Mbewe; 2011, Chimfwembe; 2010), particularly on low performance in specific subjects especially Mathematics, English and Sciences, there is little known on home and school factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in selected girls only government secondary schools, presenting the research gap for the current study which focused on establishing school and home factors that lead to poor academic performance among female pupils in selected girls only government secondary schools.

1.3 Statement of the problem

According to the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ), Grade 12 Examination Results Statistic report (2015:5) the number of pupils in girls' only government secondary schools getting full school certificates at grade twelve school leaving examinations has been significantly low compared to the number of pupils in co-education government schools and grant aided secondary schools in the past five years.

Previous studies done in Zambia by different scholars (Monde, 2012; Malambo, 2012; Chimfwembe, 2010) on academic performance of co-education and grant aided schools in particular subjects revealed that performance of pupils was affected by among others, inadequate learning and teaching materials, over enrolment and pupil indiscipline.

The above studies focused only on school factors affecting academic performance of pupils in specific subjects in grant aided and co-education government schools neglecting the influence of learners' home environments on academic performance. Focusing on girls' only government secondary schools, there is little known on both the school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance of girls, at grade twelve school leaving examinations for the past five years, presenting the research gap for the current study.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka District, Zambia.

1.5 Objectives of the study

1.5.1 General objective

To establish school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka District, Zambia.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To find out views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils in the three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka district.
2. To establish the academic policies put in place in selected girls' only government secondary schools in Lusaka district to enhance female pupil academic performance.
3. To determine academic measures put in place in homes to enhance female pupil academic performance in Lusaka district.

1.6 Study questions

1. What are the views of teachers and pupils on the school and parents on the home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils in three selected girls' secondary schools in Lusaka district?
2. What academic policies are in place in three selected girls' only secondary schools that enhance female pupil academic performance in Lusaka district?
3. What academic interventions are in place in homes to enhance female pupil academic performance in Lusaka district?

1.7 Significance of the study

According to Kasonde Ng'andu (2013), significance of the study is the section in a research that shows the relevance and implications of the study for researchers, practitioners and policy makers in the country. In this regard, it is hoped that the findings of this study has produced

information that could be used as reference points for factors influencing female pupil academic performance. The findings of the study may as well be helpful for parents as well as teachers of the learners to guide learners properly and in line with their abilities so that they achieve academic excellence while creating an enabling home and school environment. The findings of this study may also trigger further research in trying to come up with strategies to nurture internal and external motivation among learners with a view of improving academic performance. The findings may also help the policy makers in the Ministry of General education in formulating policies on the role both home and school environments play in learners' academic achievement. In the attainment of Zambia Vision 2030, the findings of this study may serve as a starting point for further research.

1.8 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by two theories namely; Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological system's theory. Though the two theories are without limitations, the study was biased towards their strengths.

Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school



Source: Ribbins and Burrige (1994).

The effective school model was developed by Sammon (1995). It has been widely used and adopted by school systems for school improvement as it advocates for the use of reflective learning techniques in trying to improve academic performance. Sammon (1995)'s eight factors of effective schools are based on the following:

Table 2: Sammon’s (1995) eight factors of effective schools

| |
|--|
| Shared vision and goals: this emphasizes unity of purpose, consistency of practice, collegiality and collaboration in a school environment. |
| A stimulating and secure learning environment: a school must be orderly and attractive in order to facilitate good academic performance. While the outside of the school must portray the quality the school can offer, teachers must also create an environment where they can freely interact professionally and share ideas without restrictions. |
| High expectations of all learners: an effective school must have all round and clear communication of expectations, providing intellectual challenges |
| Monitoring progress: an effective school must monitor and evaluate pupil school performance |
| Positive reinforcement: an effective school must have clear and fair discipline and feedback |
| Pupil rights and responsibilities: an effective school must care for pupils’ high self-esteem, positions of responsibility, control of work |
| Purposeful teaching: an effective school must have efficient organization, clarity of purpose, structural lessons, adaptive practice |
| A learning organization: an effective school must have school-based staff development |
| Home based partnership: an effective school must have parental involvement |

Source: Ribbins and Burrige (1994).

Table 1.2 above shows the nine factors on which Sammon’s (1995) model of an effective school are based.

With regards to the school factors contributing to the poor academic performance among female pupils in selected girls’ only government secondary schools, the study was anchored on all the nine elements of Sammon’s (1995) model of an effective school. Furthermore, in reference to the Home factors affecting academic performance of female pupils, the study centered on Sammon’s ninth factor, the home based partnership, which clearly explains that an effective school must have parental involvement, expressed through parent attendance during PTA meetings and the presence of parents during school open days, among many.

Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) Ecological theory

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), ‘everything which surrounds human beings may be collectively termed as environment’. It is from the environment that human beings gets food to

eat, water to drink, air to breathe and all the basic necessities required for day to day living. The environment therefore can be said to constitute a life support system. According to the ecological systems theory, there are systems nested within systems, which delineate factors further and further from individual control and that demonstrate the effects of an action occurring in one system affecting several others (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Furthermore, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979), there are five environmental systems that influence human development; they include the Microsystem, Mesosystem, Exosystem, Macrosystem and the Chronosystem.

The Microsystem is the most immediate environment in which the child lives. It comprises of daily home, school or day care, peer group or community environment of the child. Young children usually interact with only one person until they develop and their world expands at family level. The interactions within this system typically involve personal relationships with family members, classmates, teachers and care givers

The second system is the mesosystem; this consists of the interactions between the different parts of a person's Microsystem. Here, an individual's Microsystem doesn't function independently but are interconnected and assert influence upon one another. These interactions according to Bronfenbrenner (1979) have an indirect impact on the individual. It is at this stage that a child experiences reality.

Bronfenbrenner explains the Exosystem as the third level of ecological systems and it refers to the setting that does not involve the person as an active participant but still affects him or her. In this system the mass media, education, social welfare, recreational facilities and employment availability influence the experiences of persons and the family. In relation to pupil's academic performance, the school structure governing classroom management can affect the learner's academic achievement in a positive or negative way.

The Macrosystem is the largest and most distant collection of people and places to the child that still exercises significant influences on the child. It is composed of the child's cultural patterns and values, specifically the child's dominant beliefs and ideas, as well as political and economic systems. The last environmental system of Bronfenbrenner's ecological system is the Chronosystem. This includes the transitions and shifts in one's lifespan. It may as well involve the socio-historical contexts that may influence a person.

With regards to the home and school factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils, the study was anchored upon the Mesosystem of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory because this part of the theory directly looks at a child and his home and school environment (Microsystem), the relationship with his or her teachers and parents having an influence on their academic performance.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

Delimitations are those characteristics within the researcher's control, which limit the scope and define the boundaries of the study. Delimiting factors include the choice of objectives, the research questions, variables of interest, theoretical perspectives adopted and the population chosen for investigation (Babbie, 1973). The study population was drawn from three selected girls' only government secondary schools in Lusaka, because in view of the school distribution pattern in Zambia, Lusaka province has the highest number of girls only government secondary schools and according to ECZ the academic performance of girls from these schools has been poor, the need to conduct this study.

1.10 Limitation of the study

Limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impact or influence the analysis of the findings of the research. They are the constraints on generalizability, applications to practice, and usefulness of findings as a result of the ways in which the study design was chosen or the method used to establish internal and external validity (Babbie). This study was limited to three girls' only selected secondary schools in Lusaka, the study sample may therefore not be representative of all schools in Zambia hence, generalization of the study findings should be done with caution.

1.11 Operational definition of terms

Academic performance: how well a student meets standards set out by ECZ and the learning institution itself.

Classroom: a room in a school or college in which lessons are held.

Educational institution: an institution dedicated to education.

Factors: Something that contributes to or has an influence on the outcome of something.

Home Environment: the socioeconomic status of the family, family size, educational level of parents and home academic policies

Institution: an organization founded and united for a specific purpose.

Quality education: it is an education that enables people to develop all of their attributes and skills to achieve their full potential as human beings and members of society.

1.12 summary

The goal of this chapter was to provide an overview on the home and school factors that influence female pupil academic performance. What is of extreme importance from the information cited in the background is that, school and home environments do influence female pupil academic performance, but what is not known are the exact factors hence the current study. The chapter has further presented the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, study questions, limitations, delimitation, significance of the study and the operational definitions of terms. The next chapter reviews relevant literature to the issue of School and Home factors contributing to poor female pupil academic performance.

1.13 Organization of the dissertation

Chapter one of this dissertation looked at the background information regarding female pupil academic performance as well as statement of the problem, purpose of study, research objectives, limitations, delimitations and significance of the study. Chapter two reviewed literature regarding female pupil academic performance from a context approach of global, Africa and Zambia. Chapter three brought out the methodology that directed the study. Chapter four presented the findings of the study, chapter five discussed the findings and chapter six is the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

Having considered a number of issues in the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, study questions, limitations, delimitation and significance of the study, it is imperative to give a perspective of traditional education and the girl child in Zambia, there after review relevant literature on the subject of home and school factors affecting academic performance of female pupils from a context approach of Global, Africa and Zambia and this is guided by the subsequent headings: Female academic performance, School policies and academic performance, Factors contributing to academic performance and Home environment and academic performance. The chapter ends with a summary.

2.2 Traditional education and the girl child

According to Snelson (1974), traditional education comprised of missionary teachings which included the 3Rs which were reading, writing and arithmetic. However, Africans regarded this type of education as one that would alienate them from their own culture as such, parents preferred to let their girl children be at home than go to school because once at home they could learn how to take care of their husbands as marriage was the most important in African societies. When girls were allowed to participant in education, their performance and participation were affected by the traditional divisions of labor in the home. Girls were made to devote much of their time to house chores such as food preparation as well as taking care of siblings. This left them without time for their homework and school work. Sometimes they could be refused from attending school every day (Snelson, 1974).

Going by culture, a girl child was not a woman until she learnt from her grandmother, mother, aunties, and elderly women in society the duties of a house wife. With age, a girl child underwent lessons on how to make mats, baskets as she also participated in traditional dances and how to take care of her husband when she gets married (Snelson, 1974).

Once a girl child attained puberty, Snelson (1974) explains that she would be secluded from everyone as she underwent an initiation ceremony where she was taught on sexual behavior and the responsibilities of a house wife. She was also taught on personal hygiene.

Africans were only interested in learning on how to brew beer, make pottery, and weave as well as midwifery which was different from mission education (Snelson, 1974).

2.3 Female academic performance

Much as progress has been made in enhancing the socio-economic status of women in Zambia they still remain among the disadvantaged and marginalized (EoF, 1996). Up until now, there is a stereotype bias against women education and this disadvantages many women from attaining full education. Institutional, socio-cultural and personal factors combine to impede girls in realizing their potential through education. According to EoF (1996:76), statistics show that girls' enrolment in grade 1 is almost equal to that of boys, however in subsequent grades, the number of girls in school decreases steadily with a noticeably high female drop-out from grade 4 onwards. For instance, for every 100 girls who begin primary school, only 70 complete the full primary course, aside losing interest in school by the girls themselves, some parents feel it is more critical to educate boys.

However, the impact of girl child education is particularly valuable, not just for individual girls, but for their families (CIDA, 2007). The centrality of women's contribution to national development underlies the importance of integrating gender concerns into all development interventions. This is so because, without special attention to the women and girls, the national goal of accelerated development cannot be attained (EoF, 1996). Literature reveals that each year of additional schooling a girl receives raises the age at which she will marry, reduces the number of children she will bear, increases the likelihood of her babies surviving childhood, reduces the likelihood of her contracting HIV, and boosts her potential income by 10–20 %, making education one of the most vital investments in development (David, 2014).

According to Drake (2000) educating a girl child has economic gains which includes; faster growth of gross national product (GNP), higher rates of return on girls' versus boys' education, higher family resources, improved participation in wage employment and in the home, higher productivity, a more skilled labor force, better employment opportunities, greater occupation mobility and improved earnings.

World over, studies have been conducted on female academic performance. In Pakistan for instance, a study was carried out by Riaz, Klalid and Aleem (2015) to compare the factors affecting the male and female students' academic performance in higher education. A sample of 285 students was selected, descriptive and inferential measures were used to explain the

factors affecting the students' academic performance. The study was investigating the possible differences in gender wise academic performance in higher education. The pooled t-test analysis findings suggested that the average percentage marks of male and female students were significantly different; the performance of female students in higher education was found to be better as compared to the male students.

The findings of Riaz et al. (2015) are significant in that they depict a positive move towards the world wide girl child education campaign. From these findings while in Pakistan, females outperform the males, in Zambia the opposite is the case; with reference to the ECZ statistics report (2015) male pupils outperform female pupils.

Another study was conducted by Simmons (2010) on academic performance differences among male and female African American students in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The purpose of the study was to examine differences between male and female African American high school students in an urban setting. The study had 270 participants and system database was used to identify the cumulative grade point average for each student. A series of independent samples t tests were performed to assess differences in male and female academic achievement levels, academic self-perception, attitudes towards teachers, attitudes towards school, goal valuation and motivation self-regulation. The study findings indicated positive correlation between attitude towards school and attitude towards teachers, academic self-perception and motivation, goal valuation and motivation. The mean score for academic self-perception and goal valuation were significantly more positive for African American females than African American males.

The findings of Simmons (2010) gives insight into the psychological nature of women in that, how they perceived themselves towards their academics and the value they attached to their academic goals had an impact on their academic achievement while with the men it had no impact at all. Thus by nature women are emotional beings, what they hear and what they are told has huge impact on how they will perceive things and the value they will attach to things, this is no exceptional with academic achievement.

Furthermore, in India, Adak and Banerjee (2014) conducted a study on the contributions of some women Litterateurs towards the development of women education in Bengal (1900-1947) through their literary works. It was a historical research whose primary source of data was writings of women litterateurs, which includes books written by them and their autobiographies. The secondary sources of data included biographies, journals, newspapers

and writings of others on the women litterateurs under study. The study findings reveal that the works of these women have helped shape the education of women today.

From the findings of Adak and Banerjee (2014), it is observed that while the women litterateurs under study were in an area where women education was unheard of, while their path was not smooth; they braved social criticisms and worked for their fellow beings. With little formal education, these women wrote books aside establishing schools.

In Ethiopia, Mulugeta and Dawit (2015) conducted a study on the factors affecting academic performance of female university students. The study focused on pointing out the factors affecting academic performance of female university students at Akusm University Ethiopia. The study used the econometric and descriptive tools to obtain the reliable estimates of the contribution of school, students and family attributes to academic success. The findings indicated that tension, distance travelled to attend college and harassment have statistically significant adverse impacts on student performance. The academic levels of parents and the amount of funds students received monthly had positive statistically significant effects.

