Persistent School Drop-outs Among Girls in Selected Secondary Schools of Nakonde District in Zambia

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 Master of Education in Educational Administration

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DECLARATION

I, Cecilia Chaponda (Sr.) do hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has not been presented in any other institution of learning for any academic credit.

Signature----------

Date ----------

APPROVAL

The University of Zambia approves this dissertation of Cecilia Chaponda as fulfilling part of the requirement for the award of the degree of master of education in Educational Administration.

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ABSTRACT

Most studies on school dropouts in Zambia have concentrated on Primary and Basic schools. Some studies and Ministry of Education reports have shown that in Zambia there are school dropouts among girls in both Primary and Secondary schools despite interventions and measures put in place by the Government. Furthermore, no study has been conducted in Nakonde District to find out why the school dropout rate among girls has persisted. This study aimed at establishing the factors contributing to persistent school dropout rates among girls in five (5) selected Secondary Schools of Nakonde District. The objectives of this study were; to establish the rate of dropouts among girls from grades 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015, to determine factors associated with persistent school drop-out rates among girls, to investigate whether the attitude of girls towards school led to persistent school drop-out among girls and to examine the views of the head-teachers, teachers and parents on persistent school drop-out among girls. The researcher adopted a descriptive case study design. The target population was 130. This consisted of five head teachers, 65 teachers and ten parents who were purposively selected while 50 pupils were selected by using Simple random sampling. Questionnaires, focus group discussions and semi structured interview instruments were used to collect data. Qualitative data were analysed thematically by categorizing related topics to the study, making themes, interpreting and summarizing them according to the research objectives. While quantitative data were analysed by using of SPSS. The findings of the study showed that there were still school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. The major factors were early marriages, poverty, pregnancies, business ventures, distance, prostitution and the negative attitude of the girls. Some recommendations from the research findings include: Government to construct at least two secondary boarding schools in Nakonde District, Re-entry Policy needs to be revised, Government should continue to sensitize parents and girls on the importance of education, to re-enforce the law of punishing parents and guardians who force school girls into early marriages, Government to work hand in hand with the community of Nakonde in protecting the girl-child from human trafficking activities, the Ministry of General Education also to look at other factors leading to school dropouts among girls, to establish colleges and skills training centers in Nakonde District so as to motivate girls to continue with education. The researcher has recommended for further studies on early marriages, the same study on persistent school dropouts among girls to be conducted in other border towns, comparison of the performance of female teachers in all girls' secondary schools and co-education schools, and to investigate the performance of young teachers between one and five years in the teaching service. The study concludes by encouraging the Government to intensify the Education Reforms enshrined in 'Educating Our Future' in order to reduce on school dropouts among girls in Zambia.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this Dissertation to the congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady Queen of Africa (SOLQA) (For the greater glory of God). I also dedicate it to my parents, beloved relatives, most appreciated my beloved cousin Chashi Chifuta and friends, my siblings and to all men and women of goodwill, living and dead, too numerous to mention, who have left footprints in my heart. It is because of them that l have pursued this Master's degree.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAMFED:	Campaign for Female Education
DEBS:	District Education Board Secretary
EFA:	Education for All
EU:	European Union
FAWE:	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FAWEZA:	Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia
MoE:	Ministry Of Education
MoGE:	Ministry Of General Education
MoER:	Ministry Of Education Report
MESVTEE:	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
NCES:	National Center for Education Statistics
SAARC:	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UN:	United Nations
UNODC:	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WCEFA:	World Conference on Education for All
WEF:	World Education Forum
ZANIS:	Zambia National Information Service

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter has presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives and research questions, significance of the study and a theoretical framework. The chapter concludes with a summary.

1.2 Background

Education is a very important aspect in developmental issues in both developed and developing countries. John Kennedy the 35th President of the United States described education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled , can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength of the nation (Mitchell, 2014). Education is, therefore, about improving and satisfying wants. It is not a preparation for life but life itself. It opens new horizons, extends freedoms and creates opportunities. As a means to other ends, it comes with a wide range of benefits for production, distribution, economic growth, health, democracy and poverty reduction (Watkins et al, 1999). This type of education is essential to both boys and girls as they are supposed to participate in socio-economic development of society.

The importance of girl child education cannot be overemphasized as the popular saying goes attributed to the Ghanaian scholar, Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir-Aggrey (1875-1927): “if you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a family [nation].” Women are the heart of most societies and they are very influential people in children’s lives. Hence, empowering them will enable them to realize the importance of sending their daughters to school. This adage is supported by President Barack Obama of the United States while addressing the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 when he remarked: “The sustainability and progress of all regions depends on the success of women across the globe”, (Stepp, 2012; 5). He further stated: “The future does not belong to those who bully women. It must be shaped by girls who go to school and those who stand for a world where our daughters can live their dreams just like our sons” (Stepp, 2012;5).

The World Conference on Education for All held in 1990 stated that every person has a right to be educated to his or her fullest potential regardless of gender. The World Education Forum (WEF) held in Dakar recommended that all children especially girls must have access to complete education of good quality by the year 2015 (WCEA, 1990). UNESCO (2009) found that in 1990, for every 100 girls of secondary school age, only 13 were in school. Those girls in third level, Grades nine and ten, only 1-5 out of 100 were in school. This situation showed that participation of women in the affairs of national development would be low as this required education. It was observed that countries with smaller gender gaps in education had better indicators of social welfare. For instance, lower fertility rate, lower infant mortality rate, improved nutrition, increased life expectancy and better opportunities for their children in the next generation are social benefits that would accrue from more females being provided with proper education (UNESCO, 2009).

The fourth World Conference for Women held in Beijing in 1995, identified the persistent discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights as one of the 12 critical areas of concern requiring urgent attention by governments and the international community. It was recognized that in many counties, both developed and developing, the status of girls was significantly worse than that of boys (UN, 2000). Furthermore, it was observed that at the secondary level of schooling the gender gap widened as a large number of girls dropped out of school earlier than boys, especially in rural areas or impoverished areas. It was observed that this dropout among girls was a serious concern which would affect the achievement of quality, equity and Education for All policy.

After the Beijing Conference, women's movement came up with some priorities. These included the call to readmit girls who dropped out of school because of pregnancy, and in the Jomtien Conference, gender, equity and equality were prioritized as the fifth Education for All (EFA) goal. Since then girl-child education has received a significant attention from 1994 to date. It embarked on upgrading and building more schools in order to alleviate gender disparities and promote equity by providing secondary schools (2000). FAWE (2009), argued that Education for All (EFA) and the education targets of the MDGs were put in place specifically to address concerns linked to education and development. Despite this, gender inequalities in education

persist in Sub-Saharan Africa to the detriment of girls. This is evidenced by disparities in access to school as well as in enrollment, retention, completion and performance rates. Since then FAWE seeks to address this through its advocacy and intervention work that aims to create conditions for the elimination of gender disparities and to promote girls education and development in order to reduce on dropouts among girls.

On the other hand, The World Bank being one of the many stakeholders of empowering girls and women, recognized that one way of doing this is educating them whether in terms of employability, income, health, or their own children's development depend on what they learn in school and addressing the multiple sources of disadvantages that girls and women face through a systematic, evidence based approach (World Bank, 2014).

Ananga (2011) observed that girls' education was beneficial as it contributed to both social and economic development, intergenerational education, social equity, and sustainability of development efforts. Hence, education is the shining beacon of light that can get girls out of poverty. It can also give them power to look after their families and help their communities. It can also give them the strength to be aware of the abuses and denounce them, for instance: emotional, economic, physical and sexual abuses.

Girl-child education has continued to lag behind in Africa. According to educational statistics in Africa, girls' secondary school enrolment accounts for only 57 % of the school age population compared with 75$^{\%}$ to boys (WCEFA, 1990). The WCE reports that:

> "S*tudy after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, lower infant and maternal mortality, improve nutrition and promote health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS than that one for girls" (WCEFA,1990;18).*

With the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 4, governments have pledged to eliminate gender disparities and ensure that every child is in school and learning by 2030. Yet one out of eight children between the ages of 6 and 15 are denied a basic education, and girls are the first to

be excluded. More than 63 million girls are out of school and data suggest that the number is rising (UNESCO Institute for Statistic, 2015; 3).