However the findings of Mulugeta and Dawit (2015) concur with the findings of Maswikiti (2012) and Nyipir (2010) these studies seem to agree that the academic level of parents has a significant impact of the education of female pupils. Homes where parents cannot financially provide for their children usually force girl children into early marriages in order to support the family financially or force girl children to drop out of school in order to take care of their siblings while parents look for ways to take care of their families.

Additionally, in Nigeria Joseph et al (2015) conducted a study on the effects of gender on students' academic performance in computer studies, secondary schools of new Bussa, Borgu local government of Niger state. Questionnaires were used to gather data; the study had 275 participants from both public and private schools in the study area. The study results showed that even though the male students had slightly better performance compared to the female students, it was not significant as the better performance was found to be pronounced in private schools which were shown to possess the best male brains in the study area.

The findings of Joseph et al (2015) clearly explain the difference in the caliber of pupils taken to public and private schools. While it is not completely true that private schools get the most brain children in the area as evident in the study findings, it is true private schools in

comparison to public school have children that come from well to do homes that can at least afford educational study materials that can boost their intelligence.

Mauan (2013) conducted a study in Kenya whose purpose was to establish the factors influencing academic performance of girls in public primary schools in Sereolipi education zone in Samburu. The study used descriptive survey, it comprised a sample of 432 participants and the data was analyzed quantitatively. The study findings reveal that parental involvement influences academic performance of girl child in public primary schools most, followed by pupils' characteristics, family background. School infrastructure was found to influence academic performance of girl child least.

However the study findings of Mauan (2013) highlight vital points on the influence of parental involvement on academic performance of girl children. From the findings, parents' awareness of their need to be involved in the education of a girl child can according to Mauan (2013) led to high academic performance.

In Zambia Maguswi (2011) conducted a study on factors contributing to under achievement of Zambian female students in O-Level physics examination in the central province. The study looked at views held by school administrators on failure rate and measures they would put in place to improve performance. The study comprised a sample of 460 respondents; a descriptive research design was used that comprised of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. The study findings revealed that poor performance in physics was caused by inadequate funding, low teacher morale, heavy teaching loads among many.

Maguswi (2011)'s sample size (460 respondents) is adequate to have clear representation of the actual population. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods in the study was very important as it gave an opportunity for the data that could not be quantified to be stated as received from the respondents. The study gets credit for the use of a descriptive research design because respondents were given an opportunity to give their detailed views of the phenomenon of study.

Another study was conducted by Mtolo (2010) on the performance of female adult learners re-entering high school through academic production unit in Chipata and Katete districts. The researcher sought to establish the factors that negatively affected the academic performance of female adult learners re-entering high school through APU. The study sample was drawn using purposive and stratified sampling and it included learners, school managers and teachers of the

adult re-entered females. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires, interviews and class registers. The findings revealed that there was a problem on the methodology used to teach the female adult learners. And the home based factors included chores, family responsibilities, marital and financial problems. The findings revealed that the performance of female adult learners were adversely affected by the stated above home and school factors.

The findings of Mtolo (2010) give insight onto the teaching methodology with which to handle adult learners who are re-entering in the quest to improve performance. However, while the study centers on re-entered girls the current studies looks at the non-re-entered girls.

2.4 School policies and academic performance

Each school is anticipated to be characterized by the pursuit of excellence in the intellectual and personal development of its pupils. In enhancing academic performance of pupils, academic policies are important in giving the pupils direction as to what is expected of them, right from the onset of their academic journey at particular schools. Many learning institutions have policies and procedure whose relevance must be made known to pupils because they guide their academic life. However, academic school policies in many cases are peculiar to particular schools, this is because each school has an independent strategy preferred to enhance the academic performance of learners, nonetheless it is important to note that much as school policies differ from school to school they are guided by the uniformity of the country Education Act.

Globally, every school develops its own culture with the country education act as a yardstick, which influences the entire school life and activities of the pupils (Ballantina, 2008). In Pennsylvania for instance, according to the power of a great education, Pennsylvanian Education Act (PSEA)'s Vision for the Future (20/20:1), in a quest to improve pupil academic performance, envisions schools with comprehensive support for children with special emotional, physical, and academic needs. PSEA supports school policies that will build on a foundation of successful teaching and learning in the Commonwealth's public schools, where students are making progress.

Additionally, in the USA, most schools in trying to enhance pupils' academic performance suggest offering guidance and counseling services. According to Adelman & Taylor, (2002) schools focus on comprehensive guidance and counseling programs, placing greater enhance

on realigning their counseling interventions and services as they believe it promotes higher academic achievements and outcomes in school children. Professional school counseling in USA has evolved over three stages namely, position approach, services model and comprehensive guidance and counseling movement. According to Gysbers & Henderson (2000), the first circa of counseling, which is the position approach, instituted a position approach where classroom teachers dispersed occupational and career information to high school students with the objective directed largely on employment training. Little thought was given to elementary age and early adolescents' psychological and educational issues. The second phrase, a pupil-personnel orientation model was established and this looked at adequate psycho educational support services to pupils at risk of school failure. The third stage, which is the comprehensive guidance and counseling, has at the center, the shortcomings of the first and second stage and it looks at school counseling been collaborative and developmental, and serve all pupils and encourage the attainment of the prescribed student competencies so they achieve high academic performance (Adelman and Taylor, 2002).

Furthermore, African countries are not exceptional in setting up school academic policies to enhance pupil academic performance. In South Africa according to the South African Schools Act NO. 84 of (1996) with regards to schooling, emphasis has been placed on compulsory learner school attendance and teacher class administration of homework. However, in the recent past, homework in enhancing pupil's academic performance has been an issue of controversy worldwide. According to Gill and Schlossman (1996), 'leading education spokespersons have celebrated homework as essential to raise educational standards, foster high academic achievement, upgrade the quality of the labor force, and link family and school in a common teaching mission'. While other researchers state, homework provides experiential learning, Cooper (2001), states 'research on the effects of homework suggests that it is beneficial as long as teachers use their knowledge of developmental levels to guide policies and expectations, as it has both positive and negative effects on various aspect of student's lives'.

Furthermore, in Ghana, Kormla (2012), in the quest to establish interventions and come up with policies to improve pupil's academic performance conducted a study on principals' strategies for improving the academic achievement of students of disadvantaged rural junior high schools. The study identified seven interventions that need to be made in order for schools in rural Ghana to produce pupils with high academic performance. They include shared school

vision, the principal's positive personal attributes, successful instructional and managerial leadership, thriving collegial leadership, productive school and community partnerships for recruiting resources for the school, innovative physical and human resource and emerging positive values (Kormla, 2012). The study revealed that for schools to enhance pupils' high academic performance, the seven established elements must not only be present in a school but also be interconnected to enhance school effectiveness.

With reference to both the PSEA vision for the future (20/20) and the South African Education Act NO. 84 of (1996), great emphasis has been placed on encouraging parental involvement in their children's education, improvement of student assessments as well as reduction in class size. In Zambia however, according to the Education for all review document (2015), Education financing through school construction in order to ensure all pupils adequately attend and fit in classes, in addition, school assessments are vital pillars for performance monitoring and quality assurance. Under here, there are three kinds of assessments encouraged, these include the school based assessment, public examination and competency assessment.

In Zambia, among the many adopted strategies for enhancing academic performance of pupils in high schools, according to Education for all Review document (2015) during the fifth National Development plan period, is the issue of hiring 5,000 teachers yearly so as to reduce high pupil teacher ratios more particularly in the rural areas. According to Ndoye (2008), most schools in Zambia engage in large pupil enrolment which impact negatively on the quality of education. Not only does high pupil enrolment affect the sitting arrangement by having inadequate number of desks but also textbooks as well as one to one teacher-pupil attention. When the teacher pupil ratio is high, teachers fail to adequately attend to the educational special needs of all the pupils, Mbozi (2008), explains that over enrolment does not only make pupils fail to concentrate in class but also affects the teachers in that even marking of pupils' work becomes impossible to do hence slow learners in the process suffer and this negatively impacts on the outcome pupil academic performance. The Zambia Ministry of Education further puts up a policy of requiring teachers to serve a minimum two years before requesting to be moved, to reduce attrition which tends to be high in rural areas.

Furthermore, as a direct response to persistent gender gaps in education with the hope of enhancing female academic performance, the Ministry of General Education (MoGE) introduced positive action in favor of girls at various education levels. To ensure pregnant girls go back to school after giving birth and they freely mix with other pupils, in 1991 the re-entry

policy was introduced the Government recognizes the need for equal and full participation of women and men at all levels of national development, hence it has committed itself to the process of removing gender imbalances by adopting and advocating for implementation of the National Gender Policy. The implementation of the policy entails that all curricula materials highlight matters which are gender responsive and promote equity of access to education (Curriculum framework, 2013:11). This policy makes it possible for all school going pregnant girls to go home to give birth and get back into school after they deliver. These girls who return to school after giving birth are offered counseling services in order to ensure they fit in back to school.

2.5 Factors contributing to Academic performance

Academic performance has been defined differently by different scholars and different countries, according to Crosnoe et al. (2004) academic performance is often defined in terms of examination performance, this entails how well a student meets standards set out by the learning institution itself. According to Sander (2001) there are a number of school environmental factors affecting academic performance such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of school libraries, absenteeism of both teachers and pupils, unpreparedness of the teacher among many.

With regards to the impact of the teaching and learning materials such as textbooks on academic achievements, writers such as (Heyneman and Loxley, 1982; Walberg, 1984; Beeby, 1986) have revealed that textbooks provide a huge basis of information for students as well as the course of study for the subject. Exploring the effects of textbooks and other factors on student achievements, Lockheed et al. (1987) found out in their longitudinal study from a national sample of eight grade Mathematics classrooms in Thailand that textbooks may affect achievement by substituting for additional post-secondary Mathematics education of teachers and by delivering a more comprehensive curriculum.

Another study was conducted by Atienno (2014) on the influence of teaching and learning resources on students' performance in Kenya, free day secondary education, embakasi district. The study used a descriptive research design; data was collected from the head teachers, teachers and students. The sample comprised of 6 principals, 18 class teachers and 240 male and female students. The data was quantitatively analyzed, the study findings reveal that teaching and learning materials were available and are utilized in schools, especially those used

in classroom instruction, like chalks, dusters and charts except physical facilities are lacking and there is gross inadequacy of human resources, which resulted into overstretched resources with annual increase in enrolment rates thus compromising the quality of education.

The findings from Atienno (2014) give a clear picture of the influence of teaching and learning resources on students' performance in Kenya. The use of 240 male and female students makes the study findings more gender balanced and provide a wider picture of the views of the pupils,

Earlier in his own contribution, Altbach (1983) had the opinion that; "Nothing has ever replaced the printed word as the key element in the educational process and, as a result, textbooks are central to schooling at all levels". Squire (1991) writing on teachers reliance on textbooks, stated that those seeking to improve the quality of education believed that improvements in instructional materials would inevitably lead to changes in actual teaching. For many teachers, textbooks can provide an excellent and useful resource, without assuming the position of the teacher. Ogunwemimo (1989) argues that while the selection of a textbook has been declared to be vital to academic achievement, it is sad to say that relevant textbooks are not always available for teaching and learning activities. Lack of textbooks could be identified with the high costs.

A number of studies have been conducted on factors contributing to academic performance world over. In Pakistan for instance, many studies have been conducted on academic performance, Mushtaq and Khan (2012) conducted a study on Factors affecting students' academic performance at Rawalpinda and Islamabad private colleges of Pakistan. The study focused on different factors such as class schedules, class size, home environment and environment of the class. The findings revealed that family stress affects the performance of the students negatively. The study further revealed that communication, learning facilities and proper guidance do affect academic performance of students.

Mushtaq and Khan (2012)'s findings reveal that learning facilities do affect academic performance, these learning facilities include school libraries which occupy a dominant and crucial place in any school system and their absence has been looked at as a factor that affects academic performance because they provide service and guidance to readers through supporting all functions of school teaching. A well-equipped library serves pupils as well as teachers good as they research. According to Fuller (1985), collection of books kept for reading in the library is related to high performance both for the teacher and the pupil. However,

Farombi (1998) notes that school libraries may not be effective if the books within are not up to date. However while libraries with out-dated books are not effective, Ogunseye (1986) observes that the complete absence of an organized school library impacts negatively on academic performance of pupils.

In Malaysia, Ali Norhidayah, Jusoff Kamaruzaman, Syukriak Ali, Mokhtar Najah and Azni Syafena Andin (2009), also conducted a study on the factors influencing students' performance at Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah, Malaysia. Several factors discussed in the study included demographic, active learning, student's attendance, peer influence, course assessment and involvement in extracurricular activities. The results revealed that four factors, namely; demographic, active learning, student's attendance and involvement in extracurricular activities positively relate to students' performance.

According to Ali et al. (2009)'s findings, students' attendance is a very significant factor that can contribute to academic performance. Pupil absenteeism has been associated with poor academic achievement both in the short and long term. When a child is absent it is usually very difficult for the child to catch up the next time they return to class, according to Balfanz et al. (2008), school absenteeism harms more than the individual and his or her prospects. Absenteeism has an impact on both the teacher and the pupil, when a pupil is absent, it affects their academic achievement and on the other hand, when a teacher is absent it slows the rate of instructions.

Academic performance of students has been of concern even in the United States of America. Sitkowski (2008) conducted a study on the effects of participation in Athletics on Academic Performance among high school sophomores and juniors. The results of this study revealed that, there was a significant relationship that existed between academic performance, measured by GPA, and athletic participation. Through an analysis of 249 high school sophomore and junior boys and girls, it was found that athletic participation had a positive impact on academic performance and that impact may be attributed to the difference between male in season and out of season performance.

Academic performance of students has been looked at from different dimensions world-wide. In South Africa, Maswikiti (2012) looked at school children's academic performance in view of the influence of socioeconomic status and quality of education. The aim of this study was to determine whether in a sample of South African children, quality of education as well as

socioeconomic status affected the IQ scores and academic performance of school children. Participants were 79 children between the ages of 12 and 15 from various Cape Town schools. The sample included children from both high and low SES families and with varying qualities of education. The child's general intellectual functioning was measured using the Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI) and the child's academic performance was measured using the most two recent school reports. The results of Maswikiti (2012) study revealed that children from high socioeconomic status families and with a high quality of education scored better on the WASI than did children from low SES families and with a low quality of education.