In the case of Zambia, girls' education had not been emphasized since the introduction of formal education in the country. There were inequalities in enrolments especially for girls and the majority dropped out of school. When missionaries introduced Western education in the late 19th century, men and adolescent boys were the majority admitted to schools. Snelson (1974) states that in 1936 the number of pupils who were enrolled in 73 mission schools was 4600 nearly all these were boys. He goes on to say that the parents were most reluctant to permit their daughters to attend school and the opposition to girls' education was deep-rooted and lasted for many years. In addition, Snelson (1990) prostrates that the girls themselves often saw little point in going to school. Instead they stayed home helping their mothers and preparing for marriage. Furthermore, the curriculum for women was different from the men's, women were offered cooking, baby care, hygiene, serving and nutrition while men had a head start and they were offered education that was superior to that offered to women. This trend continued well into the Independence period, when there were more school places for boys, and technical subjects were offered to boys only. In addition, there were, and still are more impediments for girls to access education. Some of these included; school location girls used to walk long distances that tired them out and exposed them to sexual abuse, poor sanitation that affected girls more than boys, community duties which kept girls out of school and diverted their attention from learning and pregnancy which made girls to be expelled from school and were not re-admitted into the school system. These factors and others made girls to drop out of school.

In 1926, new schools for girls were opened at Kayambi, Chilubula and Mabumbu; Chipembi was opened in 1927, and Mwenzo Girls' School with the aim of supporting girls' education (Snelson, 1990). Despite the construction of these schools girls' education lagged behind because their mothers and grandparents were only interested in marriages. Snelson (1990) states that the 1963 census revealed that illiteracy among women was due to the fact that, as girls, they were not allowed by their parents to take advantage of the educational opportunities which were open to them.

Kelly (1991) states that in the 1940s, some girl's secondary schools were built as one way of retaining girls in school, but he says that there was a high wastage among girls as they dropped out of school in the earlier grades and those who remained were taught elementary needlework, house wifely, cookery and mother craft.

The Ministry of Education (1996) observed that there were a lot of drop-outs among girls in both primary and secondary schools. This would affect women participation in socio-economic development of the nation as it was noted that women's education was a very important factor in development. Furthermore, the 'Educating Our Future' document emphasizes educational provision on access, equality and quality after discovering that there were a lot of drop-outs among girls in secondary schools which would affect women participation in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) as they were related to women education and empowerment. In addition, education is believed to be a key factor in the development and well-being of societies. Hence, priority should be given to the education of girls and women on account of the discrimination and marginalization they had suffered in the past (MoE, 1995).

It is in this vein that the government aimed at increasing high school provision, particularly by the establishment of additional facilities for girls in order to rectify the existing large gender imbalance in Grades 10 to 12, (MoE, 1996). However, despite government's interventions and other stakeholders to promote girl child education, persistent drop-out has still persisted in the country. For instance, in Muchinga Province where Nakonde district is found, it was reported by ZANIS that there was still school dropout among girls between 2013 and 2014, 289 girls dropped out of school due to pregnancies (Times of Zambia, 2014).. There were others who dropped school but other factors were not taken care of the concern was the number of pregnancies.as this was the harming situation in Nakonde.

Furthermore, the information of dropout according to the District Education Board Secretary's (DEBS) Office for the past three years was as follows;

Table 1: Shows rate of drop-out among girls in Nakonde District in the years 2013 and 2015

Year	Illness	Economic	Marriage	Expelled	Pregnancy	Orphaned	Deaths	Other
2013	16	228	65	03	72	15	08	230
2015	10	223	70	01	46	10	12	238
Total	26	451	135	04	118	25	20	468

Source: DEBS Office Nakonde Report (2015)

For 2014 school dropout rates was looked at in terms of pregnancies only and it was observed that the number of pregnancies was 116 and for 2015 was 109 dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. It was for this reason that this research endeavoured to establish why school drop-out among girls has persisted in Nakonde District.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

School dropout rates among girls in Zambia are still a big challenge (MoE, 1996). In order to address this challenge, the nation through the Ministry of Education and other educational stakeholders (e.g. FAWEZA and CAMFED) have introduced some interventions and policies such as the re-entry policy and the provision of scholarships to vulnerable pupils to address the problem after identifying some factors leading to school dropout among girls so as to retain them in school (MoE, 1996).

Despite all these efforts and commitments by the government to uphold female education in removing every obstacle that hinders girls' education, dropout rates among girls in secondary schools have continued in Zambia (Lumba, 2014). For example in 2014, 91 girls dropped out of school in Nakonde District due to pregnancies (Times of Zambia, 2014). And the information

from the DEBS Office Nakonde also indicated that there were still dropouts from school among girls in Nakonde District due to various reasons as it indicated in Table 1.

There seems to be a gap in terms of literature on the school drop-outs among girls in secondary schools and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no one had done a study on the school dropouts among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District. Hence, the need for this study.

1.4 The Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to establish factors associated with persistent school drop-out rates among girls in selected secondary schools of Nakonde District in Zambia

1.5 Objectives

The objectives of this study were

1. to determine factors associated with persistent school drop-out rates among girls
2. to establish the rate of dropouts among girls from grades 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015.
3. to investigate whether the attitude of girls towards school contributes to persistent school dropout, and
4. to examine the views of head-teachers, teachers and parents on school drop-outs among girls

1.6 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What factors are associated with persistent school drop-outs among girls?
2. What has been the rate of school drop-outs among girls from Grades 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015?
3. Do the attitudes of girls towards school lead to persistent school drop-out among girls?
4. What are the head-teachers, teachers and parents' views on school drop-out rates among girls?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge on the subject of persistent dropouts among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District in Muchinga Province. This study is very important to the nation in various ways especially to the Ministry of Education, Non-Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders interested in educational provision. It

may be helpful to them in policy formulation and find solutions to reduce on school dropout rates among girls in secondary schools.

The head teachers of the schools may benefit from this study as they will be able to formulate school based measures to address the issues of dropouts among girls in their schools and in the implementation of the policies and delivery of instruction.

The teachers may also benefit from this study in that different findings may help them in policy formulation and interventions to find solutions to persistent school dropouts among girls.

The findings may be helpful to secondary schools in developing policies to encourage girls to remain in school from Grade 1 up to Grade 12 levels thereby reducing on dropping out of school anyhow before completion of secondary education.

The findings may also be useful to parents especially in rural areas so that they may see the need to encourage their daughters to go to school.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the social feminism theory. This branch of feminism focuses upon both the private and public spheres of a woman's life and argues that liberation can only be achieved by working to end both the economic and cultural sources of women's oppression (Kramarae and Spender, 2000). Socialist feminism gained momentum during the 1960s and 1970s. Feminism argued that women were being suppressed by a male dominated society both in education and later life, and that the stereotypical views of women's part in society of becoming housewife, marrying early and having children contributed to low education levels and concentrate on household chores (Feminism and Education, 2014). Such beliefs discouraged girls from remaining in school and concentrate on their studies. For many years, what they valued was marriage and household works. It rejected radical feminism's main claim that patriarchy was the only or primary source of oppression of women but argued that economic dependence was the driving force of women's subjugation to men. It saw women's liberation as a necessary part of a larger guest for social, economic and political justice. The liberation of women or shift from oppression would only be achieved through women's empowerment and girl-child education

which in return would enable them to fully participate in socio-economic development of nations.

UN (2015) pointed out that when more women work, economies grow, or reduction in the gap between women's and men's labor force participation –results in faster economic growth. Gender inequalities in time use were still large and persistent in all countries. When paid and unpaid works were combined, women in developing countries worked more than men, with less time for education, leisure, political participation and self-care. Hart (1992) argued for equal valuing of knowledge, human intelligence, critical thinking and creativity, so that knowledge does not lead to further marginalization for certain groups. He further stated that women were seen as being down trodden as a result of their unequal standing in the work place and domestic sphere.

Some feminists have argued that women would only gain equality with men when institutions and social relationships are changed. Furthermore, education and work must be restructured in order to eliminate male domination and other oppressions (Enns, 1997). This theory supports equality for women and men. It was evolved from the ideas of Karl Marx, who blamed Capitalism for increasing patriarchy by concentrating power in the hands of a small number of men (Kimberly, 2015). Under the assumption that women are as intelligent as men, the feminist movement has been demanding equal opportunities for women and equal pay for equal work. Feminists have also turned their attention to the classroom, demanding equal education for both boys and girls as well as encouraging girls to go into technical, scientific, and professional fields that used to be the domain of males.