In Uganda, Nyipir (2010) conducted a study on factors affecting the performance of pupils in Primary schools in Paidha town council. The study looked at the influence of the level of education of parents, family income and parent's marital status on the performance of pupils in primary schools in Paidha town council with a view of recommending on how to improve pupil's performance. The findings revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between the level of education of parents and pupils' performance, there was no relationship between family income and pupil's performance and lastly there was no relationship between parents' marital status and pupils' performance.

Furthermore in Kenya, Muthoni (2013) conducted a study on academic performance of secondary school students and its relationship with family background. The study focused on the influences of; parental marital status, family financial status, parents' education level and family size on the academic performance of students in Siakago Division. The study used a descriptive research design. The target population under study was 1,081 students of Siakago division and 1,081 parents, the study sampled 338 students and parents which were selected by use of a proportionate stratified random sampling method. The findings of this study showed that while the marital status of the parents was not significant in explaining the academic performance of students, the type of family either cohesive or conflictive had an effect on academic performance. The findings also showed that only 7% of students' academic performance would be explained by the parents' education level.

In Zambia several studies have been conducted on academic performance, Monde (2012) conducted a comparative study on performance of Grade nine pupils, at the junior secondary school leaving examinations in selected rural and urban schools in Senanga district. The study focused on establishing whether or not there is any difference in performance between urban

and rural Grade 9 pupils in basic schools in Senanga district and to find out the factors that affected the performance of the Grade 9 pupils in rural and urban basic schools in Senanga. Mostly quantitative and to a lesser extent qualitative research designs were employed. The sample comprised of 140 respondents from urban and rural schools. The findings of this study revealed that the performance of urban and rural Grade 9 school pupils at junior secondary school leaving examination was generally poor and this was attributed to factors such as lack of qualified teachers and long distances covered by pupils to and from schools.

Furthermore, Malambo (2012) also conducted a study in Zambia on factors affecting pupil performance in Grant-Aided and Non-Grant Aided secondary schools in Western province. A case study design was used which combined qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The sample comprised of 58 teachers, 20 pupils and 5 senior education standards officers. The study revealed that pupils from non-grant aided schools were under performing as compared to pupils from grant-aided schools. The unsatisfactory performance of pupils from non-grant aided schools was attributed to inadequate learning and teaching resources, over enrolment, demotivated teachers (low teacher morale) and pupil indiscipline among others. On the other hand, good performance in grant-aided secondary schools were attributed to adequate learning and teaching materials, high teacher morale, strong school academic policies and high level of pupil discipline.

In addition, Chimfwembe (2010) conducted a study on academic performance. He looked at the relationship between self-efficacy and mathematics performance among Zambian Grade 11 pupils in Lusaka urban. The study revealed that there was a variation in the level of self-efficacy in the pupils with a good number of pupils having a medium level of positive mathematical self-efficacy. The study revealed a significant difference between higher and lower achievers. With the pupils a positive correlation was found between pupils' performance in the selected five topics and their mathematical self- efficacy.

2.6 Home environment and academic performance

Throughout the world, educationalists and scholars have long been interested in understanding and recognizing the factors that contribute to academic excellence and interventions homes have put in place to enhance pupil academic performance. Various factors have been examined in relation to academic achievement, which includes home environmental factors such as social

economic status, parental involvement, family size as well as family education background (Eamon, 2005).

Parents' socio-economic status is a factor that contributes to students' academic achievement. Students' academic achievement is negatively correlated with the low level of parent's socio-economic status (SES) because it hinders the individual in gaining access to sources and resources of learning (Duke, 2000; Eamon, 2005). Low SES level strongly affects the achievement of students, bringing them to a lower level (Sander, 2001). It is observed that the economically disadvantaged parents are less able to afford the cost of education of their children at higher levels and consequently they do not work at their fullest potential (Rouse and Barrow, 2006). Socio-economic status is a critical issue when it comes to pupil schooling and academic performance, globally Otieno and Yara (2010), explain that learners from low socio-economic status families tend to value domestic activities more than schooling. Walters and Soyibo (2001) further elaborated that student performance is very much dependent on socio economic back ground (SEB) as per their statement, "High school students' level of performance is with statistically significant differences, linked to their gender, grade level, school location, school type, student type and socio-economic background (SEB)."

World over studies have been conducted on parents' socio-economic status as a factor which contributes to academic achievements. In Pakistan for instance, Qaiser et al. (2012) conducted a study on the effects of parental socio-economic status on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Karak district. The study considered sixty government boys' high schools, 10th grade classes from which 1500 students were selected using simple random sampling. It was a survey study and used self-developed structured questionnaire to collect data. Findings of this study reveal that parents' educational level, parental occupational level and parental income level affect the academic achievement of secondary school students.

The findings of Qaiser et al. (2012) give an insight into factors to consider in enhancing pupil academic performance. The use of 1500 students in the study gives a wider representation of the population, however had the sample involved both male and female secondary schools the findings would have been more gender balanced and would have shown a true picture of whether or not female pupils do get affected by their parents' socio-economic status

In India, Mushtaq et al. (2016) conducted a study on the effect of socio-economic status on academic performance of secondary school students of Ganderbal district of Jammu and

Kashmir states. The study had 120 student participants, and a socio-economic status scale was constructed and standardized, data was collected using previous academic progress records from schools. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the academic achievement of high socio-economic status of students in comparison to low socio-economic status of students. Significant differences were found between the students with (high and low) and (high and middle) socio-economic status.

In Africa, Kapinga (2014) conducted a study on the impact of parental socio-economic status on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Tanzania. The study employed a qualitative research approach informed by a case study. The study included 60 informants, which were teachers and students. The study found that majority of the students from selected secondary schools are from low SES, and their parents are not concerned with their children's learning. The study established that there is a closer relationship between SES and academic achievement.

Kapinga (2014) uses qualitative data analysis in order to give detailed information as narrated by the participants on the topic of research. However if the study informants were inclusive of parents, the findings would have had a wider view and would have been opulent in that parents would have as well given opinion on how SES affects pupil achievement, thus while Kapinga (2014), had no parent respondents, the current study has.

Okemwa (2014) conducted a study in Kenya on the influence of parental socio-economic status on pupil's academic performance at Kenya certificate of primary education in Kiamokama division of Kisii country. The study focused on eight selected secondary schools, the informants included the pupils, head teachers and teachers, and the study sample was 416. The findings reveal a significant relationship between the parents' education level and the academic performance of pupils in schools in the study area.

With regards to parental involvement in children's education undertakings, research has shown that the educational level of parents plays a pivotal role. According to Halle et al. (1997) mothers with higher education have higher expectations for their children's academic achievement and these expectations are related to their children's subsequent high academic achievement. Literature reveals that, the positive beliefs parents have in their children's abilities to achieve excellence, creates a platform for higher amounts of achievement-related behavior as well as more positive perceptions of achievement by the children. According to

Duke (2000) parent-child interactions lead to high academic achievement performance as the attitudes of the pupil's parents affect the academic success of their child.

Many studies have been conducted on the impact of parental involvement in children's education globally. In Western Australia a study was conducted by Malik (2000) on the influence of the home and school environments on the academic performance of Chinese-Australian and Anglo-Australian students. The findings of the study suggest that the reason why Chinese-Australian and Anglo-Australian children have different educational outcomes is that these families socialize their children differently. From the findings of Malik (2000) it is evident that parental socialization with school going children is likely to yield positive academic performance for the children

In Kenya, Kamuti (2015) conducted a study on the influence of the home environment on academic performance of students in public secondary schools. The study sought to determine the influence of parent/family involvement on students' academic performance. The findings of the study were that the parent's economic status influences students' academic performance, parent/family involvement also influence students' academic performance in public schools as well as parenting styles. Unlike Kamuti (2015), which focuses on public schools with a major concentration on the influence of family/parent involvement on student's academic performance, the current study looks at the home and school factors that affect the academic performance of female pupils in non-grant aided schools.

In Zambia the Ministry of Education realizes the importance of parental involvement in the education of their children; the 2002 Basic Education Sub-Sector Improvement Program (BESSIP) stated that access to quality education can be improved by enhanced community participation in basic education (Ministry of Education, 2003). As such in trying to promote community participation in the governance of schools, the Ministry of Education encourages all schools to have Parent Teachers Association (PTAs), which links the school and the community.

In Zambia, Mbewe (2009) conducted a study on the characteristics of the home environment of the high and low achieving grade nine pupils in selected basic schools. The findings revealed that the characteristic of a home had an impact on the academic performance of the grade nine pupils. There was a significant relationship between language, residential area, parents'

perception of their children academic performance on the other hand and academic achievement.

Family size has as well been looked at as a factor that hinges on academic performance of pupils. Large family size from a low SES home affects the pupil's academic performance in that usually the pupil might not have all school materials that they need, they might not have a bed space at home to study from and they might not even have their parents check through their school books because parents might be busy selling to meet the needs of the big family. According to Johnson (1996) poverty of parents has resilient effects on their children's academic work; it makes them lack enough resources and funds to sponsor their education. United States Census Bureau (2000) on the relationship between poverty and student's performance found that a student from a family of low economic status plays a huge role in their own education. Parents with lower incomes often have to work longer hours to earn their small income.

In Australia, Deborah and Julie (2013) conducted a study on the impact of family size on school achievement: test scores and Subjective Assessments by teachers and parents. The sample involved primary school pupils aged 8/9 years old and 10/11 years old in Victoria. The impact of family size was identified via instrumental variables (IV), exploiting plausibly random differences in the gender mix of siblings and twin births. The study results provide strong evidence for the existence of a quantity-quality trade-off, with IV estimates suggesting an economically meaningful negative impact of having more than one sibling. The study was longitudinal, and it commenced in 2004 with the recruitment of 2 cohorts where one was of 5,107 children aged 0-1 year old and the second was of 4983 children aged 4-5 years old.

Deborah and Julie (2013) give detailed findings on whether or not family size does affect academic achievement, especially by the use of a longitudinal study, however considering the duration of the study, there is a high possibility of incurring a lot of changes with the characteristics of the sample with which the study started with and these changes might out what the study initially intended to find out.

Ella et al. (2015) conducted a study on the influence of family size and family type on academic performance of students in government in calabar municipality cross river state Nigeria. 6 public secondary schools were used in the study, and a sample of 200 students. The data was analyzed quantitatively using one way analysis of variance. The study used a survey research

design and the results revealed a significant influence of family size and family type on academic performance of secondary school students in government in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria.

The use of 6 public schools by Ella et al. (2015) gives a wide representation of schools however the study would have had more detailed findings had it included parents as informants and not just pupils.

Suffice to mention is the fact that, the current study is different from the studies reviewed above, in the sense that, while the above reviewed studies focused on individual aspects, the current study is holistic in approach.

2.7 Summary

This chapter has given a detailed perspective of girl child education in Zambia as explained by Snelson (1974), where female education was given less preference in comparison to male education by the African parents because of the traditional roles a woman was supposed to take up, such as taking care of her husband and siblings coupled with attending to house chores while a boy child went to school. Further the chapter has revealed relevant literature on the subject of education and academic performance generally from a context approach of Global, Africa and Zambia on the following subheadings: Female pupils' education, home environment and academic performance, factor contributing to academic performance and School policies on academic performance. On female pupils' education, the chapter has looked at studies on the impact of home factors such as family size, socio-economic status, parental involvement and family education background on girl child education. Further, studies on school environments have included how factors such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of libraries, teacher-pupil absenteeism and teacher unpreparedness affect academic performance. Lastly, on school policies and academic performance, the chapter has revealed the following policies to enhance female pupil academic performance in schools: homework policy, guidance and counseling, shared school vision, productive school and community partnership and innovative physical and human resources. Chapter three brings out the methodology indicating various issues with regard to the conduct of the research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

Chapter two of this report has dealt with the review of literature on the School and Home factors leading to poor female pupil academic performance from a context approach of global, Africa and Zambia. This chapter deals, in detail, with the description of the methods applied in carrying out this research study. Methodology has been defined as the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study (Kothari, 2011). The chapter is organized

under the following sections: philosophical foundation, research design, the target population, sample size, sampling procedures, instruments of data collection, data collection procedure, data analysis and the ethical consideration. The chapter ends with a summary.

3.2 Philosophical Foundation

This study was based on the social constructivist worldview, which according to Creswell (1998) was coined by Mannheim, and works of such men as (Berger and Luckman's 1967 the social construction of reality; Lincoln and Guba 1985 naturalistic inquiry). According to the social constructivists, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, they come up with subjective meanings of their experiences which are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories. Under this philosophical foundation, the researcher relied much on the participants' views of the situation being studied; when collecting data the researcher made the questions open-ended, broad and general in order to allow the participants construct meaning of the situation as advanced under social constructivism worldview. The aim of the researcher under this assumption was to interpret the meanings teachers, pupils and parents have about the home and school factors contributing to the poor academic performance among female pupils in selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka district.

3.3 Research design

Kasonde-Ng'andu (2013) defines a research design as the structure of research that holds the elements in a research project together. This study used a descriptive research design with the intention of collecting the views of participants on home and school factors contributing to the poor academic performance among female pupils. Orodho and Kombo (2002) defines descriptive research design as one used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues. Further, Cone (1999) defines descriptive design as one that describes characteristics of a given population in a systematic and accurate manner. The study design locates the researcher in the frame of mind to get to places where to find possible documentation and sources of data relevant to the question under study. The researcher observed the participants in their natural setting, and where possible photographs were captured. Furthermore, the researcher had face to face interviews with participants, where it was not possible to conduct face to face, phone interviews were conducted.

3.4 Study area

The study was conducted in three girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka district. The three schools were chosen because of the poor female pupil academic performance at Grade twelve school leaving examination as indicated in the ECZ statistics report (2015).

3.5 Study Population

Bryman (2004) defines population as the universe of units from which the sample is drawn. In this regard, the population for this study consisted of one parent per grade twelve pupil study participant, teachers of grade twelve pupils and the grade twelve pupils in the selected secondary schools of Lusaka only.

3.6 Sample size

According to Kothari (2011) sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the population. This sample should have similar characteristics as that of the population.

The sample for this study comprised 54 participants. 42 of the 54 participants were female comprising 8 teachers, 24 pupils and 10 parents. 12 of the 54 participants were male, comprising 7 teachers and 5 parents. The 24 pupils in the study made up 3 focused group discussions, each group comprising of 8 pupils. The 15 parent study participants, one per child were used in order to collect views on the home factors affecting female pupil academic performance from parents in addition to the home factors from pupils (triangulation). Collecting subjective views on the topic of study from 54 participants, made the study sample adequate to bring out trustworthy findings.

3.7 Demographic characteristics of respondents

It was important to know the teacher respondents' number of years in service because the study was motivated by poor female pupil academic performance for the past five years. The researcher believed finding teachers that have been at study schools for three or more years would produce detailed rich information for the study because they would be in a better position to understand and know the school factors that have been affecting the female pupil academic performance.