Feminists believe in expanding human choices, the idea that both women and men should be able to develop their human traits, even if those go against the status quo. If a woman wants to do mechanics, she should have every right and opportunity to do so. In addition, feminists argue that in eliminating gender stratification, proposes that laws and cultural norms that limit the income, educational and job opportunities for women should be opposed (Kimberly, 2015).

Socialist feminists proposed the complete eradication of all political, economic and social foundations of contemporary society. Specifically, education, work, sexuality and parenting must

undergo thorough transformations (Enns, 1997). Full participation in national development can only be achieved through encouraging girls' enrollment, retention and completion of their secondary education levels, in this way persistent school dropout rates among girls may be reduced. Social feminist advocate for broad change that affects society as a whole rather than on individual basis, they believe that the only way out of this situation for women is education because without it, they will remain oppressed and exploited in society.

There is a relationship between the argument of socialist Feminists and factors contributing to school dropout among girls, i.e. women think that their place is always marriage and concentrate on house chores so they do not see the importance of education which can enable them to participate in socio-economic development. In the same way girls tend to drop out of school due to early marriages, pregnancies and other factors instead of remaining in school and complete their secondary school level which may promote them to higher institutions of learning such as College and University levels in order to participate in the development of their societies. In order to empower women, girl-child education has to be promoted starting from their parents and all levels of learning in schools.

The researcher used this theory because it interrelated to the concepts that supported the study. Therefore, the theory provided the framework for interpreting the study, and reduced the researchers' dependence on personal experiences and assumptions. This theory had also helped to establish factors leading to persistent school dropout among girls in Nakonde District, the rate of dropout, the attitude of girls toward education and what views the head teachers, teachers, parents and pupils have on the school dropout rates among girls in the District.

1.9 Summary

In this chapter the background to the study was discussed. It highlighted some factors which contributed to girls' hindrance to education. The background of girls' education showed that from the beginning or introduction of formal education, girls were being discriminated and there were inequalities in enrollment more boys were enrolled than girls. Besides cultural beliefs made parents not to send their daughters to school as they believed that girls were supposed to get married.

The chapter introduced the study on the School dropout rates among girls globally and Zambia in particular. The chapter also presented the background to the problem, the problem statement, research objectives and questions, significance of the study and the theoretical perspectives applied to the study. The background to the study indicated that girls' education had not been emphasized since the introduction of formal education. There were inequalities in school enrollment and discrimination. In addition, parents were reluctant to send their daughters to school instead they were made to stay at home and concentrate on household chores. In some circumstances even those who were enrolled in schools dropped out due to marriage, housework, traditional and cultural practices among others. The next chapter provides a review of literature relevant to the study of school dropouts among girls globally, Africa as well as Zambia.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the background to the study. It focused on the problem of the statement, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, the significance of the study and theoretical framework. This chapter reviewed literature and other secondary sources of information related to some factors associated with persistent school drop-outs among girls in secondary schools. It has covered information from Global perspective, Africa and Zambia. It has also given definitions of terms.

2.2 Global Perspective

Worldwide, it was observed that girls' school attendance still lagged more severely behind than that of boys due to workload, both within and outside the household. It was pointed out that girls being exploited as child workers outnumber boys (UN, May 2000). UNESCO (2003) stated that a large number of girls were denied the right to education, but many who attended school received their education through under-resourced and over-crowded classrooms, poorly-trained or untrained teachers, emotional and physical abuse through bullying, insults, physical punishment and sexual harassment which influenced girls to drop-out of school. In America, it was observed that 28% of females left school because of pregnancy and 12 percent did so because of early marriage. In addition some girls dropped-out because they feared to be sexually harassed at school by both male teachers and boys (NCES, 2009). Furthermore, the same NCES (2009) reported that in 1972 the law was enacted in America to retain pregnant and parenting students in school, but in some schools this law was not followed. The proponents of readmission argued that if readmission was fully supported, girls' education could have a significant impact in lowering their drop-out rates.