Table 3: Teacher's number of years in service

| Years in Service | Gender | | Frequency |
|------------------|--------|--------|-----------|
| | Male | Female | |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|---|----|
| 0-5 years | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 6-10 years | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| 11-15 years | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 16-20 years | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 7 | 8 | 15 |

Table 3.0 shows the years in service of teachers by gender. From the table, in the service range 0-5 years, the study had 2 male and 5 female teachers making up a total of 7. In the service range 6-10 years, the table shows 3 male and 1 female teachers, while 2 female teachers have been in the teaching service for a period of 11-15 years, and 2 male teachers have worked in the range 16-20 years. As is seen from the table, most of the teacher participants have served from 0-5 years and the study had more female teacher participants in comparison to male.

3.8 Sampling procedure

The study used purposive sampling. The researcher, using her judgment purposely targeted the grade twelve pupils and their teachers, as they were believed to have reliable data. Orodho and Kombo (2002) states that the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich in cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues under study. For the parents, purposive sampling was also used, as the study targeted parents to the pupils that were in the study.

3.9 Research instruments

In order to get qualitative data from teachers, pupils and parents, focus group discussion guides, semi-structured interview guides and naturalistic observations schedules were used. With regards to semi-structured interview guides, face to face and telephone interviews were conducted.

3.9.1 Focus group discussion guide

According to Black (1999), a focus group discussion guide consists of 5-12 respondents guided by a facilitator, during which members talk freely and spontaneously about a certain topic. This instrument was chosen with the intention of eliciting subjective views and opinions from the participants. Each focus group discussion lasted for about 30-45 minutes.

3.9.2 Semi-structured interview guide

According to Tromp and Kombo (2006), semi-structured interview guide is based on the use of a list of questions or topics to be covered in the interview. According to Creswell (1998) it

is a qualitative method of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open ended questions that prompt discussion. This instrument's strength rests in the ability it has to allow respondents to discuss and raise issues that the researcher may not have considered. This research instrument was suitable for the current study because in depth information was gathered due to the open ended structure of the questions that provided for uniformity. It also allowed for probing thus obtaining new ideas, hence coming up with a framework of themes.

3.9.3 Observation guide

According to Creswell (1998) observation is one of the descriptive research methods highly systematic, and its use must be precise, systematic and well planned so that the findings can be considered scientific. Observational methods may be categorized as open if the researcher simply observes the behavior of interest without any specific objective in mind, while closed observation is when the researcher decides before carrying out the investigation exactly what to look for and when to do so. Of the two types of observations which are laboratory and naturalistic, the current study used naturalistic observation guide.

3.10 Pilot study

For the success of any research, it is important to conduct pre-testing to test the methodology or questions to be used in the study (Babbie 1973). For data quality assurance, a pilot study was conducted in different schools but with similar trends to the sampled study schools, this helped the researcher to measure the effectiveness of the researcher instruments prior to the main data collection.

3.11 Procedure for data collection

Before starting data collection, consent was sought from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee and the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies. Further, the researcher got permission from the Lusaka District Education Board Secretary to go into study schools to seek permission from the school managers to administer semi-structured interview guides and focus group discussion guides to the participants.

When conducting focus group discussions, the researcher used per-determined lists of open ended questions arranged in a natural and logical sequence. 3 focus group discussions were conducted with the 24 pupils where in each group there were 8 pupils; three open ended questions were administered and participants were free to talk with other group members, this was done with the intention of eliciting subjective views and opinions from the participants. During this process, the researcher used a voice recorder to record the responses that were given by the pupils.

Furthermore, semi structured interview guide instrument was used to collect data from the teacher and parent study participants. Face to face, one on one interviews were conducted with the teachers and parents. However for parents who were sampled but not available for face to face interviews, phone interviews were conducted.

During the use of Observation guide instrument, the researcher simply observed the behavior of interest without any specific objectives in mind. Pupils were observed during lesson time in their respective schools. Pupils were also observed as they were studying in various convenient places within the school. The behavior of pupils was observed in their natural environment and the researcher recorded what was seen in the way it was seen.

After capturing the views and opinions of the participants accurately without losing any information, data from the participants was categorized into statements and summarized into narratives, tables and diagrams.

3.12 Data analysis

According to Shamoo & Resnik (2003), data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and/or logical techniques to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, and evaluate data. In this study, data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis, a method used to analyze data by identifying the emerging themes from the study findings. The responses from the semi-structured interview guides and the focus group discussion guides were coded and grouped into themes which were used for analysis. Thematic analysis involves the researcher asking broad questions and collecting word data from participants and looking for related themes and describing the information in themes and patterns exclusive to that set of participants (Valsiner, 2006).

3.13 Ethical consideration

Research that involves human subjects or participants raises exceptional and multifaceted ethical, legal, social and political issues. Research ethics is specifically interested in the analysis of ethical issues that are raised when people are involved as participants in research. The objectives of research ethics aims at the following: to protect human participants; to ensure that research is conducted in a way that serves interests of individuals, groups and/or society as a whole; and to examine specific research activities and projects for their ethical soundness, considering issues such as the administration of risk, protection of confidentiality and the process of informed consent (Babbie, 1973). In this study, the rights and respect for privacy were upheld. First, consent was obtained from the Ethics Committee, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zambia. Further, permission was sought from the Lusaka District Education Board Secretary and the school head teachers where this research was conducted. Furthermore, consent was sought from the participants and they were also informed that the data collected would be used for academic purposes only. However, as for the pupil participants below the age of eighteen, consent was sought from their parents.

3.14 Summary

This chapter has presented the study philosophical foundation which is the social constructivist worldview, where the researcher aimed at interpreting the meanings teachers, pupils and parents have on both the school and home factors contributing to the poor academic performance among female pupils. Further the structure of research that held the elements of this research study together is the descriptive case study research design. The study has indicated a population of 54 participants sampled using non-random sampling of purposive sampling. The data was collected using semi-structured interview guides, participant observation and focus group discussions and it was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Before collecting data, consent was sought from the UNZA ethics committee, the DEBs Lusaka, head teachers, teachers, parents as well as pupils and all the study participants were told they were free to stop the interview whenever they felt the need to do so. Chapter four presents the findings as obtained during the field work data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

Chapter three looked at the methodology used in conducting this research. This chapter presents the findings of the study which sought to establish the school and home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils in three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka District. The findings are presented in line with the research questions which were;

1. What are the views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils in the three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka district?
2. What academic policies have the three selected secondary schools put in place to enhance female academic performance?
3. What are the academic interventions homes have put in place to enhance female pupils' academic performance?

4.2 Views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors leading to poor academic performance among pupils in selected girls Secondary Schools

In order to establish the school and home factors that lead to poor academic performance among pupils in three selected female secondary schools of Lusaka district, data was collected from the teachers, pupils and parents. The findings are therefore presented according to the research questions of the study beginning with findings from the teachers, followed by findings from

pupils on school factors, thereafter findings from parents followed by findings from pupils on home factors.

4.2.1 Views of teachers on school factors

Teachers brought out varied responses as regards their views on school factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils. The majority of the teachers interviewed indicated that, inadequate school infrastructure was among many other factors leading to poor female pupil academic performance. The teachers said female pupils have no place to study from because once the morning pupils leave classes, the afternoon pupils immediately come in, making it difficult for the morning pupils that wished to stay over to read, having no library facilities. Some of their responses were as follows;

One male teacher from School 'A' said;

This school used to be a boys' boarding school. The government then turned the boys' dormitories into a new girl's school. So now there are two schools here, one for boys and one for girls. The government has not built any new infrastructure since the inclusion of the girls section thus, it lacks library facilities, and this really affects their academic performance as they have no place to study from as well as write homework from.

Another male teacher from School 'B' on the same factor stressed that;

The school does not have separate buildings for the morning section and the afternoon and it does not have a library, hence morning pupils have nowhere to study from because their classes are used by the afternoon pupils.

Furthermore, other interviewed teachers stressed on inadequate teaching and learning materials. Teachers said having fewer books in almost all the teaching subjects, makes it difficult for the female pupils to follow through lessons when teaching. Hence, they are always lagging behind, and in turn this affects their academic performance. In this regard, one female teacher from school 'C' said;

Textbooks are not enough especially in sciences. One book has to be shared among three to four pupils.

In addition to the above sentiment, a male teacher from School 'A' said;

We have subjects were there is completely no textbooks. By this madam, I mean if I have only five textbooks why should I carry them to class with me? They just cause confusion because pupils cannot even share them.

Over enrolment is another factor teachers brought out as leading to poor female pupils academic performance. Teachers reported over enrolment affects both the teachers and the female pupils. Teachers said they fail to administer homework as is required because of the many papers to mark and in turn this affects the performance of the female pupil. In support of this, one male teacher from School 'A' had this to say;

The teacher pupil ratio of this school is 1:70, for both the morning and afternoon sessions. This makes it difficult for me to administer homework weekly or even every after two weeks, mind you I teach English, and offering composition exercises weekly is not possible, how many scripts will I have to mark? It will take me many days.

In agreement with the male teacher from School 'A', a female teacher from School 'C' said;

Having an overcrowded class together with a heavy teaching load makes it difficult for me to offer pupils one on one attention. I have about 32 periods in a week, am always moving from one class to the other, I have no time outside class for pupil consultation.

Interviewed teachers also reported on pupils lacking internal motivation to work hard. Teachers said, pupils did not have motivation because of dirty school environmental outlook. One female school administrator teaching a grade twelve class from School 'A' said;

The way this school appears, has a lot to say about the seriousness of the pupils. Pupils here are not serious with school. They are as disorganized as the school environment.

Yet another female teacher from School 'C', said;

Well, the issue of academic performance is general; many things do affect the way pupils perform at school. Of late, what I have observed is that, pupils we receive on transfer many times fail to cope with the school study patterns as such their academic performance is so bad.

4.2.2 Views of pupils on school factors

When pupils were asked to state the school factors that lead to poor academic performance in the three selected secondary schools, some of their responses were similar to those of the teachers. Some pupils (7), stated lack of library facilities made it difficult for them to research beyond classroom notes. One pupil from school C said that;

It is difficult to study because there is no library and mostly it is hard to find textbooks especially if you can't afford to buy for yourself

And another pupil from school A said;

Because there is no library it is difficult to do our homework because sometimes the teachers can ask us to read ahead to prepare for tomorrow's topic but there is nowhere to find the textbooks.

Furthermore 4 pupils mentioned inadequate teaching and learning materials, here one pupil from school C uttered the following;

We have to use one book the three of us when learning chemistry even literature because the books are not enough.

Yet again, 3 pupils mentioned been punished during lesson time as a factor contributing to poor academic performance. Pupils reported that, as they get punished during lesson time their friends in classes remain learning and when the teacher comes to class next, they continue from where they had left from. Thus, the pupils need to find their own time to read and understand, without a teacher to explain to them should they encounter any difficulties. One pupil from School 'B' had this to say;

When you are found wanting, whether it is learning time or not, they do not care, they immediately take you out of class to go and work and It is up to you to ask your friends what they learnt in your absence.

Suffice to state, one pupil from School 'A' during focus group discussion said subject syllabi are not completed on time and this makes the pupils remain behind in terms of covering the required topics before examinations, this is what she said;

We are in grade twelve but still learning grade eleven stuff in subjects like science, and by the time we finish the grade eleven topics we would be maybe in term two and the teachers will start rushing us through so that we can finish the topics. Now when we have time, teachers sometimes do not even come to class, they are not interested.

Another pupil from School 'A' during focus group discussion mentioned lack of revision and difficulty in accessing examination past papers as factors affecting their academic performance and this is what she said;

Here teachers never bring past papers for revision to class, the whole term we spend it learning, nothing for revision here.

Furthermore another pupil from School 'C' expressed concern over teachers giving shallow notes, this is what she said;

Teachers especially in bulky subjects like commerce and history give us shallow notes in class, they instead produce pamphlets for us to buy and they say the notes are more detailed in the pamphlets, and if you do not have money to buy then you will only have the shallow notes given in class, they sell sometimes even k90 each, which is a lot.

In addition, another pupil from School 'B' mentioned the lack of infirmary room within the school as a factor, and this is what she had to say;

For me, sometimes when am on my pees I want to take some pain killers and come to school to attend class until later during the day when i begin to feel the pain again but there is no place I can rest from within school, so even when I feel better and want to come to school to be present in some subjects, am forced to just stay at home because when the pain starts there is no room in school I can rest from.

Another pupil from School 'A' during focus group discussion alluded to the de-motivating statements teachers pass as leading to poor female pupil academic performance; this is what she said;

Most teachers come into class and start calling us "ifikopo" (dull), they even say things like "muno mu classi tamwakwata amano, mushe mulibana bashani" such that even as we learn we just feel maybe it is true we cannot pass, it is so discouraging.

In addition one pupil from School 'A' said;

Teachers do not care about all of us here, they even say that the money they get paid for teaching us is already on their salaries so it is better to pay attention to G.C.E instead of us, as long as 5 pass then it is enough to show that they came to class and we learnt.

Furthermore one pupil from School 'C' during focus group discussion said;

Ama teachers bapano balitemwa ilyashi (teachers here like stories)...mamama haha , they come to class only to tell us stories about the colleges they have been to, some do not even come to class they just sit palyashi (stories) in the staffroom until their period is over. And in English when the teacher comes to class she just reads on her own until we even knock off, class is very boring.

4.2.3 Views of parents on home factors

All the interviewed parents acknowledged that the home environment has factors that contribute to poor female pupil academic performance; they stressed multiple home factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils. 5 of the 15 interviewed teachers explained low parental income, while 4 said house chores, 3 stated peer pressure and another 3 mentioned family size. Some of their responses are as follows;

One parent disclosed that;

I do not have a job; I do business to raise money to use to take care of my family. I make very little, I do not manage to buy my children all the things they need for school and some of the things are what they need to use for studying, this affects my children, and I feel bad that there is nothing much I can do.

Another parent opined that;

My daughter is the eldest at home, when am not around she has the responsibility of taking care of the house. Sometimes she gets overwhelmed by cleaning and washing, she fails to study.

One other parent said;

Most of the girls in the neighborhood are teen mothers, but my daughter does not have a child. My daughter gets influenced by her friends because they are always coming

home to play with her, they miss school and follow her up when she knocks off to talk about boys, and they do not care about school. This environment is not good for my daughter I feel she gets pressured to try out what they do.

Another parent said noisy home surroundings affected pupil academic performance, he said;

Kunokwatu mashabini nidiba, bamaliza vilimba full blast, kunokwatu kuli chongo maningi, mwanawasikulu kulibe kumbelenge bwiino mwee (here in our neighborhood there are a lot of bars that play loud music, a school pupil cannot study well).

Furthermore, one other female parent stated the lack of electricity affects her daughter when she wants to read, this is what she said;

Chikulu chilipo nikusoba malaiti, mwanawanga ama lema akachoka kusikulu, By the time akazikike kumbelenga nishikwafimpa kundala, penangu nama kendulo tulimba so nikungona chabe.(the big problem is lack of electricity, my child gets tired after school and by the time she sits down to study after school hours, its already dark, and sometimes we have candles for her to use, but sometimes there are no candles so she fails to study).

Another female parent mentioned abuse of gadgets, this was her response;

Children can be a trouble sometimes you know! With my daughter, she uses the home internet meant to help her with school work to browser for movies and music, so I constantly need to keep check on her.

4.2.4 Views of pupils on home factors

When pupils were asked home factors that contribute to poor academic performance among female pupils, varied responses were given. Most of the pupils mentioned low parental income, they said if their parents cannot manage to pay school fees for a particular term they are asked to drop and wait until money is raised while the boy children continue going to school, because unlike a boy child, the girl can help with house chore. One pupil said;

I reported for school during Grade ten, in term two because mum could only afford to take my brother to school. I helped mum sell the whole of grade ten term one to raise money to continue school in term two.

One other pupil opined that;

My mother doesn't get paid a lot of money, she works in a saloon, and I feel bad to ask her to buy for me things like textbooks, I would rather read just the notes we are given in class but sometimes the notes are brief, I do not even understand.

Another pupil in support of low parental income said;

My parents say they can only pay for my school fee that's all, so when I tell them to take me for tuition they say it is expensive, they do not have money.

Furthermore, one other pupil mentioned family size; this is what she had to say:

For me I am disturbed at home when I want to study, there is no comfortable room to study from because our house is one room, my mother divides the room with a curtain to make a bedroom for us, the place is small and I do not even have a chair to use when studying.

In addition pupils also stated house chores to be a factor affecting their academic performance. Pupils said instead of studying when at home, because either they are the only female or the eldest female, they are occupied with cleaning. One pupil said;

At home we have no maid I get to do all that which would have been done by a maid if we had one. I get tired because I have to do a lot of cleaning and washing such that I have no time to study.

One other pupil on house chores said;

I sleep very late because when I am home I cook for my parents and two brothers, am the only girl child. Am always tired, I do not even manage to study, I have to also bath my brothers because my mother comes back home so late.

4.3 Academic policies in selected secondary schools

When teachers from selected secondary schools were asked whether or not they are aware of academic policies present in their schools, all the 15 responded in the affirmative. Many teachers mentioned the home work policy to be present in their schools. Teachers said administering homework to the female pupils helped the female pupils revise and understand topics better. The three interviewed schools had however different frequencies of administering

homework, a factor for poor female pupil academic performance. One female teacher from School 'A' said:

It is a must to give homework, all of us are aware that we are to give homework in our subjects every after two weeks, if you go in a class and find that it is not given, the problem is then with the teacher not the school because all of us know we are to administer homework.

Another male teacher from School 'C' had this to say on homework:

My subject English is a daily contact subject and I handle both morning and afternoon, if I give homework every week in composition for instance for 4 classes of 65 plus pupils, I cannot finish marking on time. We do give homework but sometimes not as often due to other factors like class overcrowding and too many teaching periods to handle.

One other male teacher from School 'B' said:

It is a requirement to give homework to pupils at least every after a topic, and HODs check through pupil's exercise books to see if pupils are given homework. At least every month pupils should have written something in all subjects.

However, when teachers were asked the frequencies of administering homework in their schools, School A had 3 teachers administering homework fortnightly while 2 teachers monthly. School B had all the 5 teachers administer homework monthly while school 'C' had one teacher administer fortnight and 4 administer monthly, there is no interviewed school that administers homework daily or weekly.

Further, on the absenteeism policy, all the 15 interviewed teachers unanimously agreed to have the absenteeism policy in their schools. Teachers said having the absenteeism policy helped improve the female pupil academic performance through punishing pupils that miss class, as a way to help them attend all classes in order for them to acquire knowledge that will help them to improve on their academic achievement. One female teacher said;

If a pupil misses class for 14 days consecutively, without any proper reason, the pupil is supposed to be automatically sent home on either suspension or expulsion.

Furthermore when teacher respondents were asked how many pupils in the past one year have been expelled because of missing class for 14 days consecutively, using the class teacher records, all the 15 teachers mentioned none, one female teacher from School 'A', who also has a role in the school guidance and counseling office said;

It is difficult to gather records on pupils who miss class consecutively because class subject teachers do not update their registers often times. What is known is who misses class the whole day through the class registers for class teachers but pupils are so clever, after morning class registration they abscond particular subjects especially when subject teachers do not take registration.

However when the teacher respondents were asked how many pupils were asked to call their parents because of missing class in the past one year, using the records of the school guidance office, School 'A' reported 4 pupils, while school 'C' had one.

Other academic policies teachers agreed having in their schools include open day policy. Teachers said the open day policy encourages the girl child to work hard knowing that their parents and teachers know each other, during open days some teachers and parents exchange numbers as a way to keep check on the pupils' school progress. However when teachers were asked the frequency of administering the open day policy all mentioned yearly, one female teacher from School 'B' said;

At the beginning of every year, as new pupils are coming into school, we usually have open days where as the new pupils come into school, their parents also come so that teachers interact with them and also the parents for old pupils are told about their children's school behavior and performance.

Furthermore, another policy teachers mentioned was the repeat a grade policy. Schools 'C' and 'A' teacher respondents agreed having the repeat a grade policy in their schools, stating that the policy helps pupils work hard as it is made clear to them that pupils who will not pass to the school set standards will not proceed to the next grade. However school 'B' teachers said they did not have the policy.

When teachers were asked how many pupils have been recommended to repeat a grade in the past one year due to poor academic performance, through the records of the guidance and Counselling department, school 'A' reported 10 pupils while school 'C' reported 6. One teacher from School 'A' had this to say;

At this school, pupils who have not done well at the end of the year do not proceed to the next grade instead they remain in the same grade. This is done in order for the pupils to be fully prepared even as they go to the next grade.

The guardians' collection of report cards is one other policy found present in the study schools. All the teacher informants from the three study schools agreed to have the guardians' collection of report cards in the presence of the pupil policy in their schools, stating that it is an important policy as it makes female pupils to work hard in fear of collecting bad grades in the presence of their guardians. One male teacher from School 'A' said;

We have a policy of guardians coming to collect report cards together with the pupil. Once the report cards are ready, the pupil must not come alone but with the guardian to collect the report. This encourages the female pupils to work hard, fearing to collect bad results in the presence of their guardians.

Furthermore, some study schools had the price giving policy as a way to motivate the female pupils to improve on their academic performance. One female teacher from school 'C' said;

'We have a policy which is not very active but performed once a while, the best pupil receive awards, in form of exercise books, pencils and a mathematical set. It is a very good way to motivate the female pupils even though due to school financial challenges it is not performed continuously as it is supposed to.'

Another policy, the teachers mentioned was the teacher continuous professional development policy. Teachers in all the three schools do meet to share ideas in different subjects which help improve their lesson delivery for the better performance of the girl child.

However, informants reported various frequencies of holding the CPDs, teachers from school 'A' said they hold CPDs monthly while those from school 'B' and 'C' said termly. One male teacher from School 'C' had this to say;

Every time we hold CPDs we give ourselves tasks to do and if anyone has a question outside the presentation they are allowed to ask. For example one can present on

teaching methods that suit particular topics and so on. This equips us with better methods of teaching the girl child.

Another teacher from School 'A' said;

CPDs are very important because we get to share and learn a lot and improve our content delivery for the benefit of the girl child.

In addition to the sentiments above, another female teacher from School 'B' opined that;

Even when CPDs require a lot of time it is an exciting moment, it is a demonstration of real class situation, we benefit and build confidence in our teaching skills. And I hope in the near future the CPDs can be conducted monthly, at least even over the weekend only for few hours so that they don't affect teaching.

4.4 Academic interventions in homes of female pupils from three selected secondary schools

When the fifteen parents were asked the academic interventions they have put up in homes to enhance female pupil academic performance, multiple factors were cited. 5 parents mentioned control of play time, 4 stated offering counseling, 3 said checking note books and singing and further 3 mentioned ensuring everyday school attendance. One female parent said;

My daughter needs to wake up to study and she knows it, to help, I wake her early in the morning to go through her books for an hour before she can start her day, on every day of the week.

One other female parent disclosed that;

my child is free to bring friends home to study.

In addition to the above sentiments, one female parent had this to say:

I plait hair in order to raise money to buy school things for all my five children, each one gets a turn, however when business is slow, I get to buy only for the child who has the best grades. So my children are encouraged to work hard.

Another male parent articulated that;

Every Friday evening I and my daughter have a time table to go through past examination papers together.

4.5 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of the study which sought to establish school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in the three selected girls' only government secondary schools of Lusaka District. The findings have been presented in line with the research questions. Under the first research question, teachers, pupils and parents gave multiple responses, some views of teachers and pupils however were similar such as lack of library facilities, inadequate teaching and learning materials and over enrolment. Further some teachers mentioned heavy workload and school environmental factors while some pupils stated that teachers do not finish subject syllabi on time, negative sentiments passed by teachers as well as teachers in a habit of administering shallow notes with detailed notes produced in pamphlets for sell to pupils. Parents on the other hand, mentioned abuse of gadgets by their children such as phones as well as internet facilities, some mentioned home environmental factors such as family socio-economic status, family size as well as parental involvement in pupils' academic life. With regards the second research question which stated, the study findings revealed a number of policies which includes the homework policy, absenteeism policy, guardian collection of report cards policy; open day policy, repeat a grade policy as well as continuous professional development meeting policy. On the last research question, the chapter has reported a number of interventions participants mentioned such as; offering guidance to pupils on what time to play/ watch television and when or what time to stop, offering counseling to pupils, checking pupils exercise and note books, ensuring everyday school attendance as well as helping children go through past examination papers. This study has brought out new knowledge which has filled up the knowledge gaps identified in the literature review and study questions such as the desire parents have for their female pupils not only to be taught on menstruation in schools, but also on how to handle the changes that the transition comes with, it been a factor that affects female pupil academic performance. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

Chapter four presented the research findings in relation to the background information, views of teachers, pupils and parents on School and Home factors leading to poor female pupil academic performance. Chapter five discusses the study findings according to the study objectives. It brings out different implications, principles, relationships and generalizations shown by the results as well as the agreements and disagreements between the results and the reviewed and available literature. The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To find out views of teachers, pupils and parents on the school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in three selected Girls only government secondary schools.
2. To determine academic interventions homes of selected female secondary school pupils have put in place to enhance female pupil academic performance.
3. To establish the academic policies three selected Girls government secondary schools have put in place to enhance academic performance of female pupils.

5.2 Views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils

5.2.1 Views of teachers and pupils on School factors

The study findings from both the teachers and pupils revealed that the absence of library facilities was a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Teachers explained it was difficult for pupils to find books to use when given homework to

write or when told to read a topic ahead in preparation for the next lesson. This was attributed to the absence of library facilities in schools. Female pupils also affirmed to the fact that there was absence of library facilities in schools. This finding is in resonance with Mushtaq and Khan (2012) who conducted a study in Pakistan on factors affecting students' academic performance at Rawalpinda and Islamabad private college and found that lack of learning facilities inclusive of libraries do affect academic performance of students. Furthermore, Cooper (2001) also supported the above finding by contending that absence of school libraries makes it difficult for pupils to find information, resources, services and instructions. The absence of library facilities is therefore a factor contributing to the poor academic performance among female pupils as it was not easy for the female pupils in this study to research beyond classroom level.

This finding however, is in conflict with Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school on which the study was anchored; which states that an effective school must have a stimulating and secure learning environment such as having well stocked libraries and adequate infrastructures. Contrary to this, the study schools had pupils all over the school surroundings trying to study because of the absence of library facilities. Therefore, under such learning environments female pupils cannot be stimulated to work hard and this could serve as a demotivational factor. The implication of this finding is that a library is a central factor in the teaching and learning process that provides one of the most important educational services. It is pivot in playing the role of scaffolding to the female pupils. Henceforth, it is significant for female schools to have library facilities as they would provide female pupils with books and equip them with lifelong learning skills that they need to use at any point in their academic journey. However these must be well stocked and up-to-date in order to save their purpose as information and ideas are important to functioning effectively in today's information and knowledge based society.

Educational processes functions in a world of books. It is therefore imperative, for the Ministry of General Education to ensure all Girls schools have library facilities as enshrined in the Ministry of Education, curriculum framework (2013), which explains that library facilities must be present in all schools. While conducting this research, it was discovered the major reason for the lack of school libraries for many schools was because of upgrading schools from one level to the other; hence as the Ministry of General Education upgrades schools, emphasis must be made on increasing school infrastructure in order to cater for the changes.

Furthermore, the study findings from both teachers and pupils revealed inadequate teaching and learning materials. Teachers explained that textbooks were not enough especially in sciences as a result female pupils have to share one book against the four of them on the other hand, in qualifying the views of teachers, pupils said in many subjects they attend class without textbooks and if a teacher brings textbooks to class they are never enough, they still have to share amongst themselves. This finding concurs with the findings of a study conducted by Mudulia (2012), on the relationship between the availability of teaching and learning resources and performance in secondary school science subjects in Eldoret municipality in Kenya, the finding revealed that availability of textbooks, revision books, laboratory chemicals and equipment was higher in the high performing schools than in the low performing schools. In addition, Malambo (2012) also conducted a study whose findings echo the findings of the current study. The findings of the study conducted by Malambo (2012) on factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in grant and non-grant aided schools revealed that the unsatisfactory performance of pupils was due to the inadequate teaching and learning resources among many.

Additionally according to Mbozi (2008:127) in his study of quality education in selected schools in Kazungula and Livingstone districts in Zambia, inadequate textbooks was found as a factor affecting the performance of the learners. This implies that the inadequate teaching and learning materials affects the learning process. According to Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school, one of the nine tenants state that an effective school must have purposeful teaching. One way of purposeful teaching can be when a subject has well stocked teaching and learning materials for both teachers and pupils to use during class time, however this is contrary to the findings of this study which revealed inadequate learning and teaching materials.