In South Asia, girls' education is not valued as they believe that girls are trained for a role as a wife, mother, and daughter in law (Nisha, 2014). Furthermore, Nisha (2014) states that families also think that the cost of education both monetary and psychological is wasted on a girl as she will get married. Such ideas are seen as hindrance to girls' education. In contrast, Canada's school dropout rate has decreased among girls since the 1990s. Statistics Canada's Annual Labor

Force Survey (SCALFS, 2009) states that the rate of dropout decreased from nearly 17% to 9% in the 2008 and 2009 school year. This is in line with all European Union (EU) member states where men were more likely to leave education earlier than girls. For instance, in Cyprus, Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Portugal and Italy early leaving or drop out of school was twice as high as or more for men than for women (Europe educational statistics, 2015).

In Afghanistan, it was found that early marriage was the foremost cause of school dropout among girls. When girls reach puberty, parents consider it as time for them to be married and tend to arrange the marriage instead of continuing school, (Mansory, 2007). The author argues that early marriage forced girls to drop out of school and concentrated on motherhood works. In addition, in Tajikistan many girls attended only religious classes which provided relevant skills for future married life as skilled wives (Falkingham and Baschieri, 2006). As a result, girls' opted to drop out of school and got married.

In some societies, girls are not allowed to participate in sports as they are socially and culturally prohibited. For instance, Muslim women face restrictions by their culture and religion to participate in sports activities in school. Benn (2002) pointed out that Islam does not permit kit requirement outdoor games such as wearing short skirts, shorts and tee-shirts and public changing and showering. Such beliefs make girls drop out of school. In some societies social exclusion is an additional barrier to girls' going to school. Certain groups of girls are more likely to be excluded from school on the basis of caste, ethnicity, religion or disability. For example, in Nepal, Dalit girls are almost twice as likely to be excluded from as higher caste girls (DFID, 2005). In such societies people must understand that girls' education has long been recognized as a human right. There should be no discrimination of any kind because denying girls' opportunity to education is less like refusing to embrace national development.

2.3 Africa's Perspective

The research findings by UNICEF (2004) indicated that girls' dropout rate from school was higher than that of boys. The vast majority of school aged girls in the Sub-Saharan Africa are not in secondary schools. The report indicated that 83% of all girls out of school in the World live in the Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. For instance, in Pakistan, the

gross enrolment rate for girls in secondary education is 19 percent while in Niger, Tanzania and Chad it is only five percent (DFID, 2005).

Research by Ainsworth (2005) found that in Tanzania school drop-out increases in areas where distance to school is longer. For instance in rural areas there were no roads and vehicles; hence children had to walk for long distances through difficult terrain and dangerous environment which consequently affected their performance.

In Nigeria according to Malwa *et al* (2011), women still continue to be under-educated and the girl-child does not have the privilege of a good education. Boys and men continue to have the upper hand in education while the girl-child ends up being open to harassment and intimidation owing to the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society. Parents and guardians also do not see any obligation to be involved in girl-child education as they are usually given off for marriage immediately they attain puberty. All these practices in Nigeria make girls abandon school and concentrate on house work.

Many scholars have emphasized the importance of education. They say education brings freedom. Nelson Mandela said, "Freedom can't be achieved unless women have been emancipated" (Mokone, 2014). The argument is that there is need in African communities to stop seeing women as tools for sex and creatures that can only succeed at cooking or other traditional female activities. That has to stop if we really want development.

In some developing countries violence caused by civil wars, tribalism and other conflicts hinder girls' education especially in areas where there are constant conflicts as in the case of Rwanda and Burundi. It is estimated that about 90 percent of child-headed households are headed by girls who have been victims of violence in conflict situations. This promotes absenteeism due to fear of violence, eventually children dropout of school (DFID, 2005).

Chege and Sifuna (2006) observed that in some parts of Kenya parents tend to discourage their daughters from acquiring too much education for fear that they would have difficulties in finding educated husbands or being good wives. Hence girls drop-out of school and are taught chores like cooking, laundry and baby care by their mothers. Mokone (2014), argues that human beings are quick to talk about crime against humanity and then point their accusing fingers in any

direction that pleases them, but the reality is that it's also a crime against humanity to deprive the girl-child of an education.