Textbooks remain the most beneficial of all education inputs on pupils' and in particular female pupils' achievements in schools as small investments in teaching and learning materials have an excessively large impact on pupil academic performance. When textbooks are available in schools, pupils would be able to follow through lessons during class time and each pupil would have their own book hence there will be no disturbances like the current situation where, one pupil wants to turn the book to the next page while the other wants to read behind the opened page. Therefore, the Ministry of General Education should conduct a check with the schools to ensure purchasing right quantities of textbooks for all schools. As school curriculums change, the Ministry of General Education must print adequate amount of textbooks to match the changes.

Additionally, the study findings from both the teachers and pupils revealed that over enrolment is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. While teachers explained they were overwhelmed by the huge numbers of pupils they had to teach having a teacher pupil ratio of 1:70, they could not give homework as they are mandated to, the pupils confirmed they were hardly given homework and if they were, it would take a long time to be marked. This finding is in line with the finding of Malambo (2012) on factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in grant and non-grant aided schools, his findings explain that the unsatisfactory performance of pupils from non-grant aided schools was attributed to over enrolment among many. Furthermore, Silver (1999) supports the finding of the current study by explaining that, pupils in overcrowded classes score significantly lower marks in subjects like mathematics, science and English than pupils in classes with smaller numbers. Mbozi (2008) also explains that in overcrowded classes teachers fail to adequately attend to the individual pupil problems. This implies that, because of over crowdedness in schools, teachers fail to administer homework to the pupils adequately.

According to Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school, one of his nine tenants state that there should be monitoring and evaluation of pupil academic progress in an effective school. However, this cannot successfully take place in an overcrowded school because one of the tools of monitoring pupils' progress is by administering homework, through this, teachers can know whether or not pupils are making progress. As depicted from the studying findings, in the study schools due to huge enrolment numbers, sometimes homework is not given and when it is given sometimes it is never marked, hence the situation been difficulty for teachers to know the academic progress of the female pupils.

In reference to Education for all (2015) National Review document, during the fifth National Development plan period, the issue of over enrolment was addressed by coming up with the policy of hiring 5,000 teachers yearly. This was so in order to reduce high pupil teacher ratio more particularly in the rural areas of Zambia, however even when this policy is in place the growing Zambian population renders it useless, up until now the teacher pupil ratio in the schools of study was found to be 70 pupils to 1 teacher. School overcrowding negatively affects both teaching strategies and learners' performance, because apart from learning materials not been adequate, the contact between teachers and pupils is impacted negatively. Large enrolment levels affects the pupil sitting arrangements in class as well as the attention teachers give to individual pupils. Therefore the Ministry of General Education through the school head

teachers must ensure controlled teacher pupil ratio in order for schools to effectively administer the homework policy.

The study findings from both the teachers and pupils state that, teachers have a heavy work load were one teacher can have as many as 32 periods in a week for the morning session and the same number for the afternoon session, this makes it difficult for them to create time outside class to help pupils on topics they need clarity on, as they are either in class or preparing to go in the next class. Asserting to this view, pupils said teachers were hardly available for consultation after class time. This finding is in line with the finding of Maguswi (2011), who conducted a study on factors contributing to under achievement of Zambia female O-level physics students in central Zambia. His findings explain that poor academic performance of the students in Physics was caused by inadequate funding, low teacher morale and heavy teaching workload on teachers among many. Hence, the implication of the current study finding is that, in as much as the female pupils might have a number of unclear academic issues, seeking clarity is not an easy tasks, as teachers are never available for consultation. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, the interactions within a child's micro system are important for the full functioning of an individual. Interactions between a pupil and teacher on academic matters develops the intrinsic motivation within a pupil to seek further clarity on all challenging academic issue, from this; a sense of confidence in the pupil develops which helps improve academic performance.

Therefore the Ministry of General Education should deploy as many teachers as possible in all subjects in order to lessen the work overload situation present in the schools of study. Through this, teachers will have enough time for pupil consultation. The availability of the teacher is very important because some pupils during class time might be faced with so many problems but may be shy to ask, outside class time the pupils might seek further clarity.

However, the study also established unique findings from teachers and pupils on school factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. For example, findings from teachers stated that the school environmental outlook has great potential to motivate or demotivate the pupils to work hard. Teachers said the reason for the low academic performance among female pupils is attributed to the dirty surroundings of the schools under study, they made mention that as the female pupils enter the school premises, psychologically they are defeated and usually have no 'work hard spirit' within themselves, due to the dirty school surroundings. The current study finding agrees with the findings of Mudulia (2012), school

environments including the classroom appearance, libraries, laboratories, teacher's qualities and quantities, school management and surroundings affect students' academic performance. The finding of this study implies that, school surroundings have an effect on the female pupil academic performance. According to Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school, school environments should be stimulating to both the teachers and pupils in order to motivate the teachers to teach effectively as well as prompt the pupils to be receptive during lesson time in order to improve pupil academic performance and remain inviting to society.

The Ministry of General Education should ensure through various school administrations that school surroundings are kept clean, to stimulate the desires within the pupils to work hard in the quest to improve female pupil academic performance. The importance of maintaining a clean school environment cannot be over emphasized. Not only does a clean school environment prevent pupils from catching diseases as a key factor in the overall health and safety of pupils, it also has psychological powers to motivate pupils to work hard hence improve academic performance. When a school is kept clean parents will have confidence in the school as well as the pupils themselves, it is this confidence that instills hard work in the pupils, as society utters good sentiments about the school, the school children feel proud hence work hard to maintain the perception society has over the school. Thus, the school environment is a vital aspect that should be well managed to enhance pupil academic performance.

The study findings from teachers further revealed the inconsistent Continuous Professional Development (CPD) meetings schools hold as a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Teachers explained that while the school policy on when to hold CPDs states monthly, the meetings are never held monthly, they are held yearly and sometimes even after a year. As such, any challenge a teacher meets while delivering lessons will have to wait at least for one year in order to consult and learn from other teachers offering the same subject during CPDs. The current study finding agrees with the finding by Parkay (2004), who contends that in an effective school, one should expect to find systematic and well planned teacher's professional group meetings taking place in short time intervals for the benefit of both the teacher and pupil. This implies that the inconsistency in holding CPDs in the schools of study is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils.

Sammon's (1995) model states that an effective school must have high expectations for its learners, thus waiting up for a whole year to learn and consult new teaching ideas on

challenging topics makes it difficult for teachers to have high expectations for pupils because as the year comes to an end even the class the teacher had difficulties with on how to handle certain topics would have gone into a new grade hence achieving low in the previous grade where the teachers needed to consult on the challenging topics during CPDs. Therefore school administrators must ensure that all school departments follow the school policy on the frequency of holding CPDs. CPDs help teachers stay interested and opens them up to new possibilities, new knowledge and new skill area. They must be held regularly because they help teachers check through their methods of lesson delivery alongside giving them an opportunity to consult from each other on how to handle certain topics.

Additionally, the study findings from teachers revealed that some female pupils did not have internal motivation to work hard, coming from homes where all siblings do not have an education or if they have gone to school, they never completed. Female pupils from such homes, see no need in concentrating on school work because they have no role model at home. They come into school with an 'I do not care' type of mindset. The current study finding is in line with the finding of Simmons (2010) who conducted a study on academic performance differences among male and female African American students in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The study findings indicated that pupils who had no motivation and role models especially from home had poor academic performance. Furthermore the findings of the current study further agrees with the findings of Nyipir (2010) who conducted a study on factors affecting the performance of pupils in Primary schools in Paidha town council. The findings revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between the level of education of parents and pupils' academic performance, pupils were motivated to work hard by the educational level of their parents. This implies that the motivation pupils have to achieve academically, originates from what motivates them in their various homes. According to Bronfenbrenner's (2001) ecological theory, a person's individual Microsystem (school, family, peers, church among many) doesn't function independently but are interconnected and asserts influence upon one another and this has an indirect impact on the individual. The educational level of parents and sibling does interact with the thoughts female pupils have on how much they can achieve academically.

Therefore the Ministry of General Education should strengthen the PTA meetings and use them as foundations for encouraging parental commitment in children's academics in an effort to instil motivation in them. Motivation plays a huge role in pupil academic achievement. As

pupils leave home for school they have on their minds someone they would want to be like and often this character sets the limit to how much they feel they can achieve.

On the other hand, female pupils also had unique findings contrary to those of teachers. Findings from pupils stated that punishing female pupils during class time is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Pupils mentioned that as some pupils get punished during class time, teachers continue to teach those present in class at that time. It is therefore the responsibility of the pupils punished to find time to catch up on what the teacher taught while on punishment, and often times its difficulty to catch up. This finding is in resonance with the finding of Ali et al (2009) who conducted a study on the factors influencing students' performance at Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah, Malaysia. Several factors discussed in the study included student's lesson attendance. Ali et al (2009)'s study results revealed that student's lesson attendance among many positively relate to students' performance. The implication of this finding is that punishing female pupils during class time is a factor attributing to the poor academic performance among female pupil. According to Sammon's (1995) model, an effective school must have high expectations of all learners, this means that the school must have all round and clear communication of expectations, providing intellectual challenges. This is no exceptional with punishment, as the school punishes pupils it must have high expectation of the pupil not offending again hence the right expected behavior must be communicated to the pupil right during punishment.

Therefore the Ministry of General Education through school administrators must ensure female pupils are not punished during class time. Punishing female pupils while others remain learning, makes punished pupils remain behind academically and this serves as a demotivational factor to the female pupil because if she tries to catch up and finds it difficult to do so, she will get frustrated with the effort hence this frustration is highly likely to give birth to a stubborn pupil who in most cases will always get punished and never be in class. Thus while it is very important to punish pupils in order to make them not offend again, punishment must be administered in a way that the right behavior is communicated to the pupil so that they know what is expected of them next time.

Findings from pupils further revealed that teachers delay in completing the subject syllabi because of low morale. Pupils revealed that when examination period comes near, teachers begin rushing through topics as a result they give shallow notes while producing pamphlets for sell where detailed notes can be found. Teachers do not have time for examination past paper

revision hence making it difficult for pupils to access examination past papers, they teach rushing through the lesson as a result pupils are not engaged in many lessons. This finding agrees with the finding Maguswi (2011) who conducted a study on factors contributing to under achievement of Zambian female students in O-Level physics examination in the central province. The study looked at views held by school administrators on failure rates and measures they would put in place to improve performance. Findings revealed that poor performance in physics was caused by low teacher morale among many.

This finding implies that subject teachers having no morale to finish the subject syllabi on time is a factor that contributes to poor academic performance among female pupils.

Low teacher morale is a huge factor in teachers completing subject syllabi on time. When a teacher is de-motivated he or she will care less about preparing for class, and this will affect his lesson delivery, and the effects trickle down to having non-pupil interactive teaching methods and inability to have thorough revisions. Syllabi are important for laying considerable stress on the methods of teaching, system of evaluation and grading, in order for schools to have enough time for revision, it has become increasingly important for teachers to complete the topics to be covered in the particular subject on time so that they have sufficient period to walk the pupils through all the difficult they encounter as they study or learn in class before examination time. Syllabi are time bound and it is important for teachers to complete the contents on time (Lockheed, 1986). Syllabi provide an inclusive guide map, as they reflect the educational philosophy governing the subject, however if not completed on time the entire undertaking of study can be threatened.

The Ministry of education should ensure to come up with strategies to boost teacher morale, further the school Heads of departments must also ensure to check through the individual teacher's records of work to determine whether or not they are on time to finish the syllabi and if need be, must be advised on how to handle certain topics in order to be on time.

5.2.2 Views of parents and pupils on Home factors

The study collected views on home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils from both parents and pupils. Therefore the discussion for the findings will involve both the parents and pupils.

The study findings from both the parents and pupils revealed that low parental income is a home factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Parents said it

is difficult to purchase study materials for their female pupils because they do not have enough money. Some parents said because they have no money they cannot afford to stay in homes that have electricity, they said buying power is expensive compared to buying candles and kerosene for lighting purposes. Affirming to the views of parents some pupils said, been the eldest and some said the only female children in their homes, early in the morning before leaving for school they had to go to the market to display their parents' things for sell, as their parents go to buy things for resell. Other female pupils on weekends had to go into the streets to join their parents sell and make money for food. Because of this, pupils said they have no time to study at home. Some pupils said been female, as they reach home they have to quickly prepare super before it gets dark because they live in homes without electricity, and sometimes when they plan on waking up to study they cannot, because parents do not have money to purchase candles or kerosene for lighting while studying. This finding is in resonance with the finding of Qaiser et al (2012) who conducted a study in Pakistan on the effects of parental socio-economic status on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Karak district. Findings of this study reveal that parental occupational level and parental income level affect the academic achievement of secondary school students. Further Kapinga (2014) also conducted a study in Tanzania on the impact of parental socio-economic status on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Tanzania. The study found that majority of the students from selected secondary schools are from low Socio-Economic Status (SES), and their parents are not concerned with their children's learning. The study established that there is a closer relationship between SES and academic achievement. The implication of the study finding is that low parental income affects pupil academic achievement. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Exosystem, parental income does not directly involve the pupil as an active participant but still affects him or her. Because when parents get low income they might not be able to purchase all school requirements for the child, however when they get high income it becomes easy for them to support their children academically through paying their school fees, been able to rent a comfortable home and acquiring all the necessary educational materials needed for school, thus parental income has an influence on pupil's academic performance.

Therefore, the Ministry of education through school administrators must ensure to strengthen the already existing local established groups in schools that identify vulnerable pupils, coming from families that cannot afford certain educational necessities in order to be offered bursary, and encourage networking with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) so that all vulnerable

children can get the necessary help they deserve. The success of a pupil's school life depends on both the effort the pupil puts in her school work and the provisional role parents play in the pupil's school life. While parents' provisional roles includes among many, purchase of study materials for the pupil, being able to provide the pupil with transport money to use to and from school, been able to provide a comfortable study room at home, being able to provide the pupil with money to buy food while at school and many other necessities the pupil may need. According to Otieno and Yara (2010), if parental income is low, the needs of pupils might therefore not be met and as a result the pupil's school may be greatly affected, she may stop school or resort to finding boyfriends to provide her with things she might need which may later result into teen pregnancy among many. Therefore poverty is an important factor worthy considering in the differences in academic performance and achievement not only in Zambia but globally.

Study findings from both the parents and pupils revealed that house chores are among the home factors that contribute to poor academic performance among female pupils. Parents said they have no money to employ maids and they are busy with trying to find food for their children by going out to look for jobs and also to sell, so the female children must help by cleaning the house and cooking, if need be by looking after their siblings as well. Pupils also said they usually have house cleaning to do at home early in the morning before going to school, when they knock off pupils said they clean dishes, some even prepare super and others take care of their younger siblings, further other pupils said they work during weekends and holidays. The implication of this finding is that house chores in homes without maids pre-occupy the female pupils such that they are left with little or no time to do their school work.