Millicent *et al* (2013) postulate that among the Masai community of Tanzania and Kenya circumcision is said to be a rite of passage into womanhood. Once a girl is circumcised she drops out of school to get married as school is for children. This is because among the Masai, women are traditionally valued on the basis of how many children they can produce for their husbands but not by how educated or economically successful they might become. It was observed that in Kenya the estimated figures, between 10,000 and 13,000 girls' drop-out of school every year due to pregnancy (Osulah, 2007). The survey also discovered that enrolment rates were almost the same at lower primary school for both boys and girls but the gap started to widen in upper primary as more girls left school than boys in certain parts of the country.

In his study Okediji (2012) observed that drop-out rates of girls in Africa is still very high due to cultural practices, vulnerability to violence and issues of sexual harassment from male teachers and boys. On the other hand, UNESCO (2010) cited by Shahidual and Zehadui-Karim (2015), indicated that traditional values were stronger in rural areas in developing countries compared to urban areas and people often do not allow girls to leave home even for school. In addition some parents were reported to be reluctant to send their daughters to school though in primary schools because of belief that education and school could be a corrupting influence. In some communities, there was the view that in co-educational school as most primary schools, girls' morals would be corrupted because of the amount of time they spent with boys. Other views were; fear for the physical and sexual safety of girls in school due to cases of physical and sexual harassment and abuse from peers and teachers in the school. Where schools are situated long distances away, parents also worried about their daughters' safety while traveling to and from school, (Hari, 2014).

In many developing countries, child marriage is a major barrier to progress on girl's education. Over 60 percent of child brides have no formal education. Many girls are not in education because schools are inaccessible, expensive or because of the traditional role girls are expected to play in the household, or simply because parents do not see the value of education for their daughters. Adams (2013) in his study observed that the education of girls in Sub-Saharan Africa

in general and South Africa in particular has been impeded by the high rate of school dropout due to pregnancies and a young age at first sexual intercourse.

In Uganda it was noted that Pregnancy is the leading impediment (34%), followed by poverty (28%) and engagement in early marriage (11%). Girls who got pregnant while at school were often rejected at home and sent away. They were labeled as useless, a burden, perceived as sinful, abominable, outcasts, and a waste. They were denied assistance even when the family had the resources. This led to large school drop-outs among girls (Theresa and Sossau, 2008). According to Botswana Education Statistics (2007), pregnancy is the number one reason that accounts for girls' drop-out especially among girls from lower socio-economic families. Other factors include; students' ethnicity, home life, poor attendance, passive teaching methods and poor conditions created by large school drop-outs.

On the other hand, many parents and community members believed that a formal education was not necessary in order for girls to prepare for their expected roles as they can be learnt from their mothers and others in the community. Hence, many parents did not enroll their daughters in school or withdraw them before completion. Such attitudes deny girls an opportunity for formal education (Hari, 2014). Furthermore, Hari (2014) found that the negative attitude of many parents contributed to school dropouts among girls. The negative attitude was attributed to traditional socio-cultural beliefs regarding gender roles and abilities; women were expected to exclusively assume the roles of mother and wives, therefore, girls dropped out of school and concentrated on household works. But with change of time girls and women have been encouraged to participate in socio-economic activities in order to contribute to the well-being of their families and communities. Girls are being encouraged to do science and mathematics to enable them do works which were thought to be for boys.

Furthermore, Ondere (2012), found that discrimination, school environment and negative attitude of teachers as major factors led to dropout among girls in Kasalani District, Kenya.

However, the perceptions of girls and women towards education have remained the same in developing countries like Zambia. This is in line with (Hari, 2014), who observed that many people have difficulty in accepting that there is a need to equip women with the skills and

knowledge necessary, through education to enable them to take up their new roles and function effectively in the modern world. In addition, education enables girls to make their own decisions and influence their families positively. It saves and involves the lives and provides them with skills to contribute to their societies in economic, social and political development because they also have got the right to education just like boys.

Kabesiime (2007) found that in Uganda the teacher's attitude towards girls in the classroom was crucial for retention of girls in school. It was observed that teachers who were keen on encouraging equal participation of girls and boys in class increased the completion rate of girl' education in secondary schools. It was further discovered that teachers who had been sensitized to change any negative attitudes towards girls' education and adopted new methods to promote equality in classrooms had made a great impact in the performance and retention of girls in school.

Available literature indicates that pregnancy is the major cause of drop-out amongst adolescent girls in schools across the Sub-Saharan Africa. Because of this several countries have introduced readmission policy that allows teenage mothers to complete school. Many countries have focused their efforts to improve girls' access to education.

However, Grant and Hallman (2006) argued that the re-entry policy to school after pregnancy depends on some circumstances such as if they can get caregiver for their child and if they are able to share or relinquish child-care responsibilities. This shows that re-entry in many countries is not much higher as it was intended. That is why in African countries there are still many school dropouts among girls at some levels of learning institutions.

2.4 Zambia's Perspective

In Zambia dropping out of secondary school is a serious educational and social problem as it is a drawback to the national goals and the Vision 2030 goals, as the number of girls dropping out of school has been rising over the past decades due to pregnancies. For example, in 2011 there were 12,285 teenage pregnancies among school going pupils (MoER, 2014). Mwaba (2014), found that the main factors for girls failing to attain education was poverty and parents failing to pay school fees, pregnancy and early marriages. So girls were made to stay home while boys remained in school. She argued that these factors would make Zambia fail to achieve the MDGs

of 50/50 participation of women in decision-making. But this study was not done in Nakonde District and it was at Primary school level hence, it created a gap and attracted study in the secondary context in Nakonde.

Early marriages are another factor for many girls drop out of school in Zambia especially when families wish for the social and economic benefits the marriage brings. Besides, girls are also more likely to drop out of school due to their domestic responsibilities and are often discriminated against in terms of quality education they are sent to (DFID, 2005).

The Ministry of Education has introduced some interventions and policies such as the re-entry policy after identifying some factors that lead to school drop-outs among girls so as to retain them in school (MoE, 1996). On the other hand, since 2010 FAWEZA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE) has made a long-term commitment to involve the local Community Action Groups (CAPs) in the decision-making process in school as they are related to advancement of the Zambian child in education. These groups support girls' retention, performance and completion in the education sector (FAWEZA, 2014). Furthermore, in the period 2013 to 2014, FAWEZA, with funding support from UNICEF working with CAGs managed to reach out to 51,000 out of school children and retrieved a total of 2900 girls who reclaimed their school after dropping out among them were also teen mothers from Muchinga and Western Provinces. In addition, in 2012 there were 14,849 pregnancies only 6,000 were readmitted to school and in 2013, out of 14,928 only 5,829 were readmitted (FAWEZA, 2014).

In addition, the MESVTEE Statistical Bulletin (2013) indicates that despite the re-entry policy being in place for close to the 18 years, there are still less than 50% girls being re-entered after giving birth. The table below shows the number of pregnancies and re-entered number after birth from 2009 to 2013.

Table 2: Number of pregnancy and re-entered

Years	No. Pregnancy	No. Re-entered
2009	15,497	6,679
2010	15,586	6,067
2011	15,707	6,030
2012	14,849	6,001
2013	14,928	5,829

Source: MESVTEE Statistical Bulletin (2013: 3)

On the other hand, MoE (2006, 2007) pointed to the existence of stigmatization of pupils who are mothers, lack of support from both teachers and parents and a sense of shame and lost status among the girls themselves as factors hindering teenage mothers from returning to school.

The available literature shows that, in Zambia many studies related to school drop-outs among girls were concentrated on Basic and primary schools; little has been done on secondary level of education. It should be noted that drop-outs among girls is still a challenge in both Primary and secondary schools of Zambia (Mwale, 2014) and this situation needs attention if the country wishes women to participate in economic, social and political development in order to achieve the 2030 vision.

According to the above literature, pregnancy is the major factor leading to drop-out rates among girls worldwide. Many countries have introduced the re-entry policy in order to make girls complete their secondary school education but the drop-out rate has continued. For instance, in Muchinga Province where Nakonde District is found, during the visit of former First Lady Kaseba, ZANIS on 14th August 2014 reported that 289 school girls fell pregnant in 2014.

The unaddressed problem that needs to be answered is the continued school drop-out rate among girls despite measures put in place to address the situation. This entails that there are other factors which are yet to be known that lead to this persistent school drop-outs among girls. This was supported by Mensch and Hoyd (2