When female pupils are faced with so much home responsibilities like cleaning the house, washing dishes, baby-sitting among many, their school time gets divided. Family socio-economic status has huge impact on the female pupil academic achievement because low socio-economic status families will not have money to employ a maid instead the children will take up the role of maids as parents go out looking for means and ways of surviving. As they take up the role maids are supposed to, they will remain with little time for their school work and those without internal motivation to work hard will not even try and engage themselves in any way they can. Therefore through Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings parents should be talked to in order to give their children adequate time at home to study because factors that affect academic performance involve both home and school.

Furthermore study findings from both the parents and pupils revealed that family size is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Parents said they have to support their children academically by purchasing study materials for them; however parents with a huge number of children said sometimes the money is not enough to purchase study materials for all children, parents from households with numbers of children above five said sometimes they cannot afford to pay school fees for all their children as a result while others remain in school, some stop because parents cannot afford to sponsor them academically and usually the ones who stop are female pupils because compared to boys they can help with house chores. Pupils coming from big families affirmed to the views of parents by saying they stay in small house rooms where they are usually too many in one room to even find space to study, some mentioned the houses are always noisy for them to concentrate on school work. Those from families with only one child said while it was easy for them to get adequate financial support, it was difficult for them to find anyone to consult while at home when faced with a school problem in the absence of their parents. This finding is in line with the findings of Deborah and Julie (2013) who conducted a study in Australia on the impact of family size on school achievement. The findings revealed a strong evidence for the existence of a quantity-quality trade-off, with IV estimates suggesting an economically meaningful negative impact of having more than one sibling. The findings of Ella et al. (2005) also agree with the findings of the current study, Ella et al. (2005) conducted a study on the influence of family size and family type on academic performance of students in government schools in Nigeria, the results revealed a significant influence of family size and family type on academic performance of government secondary school students. The finding of this study implies that family size does contribute to the poor academic performance among female pupils. Large family size makes it difficult for pupils to find a study atmosphere on the other hand; small family size also makes it difficult for pupils to consult when faced with a problem as they do not have any siblings to consult from.

It is the responsibility of parents to take care of their children's education expenses. However parents with large family size in this study failed to pay school fees, buying school uniforms and other pedagogic requirements needed for pupils and eventually causing them to become absent from school, and school absenteeism is a factor that also links to poor academic performance. Therefore school administrators should encourage pupils to form school study groups where those without textbooks can ask to use their friends' while discussing. The study

groups will also enable pupils to learn and consult from each other with the view of enhancing academic performance.

Another interesting finding of this study from both the parents and pupils is peer pressure. Parents living in compounds surrounded by many houses and drinking places complained that their children get influenced by so many things like other young school girls who have children and go to school leaving babies home, married young girls and drunkard young girls in the neighborhood, while pupils said the teen girls who are married and go to school coming from their husband's homes carry money to school and a lot of food, and they tell of stories of marriage and this pressures the girls not married to try and do the same. In line with this finding Ali et al. (2009), also conducted a study on the factors influencing students' performance at Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah, Malaysia. Several factors discussed in the study included demographic, active learning, student's attendance, peer influence, course assessment and involvement in extracurricular activities. The results revealed that peer influence affects students' performance among many other factors. The implication of this finding is that peer pressure does contribute to poor academic performance of female pupils. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, the interactions within a child's Microsystem exact influence on an individual's behavior. Interactions among peers will exact influence directly or indirectly on an individual's way of perceiving and valuing certain things.

The influence of peer pressure cannot be overestimated. Everyday friends influence each other's choices and behaviors. It is human nature to listen to and learn from other people in the same age group. Children who are surrounded by people who do not value school may be peer influenced, hence end up copying the belief and they too may stop valuing school. Peer pressure easily takes place as young girls are at the stage where they are not completely sure of who they are and what they believe in, hence any behavior that comes out strong, is likely to be adopted because that is what they feel they are supposed to be. Therefore school administrators through PTA meetings should advise parents to try as much as possible to offer counseling to their female pupils (children) against peer pressure because the pressure to conform can be powerful and hard to resist especially for teenagers.

Furthermore findings from parents revealed that, pupils' abuse of gadgets is a home factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. Parents said female pupils abuse the phones bought for easy home communication, to browse about things non-academic like fashion trends, especially latest clothes, facial creams and browsing on various socio-

medias like face book. They spend so much time doing this; as a result they have little time for school work. The implication of this finding is that abuse of gadgets can consume so much of a female pupil's time causing the pupil to fail to study as a result, led to poor academic performance at school.

Therefore parents at home must be aware of such behavior and try as much to control the behaviors as possible. While gadgets like computers as well as phones can be very vital for female pupils to use to discover and learn new things, especially in the modern 21st century time where almost everything is computerized, girls do become fanatics and use them for wrong purposes. A pupil can become so obsessed and neglect everything else inclusive of their school life and concentrate only on gadgets like phones and use the internet to search for wrong things.

5.3 Academic interventions homes of selected girls' secondary school pupils have put in place to enhance academic performance of female pupil

Study findings revealed that, in homes of selected pupils, parents have come up with an intervention of offering guidance to pupils in terms of controlling play and television time to help improve the academic performance of their female pupils. Parents said, most pupils when at home spend a lot of time watching television instead of reading, some spend a lot of time chatting and telling stories with their friends especially in compounds instead of concentrating on school work hence parents keep check on the amount of time children spend of television and play as a control measure so that when they have exceeded the normal times they are reminded to go and study. This finding is in line with the findings of Mushtaq and Khan (2012) who conducted a study in Pakistan on factors affecting students' academic performance at Rawalpinda and Islamabad private colleges of Pakistan. The study focused on different factors such as class schedules, class size, home and class environments and the findings revealed many factors among which is that parental proper guidance does affect students' academic performance. The implication of this finding therefore is that proper guidance offered to children on when to play and watch television creates an atmosphere conducive for pupils to study and improve their grades. As children are instructed on when to start and stop watching television, it helps them realize that their parents are involved in their education hence the need to put in effort. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, the normal psychological functioning of a child requires the elements of a child's Microsystems (parents, peers, as well as school) to interact with the child. A child, whose parents interact with, behaves

different from one whose parents do not interact with. Interactions within a child's Microsystems are vital for the full functioning of a child.

Therefore through school PTA meetings parents must be encouraged to get involved as much as possible in the academic life of their children, because their commitment in itself creates a platform for the children to work hard academically. Parents with high expectations for their children create an enabling environment such as control of play and television watching time for their children in order for them to perform well academically. According to Halle et al. (1997) mothers with higher education have higher expectations for their children's academic achievement and these expectations are related to their children's subsequent high academic achievement. The positive beliefs parents have in their children's abilities to achieve excellence, creates a platform for higher amounts of achievement-related behavior as well as more positive perceptions of achievement by the children. According to Duke (2000), parent-child interactions lead to high academic achievement performance as the attitudes of the pupil's parents affect the academic success of their child.

Furthermore study findings from parents revealed that in order to enhance female pupil academic performance, parents have come up with an intervention of offering counseling to their children. Parents said a girl child gets affected by many things as they grow and interact, hormones also stimulate them into doing such things as getting involved with the male species, some pupils when they fail academically they feel defeated and useless, they give up, hence the need to offer a girl child constant counseling. This finding is in line with the finding of Adelman & Taylor (2002) who found out that in American schools focus is placed on comprehensive guidance and counseling program, placing greater emphasis on realigning their counseling interventions and services as they believe it promotes higher academic achievements and outcomes in school children. However, the findings of the current study gives insight into the girl child educational perception difference of the 1930s and the present 21st century parents, findings reveal that unlike parents of the late 1930s according to Snelson (1974) who did not have hope in educating a girl child, 21st century parents are concerned with the girl child education, such that they not only offer holistic counseling to their children but also wake their children up to try and study during night time, and this is an important factor in trying to enhance female pupil academic performance. The implication of this finding therefore is that, offering counseling to a girl child on different issues surrounding life can be a breakthrough to high academic performance of a girl child. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory, recommends parents to interact with their children in order for them to

function successfully. The act of parents offering counseling to their children, according to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Microsystems helps the children strengthen their personal relationships with their parents on family level, and this enables them to function healthy psychologically.

Pupils been at teen age which is usually the experimenting age, and due to interacting with age mates from different home set ups and exposed to different environments are filled up with different feelings of wanting to try out new things. It is at this stage that counseling becomes very vital in order to guide the pupils through their decision making as they are faced with different issues of life. Therefore during PTA meetings parents should be encouraged to spare quality time at home to talk to their children on academic and life surrounding issues in order to strengthen their parent-child relationships, while motivating children to work hard at school.

Another interesting finding of this study is that parents ensure that their children go to school every day, by checking through their children's exercise books and signing their home works. Some parents said, every morning they wake up their children to study and ensure that they leave early for school, however to be sure they actually went to school and did not go somewhere else, they check through their children's notes and exercise books every day and sign. Subjects where the children do not have notes parents said they question their children as to why they did not write notes. These findings agree with Cone (1999) who observed that being absent from class decreases a student's ability to learn. The implication of the study finding therefore is that, parental involvement in the children's academic life through signing and checking pupils' books creates desire in children to attend school every day and through their daily school attendance, female pupil academic performance may improve.

Parents' understanding of the importance of not missing class is a great factor in ensuring that their children attend all class as is required by different school regulations. Through monitoring their children and making sure they go to school every day, the spirit of hard work is rekindled in the girl child to perform better in order to produce satisfactory results to strengthen the hope parents have in their ability to perform better. However, this does not only encourage the girl child to work hard but also encourages the parent to remain involved in their children's education which is important for enhancing the female pupil academic performance. Parents' awareness of the need for pupils to attend class instills the desire for hard work in the pupils which in turn enhances female pupil academic performance. Therefore, it is important for

parents to be encouraged to continue checking through their children's books as it encourages the pupils to work hard.

Furthermore, study findings from parents revealed that in trying to enhance female pupil academic performance, parents said they have come up with the intervention of helping their children go through past examination papers. Parents said they have set up days within the week when they go through past examination papers with their children in different subjects; especially the most challenging and they have opened up their homes by allowing their children to bring their friends with them at their homes for group discussions during weekends and holidays. This finding agrees with Brunner (1960) who explains that children need instructional help at various stages of their mental development because they are capable of recognizing a solution before producing it. In addition, this finding is supported by Bronfenbrenner (1994), who explains that a child's parents actively involved in the friendships of their child by inviting a child's friends over to their house allows the child experience equilibrium and stable emotions which will positively affect their mental development. The implication of this finding is that as parents get involved in their children's academia, they help create a platform for their children to work hard hence enhance female pupil academic performance. Therefore as mentioned by Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school, schools should strengthen their home based partnerships so that at such gatherings parents can be encouraged to reinforce their involvement in the children's education. With reference to Bronfenbrenner (2001), parental involvement in children's academia is an integral part of the full development of a child with respect to their mesosystem.

Therefore the Ministry of General Education should through PTA meetings encourage parents to scaffold their children by helping them go through past examination papers, as it helps them learn step by step, having guidance at various stages of the learning process. The Scaffolding parents offer their children, remains important not only for enabling success before a new stage is attained but also instills the sense of confidence in children even as they encounter any difficulties in their academic journey.

The study findings revealed that in trying to enhance female pupil academic performance, parents with the financial means and resources strongly made mention that they purchase textbooks and other study materials for their children as a way of making their study and school life quite easy with no excuse of having to fail. Parents who did not have enough money to purchase study materials for all their children, said they allowed their children to compete

academically and the one with the best school grades was given first priority to be bought books for. The findings of this study concur with the findings of Mbozi (2008:127) where inadequate textbooks were found as a factor affecting the academic performance of the learners. The implication of this finding is that textbooks and other educational materials are important in enhancing academic performance of pupils.

As emphasized by Altbach (1983), nothing has ever replaced the printed word as the key element in the educational process and, as a result, textbooks are central to schooling at all levels. The support parents offer their children by purchasing textbooks for them ensures that even as pupils study, they have enough materials for reference, materials are vital for academic achievement. Parents allowing their children to compete amongst themselves for who should be first when it comes to be bought books for, instill hard work in the children, because they all would like to be bought books for, this competition in return enhances academic performance. Textbooks remain the most lucrative in the educational process because without textbooks sometimes the notes given in class are shallow and children might not understand as they read their notebooks, but when they have textbooks to make reference too, after reading their exercise notebooks, they get to have a thorough understanding of the topic they are reading on. In a way, textbooks act as a map, offering direction to the pupil of how and what is involved in the topic of study. Therefore parents should be encouraged to support their children's education by purchasing study materials for them where need be.

5.4 Academic policies of selected secondary schools

The study findings revealed a number of academic policies present in the study schools. The homework policy was found to be present in all the three schools of study, with difference only in the administration frequency. While some teachers said they administered homework fortnight others said monthly. This finding is in line with the Pennsylvian Education Act (PSEA) vision for the future (20/20) which emphasizes on students' class assessment measures to be improved so as to enhance student academic performance. In the same vein, the South African Schools Act NO. 84 of (1996) also stresses on the need for schools to offer assessments to pupils in order to enhance academic performance. The Zambia Education for all review document (2015) in addition emphasizes on school pupil assessments as pillars for performance monitoring and quality assurance in schools and states according to Kasanda (2003) that homework must be given to learners at least twice a week in all the subjects, however in view of this document, according to the study findings there is no school under study that administers

homework weekly, and many reasons were advanced for not administering homework as is supposed to, such as pupil over enrolment which makes it difficult for subject teachers to mark homework in subjects such as English comprehension as well as history because of their bulky nature. This finding implies that failure by schools to adhere to the teaching guidelines on various issues such as homework policy is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. According to Sammon's (1995) model, an effective school, must monitor pupil progress and evaluate the performance of the pupils, and this can be done through administering homework.

World over, home work has been looked at to have both positive and negative effects on various aspects of pupils' academic lives. It can be very helpful if the pupil herself can do the homework on her own and can yield negative results if the pupil gives someone at home to do the homework for her. Despite critics of homework such as Alfie Kohn (2006), who contend that there is no consistent linear or curvilinear relation between the amount of time spent on homework and the child's level of academic achievement, Kasanda (2003) stresses that homework cultivates in pupils a sense of responsibility and life skills, as they get empowered with the potential to manage tasks. Therefore the Ministry of General Education through school administrators must ensure teachers administer homework as per Ministry guidelines.

Absenteeism is another academic policy the study findings revealed. In all the three schools of study, the absenteeism policy was found to be present. However all participating teachers said in the past one year no pupil has ever been expelled from school because of missing class for 14 days consecutively despite them been absent and coming late to school on particular days evident in the subject class registers. This finding agrees with the findings of Balfanz et al (2008), which states that school absenteeism harms more than the individual and his or her prospects because the more a pupil misses class the less interest they have for school. The finding of the current study further agrees with the finding of Kasanda (2003) who observed that being absent from class decrease a student's ability to learn. This study finding is further supported by the South African Schools Act NO. 84 of (1996) which states that, schools must ensure compulsory attendance of learners. The study finding therefore implies that, while the absenteeism policy exists in the study schools it is just on paper, and not been put to practice, hence the poor academic performance of the grade twelve female pupils because learner absenteeism and late coming as evident in the particular teacher subject registers have a negative bearing on the learning achievements.

While conducting this study the cause of absenteeism both for the teachers and pupils was found to be class overcrowding where the 70 pupils to 1 teacher did not only make the teachers tired and stressed such that they resort to been absent from work in order to rest, it also made it difficult for them to use innovative teaching methods such as cooperative learning and group work during lesson delivery, hence choosing teaching methods such as lecture methods which made class boring for pupils and difficult for them to concentrate during class time. According to a study by Corcoran et al. (1988) it was found that overcrowding and heavy teacher workloads created stressful working conditions for teachers and led to higher teacher absenteeism.

Therefore the Ministry of General Education through school administrators must ensure that pupils who miss class whether 14 days or less are disciplined so as to ensure they do not remain behind during lesson time because it is very challenging to succeed if a student misses too much school work, it becomes hard for them to catch up. Pupils who miss class lose interest in schooling which results in low academic performance. Teachers' workload must be made normal in order not to stress the teachers, provide them with time to use interactive teaching methods during lesson delivery for better academic achievement outcome.

Another interesting finding is the issue of open day policy. The study findings revealed that all the participating schools have open day policy. Some teachers said they hold open day yearly. This finding is in resonance with Kormla (2012)'s finding on principals' strategies for improving the academic achievement of students of disadvantaged rural junior high schools. The study identified seven interventions that need to be made in order for schools in rural Ghana to produce pupils with high academic performance which includes community partnership and shared school vision and these must not only be present in a school but also be interconnected to enhance school effectiveness. In addition, the study finding agrees with PSEA vision for the future (20/20) which emphasizes that school support policies must encourage parental engagements. This implies that open day is an important factor in enhancing pupil academic performance and the frequency with which it is held is very cardinal. According to Sammon's (1995) model, an effective school must have home based partnership. It is through such functions as open day that parents can get involved and participant in the education of their children, by asking questions on the academic and school social life that surrounds their children. Bronfenbrenner (1979)'s mesosystem, further highlights the importance of the interactions between the different parts of a person's Microsystems. Parents

and teachers interaction through open day have an indirect impact on the individual, it reinforces the sense of hard work in the pupils and motivates them to stay focused for fear that the teachers will report to their parents any behavior the school does not allow.

The importance of open day policy cannot be under estimated. During school open days, parents come together with teachers and their children to get first-hand information from the subject teachers of the pupils' academic performance and general behavior in school. Therefore the Ministry of General Education should encourage school head teachers to hold open day as often as possible as it saves to motivate pupils to work hard and creates an opportunity for parents to be involved in their children's education.

Furthermore the study findings revealed repeat a grade policy. While some teachers expressed ignorance over the policy, other teachers said the pupils that do not sufficiently pass do not proceed to the next grade instead they remain in the same grade until they prove to have grasped the concept. This finding is in line with PSEA vision for the future (20/20) which states that teachers must provide individualized support for students at risk of academic failure. And one way through which this can be done is by identifying the children that have not grasped the concept of the previous grade so that they do not proceed to the grade ahead; instead they remain in the same grade until such a time when they have grasped the concepts. This finding implies that while in schools where the repeat a grade policy is present, pupils who are not academically ready for the next grade do not proceed until they demonstrate that they have grasped the concept and are ready to move, in school where the policy is not there, all pupils whether ready or not proceed to a new grade, and this from the researcher's point of view is a factor contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils. According to Sammon's (1995) model of an effective school, teachers must have the ability to be able to monitor the academic progress of the pupils, by strictly checking through their performance and making recommendations whether or not they can proceed to the next grade, in order to enhance academic performance.

It is important for pupils to be assessed so that they do not proceed to the next grade if they still have some concepts they have not grasped in the current grade. Therefore the Ministry of General Education must ensure that individual schools implement the repeat a grade policy and head teachers must check through with the subject teachers to make sure they have the academic progress of all pupils and they check through to know whether or not they are all

ready to proceed to the next grade and if not, they should have the right to make recommendation for the pupil to remain in the same grade until they grasp the concept required.

Study findings further revealed guardian collection of report cards in the presence of the pupil. Teachers said they do not give report cards to pupils in the absence of their guardians, every time the report cards are to be collected, pupils must be present together with their guardians. This finding implies that parents have a chance to ask the grade teachers about the academic performance of their child as is reflected on the report card because as they go to collect they collect it from the pupil's grade teacher. The issue of who to allow collect the school pupils' report card is very critical as it is through such a time when parents collect pupils' report cards that teachers can let the parents know and understand the academic performance of their children.

The study findings revealed that, female pupils who get outstanding results are given awards. Teachers said pupils who get top positions in the school, as a way to motivate them, the school holds up a prize giving ceremony where they are given awards in terms of books as well as pens and other educational materials. Giving awards is one way of fulfilling one of the tenants of Sammons' (1995) model of an effective school. According to Sammons' (1995) model, teachers must have high expectations for the pupils and one way to show they have high expectations is by giving prizes to the deserving, as a way to reinforce the behavior. This finding implies that prize giving ceremony reinforces hard work and motivates others to put in their best in order to receive the awards too. According to Skinner in Munsaka (2011), reinforcement strengthens desirable behavior, the manner in which people in a child's environment attend to a given behavior either strengthens or weakens it, thus giving awards to pupils with good results will strengthen the spirit of hard work in them while creating competition for others to work hard and get the award as well. Munsaka (2011) explains that consequences determine whether a behavior enacted by an individual will be repeated in future, giving children awards during price giving will strengthen their inner drive to work hard thus improve on their academic performance. Therefore, the Ministry of General Education must ensure all schools hold up price giving ceremonies to motivate pupils to work hard, however, once a school starts the prize giving ceremony, according to Skinner, in Munsaka (2011) should be carefully observed to avoid it going into extinction, by having a situation where the pupils perform well and when the time for price giving comes, the ceremony is not held, such an act may de-motivate the pupils to stop working hard hence affect the female pupil academic performance of the school.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed findings based on the study objectives. In reference to the views of teachers, pupils and parents on school and home factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in girls' only government secondary schools, the chapter has discussed among many the lack of library facilities, inadequate teaching and learning materials, low parental income and house chores. On lack of library facilities and inadequate teaching and learning materials the chapter highlights the fact that female pupils found it hard to research beyond class because they had nowhere to find books to make reference to and even in class, most subjects were taught without textbooks. Hence, because educational processes function in a world of books, it is important for the Ministry of General Education in the quests to improve female pupil academic performance, to make sure schools have library facilities and adequate teaching and learning materials. The chapter has also discussed on low parental income and house chores, most pupils by virtue of been female were overwhelmed with house chores especially in home with low parental income. Communities should be educated on the importance of not over whelming female children with house chores because this makes it difficult for them to study and thus leading to poor female pupil academic performance. The chapter has also looked at academic interventions homes of selected pupils have put in place to enhance female pupil academic performance such as control of pupils play and television watching time. It has also looked at the academic policies schools have that enhance female pupil academic performance, such as the homework policy. While teachers expressed understanding of the importance of homework to the female pupils, the frequency of administering homework varied from one school to the other. Some teachers administered once a month and some never even marked the work, hence pupils could not assess how much they have understood in particular lessons. School administrators should therefore, ensure to check with class teachers so that homework is administered as is supposed to. The next chapter concludes the research and outlines a number of recommendations concerning female pupil academic performance.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

Chapter five has discussed the findings of the study and based on these findings, this chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations. It also gives a proposal for future research on the topic.

6.2 Conclusion

Based on the first objective of the study which was, to find out the views of teachers, pupils and parents on factors contributing to poor academic performance among female pupils in selected girls' only government secondary schools, study findings from both teachers and pupils revealed that several factors contribute to the poor female pupil academic performance such as: lack of library facilities, inadequate teaching and learning material, over enrolment and lack of adequate time for teacher-pupil consultation after class hours. Teachers said some pupils received on transfer fail to cope with the school study patterns while some lack internal motivation to concentrate on school work as they have no role model where they are coming from. Pupils further mentioned other factor such as failure by teachers to complete the subject syllabi on time as well as the negative sentiments some teacher pass been de-motivating and a hindrance towards hard work.

Additionally, the study findings revealed several home factors contributing to poor female academic performance such as peer pressure, family socio-economic status, pupils who came from big families complained it is difficult for the house to have an atmosphere favorable for study, when purchasing school materials, parents with huge families said each child has a turn and they have to wait up for their turn no matter the urgency and some pupils complained about the many house chores by virtue of family size they have to attend to after school. Furthermore, pupils from homes surrounded by bars complained about the noise from bars as disturbing their study, and those from houses that are so close together also complained about the noise of playing music as well as people laughing and chatting to be a disturbance to study. Findings from parents further revealed that children waste study time at home on gadgets such as phones and also those in homes that have internet use the facility for wrong reasons.

In reference to the second objective on academic interventions selected homes have put in place to enhance female pupil academic performance, study findings revealed that many parents control the television and play time of their children as a way to help them concentrate on their school work. Others stated they offer scaffolding to their children while others help wake their children up during the night in order for them to study. Other parents mentioned they help their children form study groups, adding on, many other parents according to the study reveal that, by signing their children's home work and checking their books every day, they motivate their children to work hard at school.

Furthermore, in reference to the last objective of the study which was to investigate the academic policies selected secondary schools have put in place to enhance academic performance of female pupils, the findings revealed that, the following policies exist in almost all the three selected secondary schools; the homework policy, absenteeism policy, open day policy, report a grade policy, guardian collection of pupil's report cards, prize giving ceremony and lastly the continuous professional development meetings. However much as almost all the three selected secondary schools have the above mentioned policies the frequency of administering the policies varied greatly and the low academic performance among female pupils is highly attributed to this variation in administering the policies. While other schools for instance administered homework weekly others administered monthly and never even marked pupils' books.

6.3 Recommendations

In reference to the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made to the Ministry of General Education, School Administrators and the pupils' parents:

1. The government through the Ministry of General Education should ensure all girls government secondary schools are well funded in order for them to have well stocked library facilities and adequate teaching and learning materials.
2. The government through the Ministry of General Education should ensure that when a school is upgraded even the infrastructure is developed this is so in order to cover for the changes made during the upgrading
3. The school administrators should ensure that open days are held termly, as a way of encouraging female pupils to work hard and also create an atmosphere where teachers can discuss the female pupil challenges with their parents face to face. This gives parents, an opportunity to check through the academic progress of the pupils.
4. The Ministry of General Education should use PTA meetings to encourage parents to take kin interest in their children's school work by keeping check on their notes as well as homework; this will stimulate pupils' internal motivation to work hard.

6.4 Proposed area of research

Since this study was conducted in Lusaka district, a similar study can be carried out in a different district in the rural areas of Zambia so as to compare the urban and rural factors leading to poor academic performance among female pupils.

Additionally, a similar study can be carried out with the inclusion of views of school administrators and Ministry of General Education officials such as the District Board Secretaries as well as standard officers, as they are privy to certain information.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Guides

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Sex of respondent: Qualification of respondent:

Number of years in service: tick where applicable

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 0-5 years | |
|-----------|--|

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| 6-10 years | |
| 11-15 years | |
| 16-20 years | |
| Above | |

1. How would you explain the meaning of pupil academic performance?
2. The female pupil academic performance of this school has been poor for the past three years, what are your views on the factors contributing to poor female pupil academic performance in this school?
3. How are teachers motivated to perform their duties with excellency in this school?
4. How would you explain the meaning of academic policy?
5. Explain in details the academic policies present in your school from the following academic policies:
 - a) Homework policy
 - b) Absenteeism policy
 - c) Open day policy
 - d) Repeat a grade policy
 - e) Pupil report card collection policy
 - f) Continuous professional development policy
6. Apart from the above listed, what other academic policies are present in your school?
Explain in details
7. What is involved in the academic policies present in your school? Explain in details
8. What is the frequency of administering the academic policies present in your school?
9. What challenges are faced when administering the academic policies present in this school?
10. How are best students awarded in this school?
11. In the past one year how many pupils have been expelled/suspended for missing class?
12. How do you think female pupil academic performance of this school can be improved?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Sex of respondent.....

Educational level of respondent.....

1. What is your occupation?
2. How do you understand pupil academic performance?
3. How does the academic performance of your child make you feel?
4. What are your views on the home factors leading to poor female pupil academic performance? Explain in details (probe further)
5. What is your understanding of the meaning of academic home interventions?

6. How do you think you can make better your child's academic performance? (probe further)
7. What are the home interventions you have put in place to enhance the academic performance of your child?

Appendix B: Focus group discussion guide for pupils

| Questions | Group 1 8 pupils from School A | Group 2 8 pupils from School B | Group 3 8 pupils from School C |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age range: 15-25 years 26-30 years Above? | | | |
| What is your understanding of pupil academic performance? | | | |
| What are your views on the school factors | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| affecting your academic performance? | | | |
| What are your views on the home factors leading to poor academic performance? | | | |
| What can be done at school to enhance female pupil academic performance? | | | |
| What can be done at home to enhance your academic performance? | | | |

Appendix C: Consent Form

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION**

CONSENT FORM

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO BE A RESEARCH RESPONDENT

I am a student at the University of Zambia doing a Master of Education degree in Educational Psychology. I am here to request for your consent to be one of my respondents to my research on **“School and Home factors contributing to poor academic performance Among female**

secondary school pupils in Lusaka District ”. This will help me come up with views from Teachers, Pupils and Parents on factors both School and Home accounting for the low number of female pupils getting full school certificates at grade twelve school leaving examinations in Girls’ only Government secondary schools.

Be assured that the information you will share with me will be confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Your consent to this request will greatly be appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

..... (Sign)

Likando, Sumbwanyambe – Researcher/Student

Consent by respondent

Having read or heard the information concerning this research, I hereby voluntarily consent to be one of the respondents. In this regard, I reserve the right to end the interview at any time and choose not to answer particular questions if necessary.

Name: Signature/date: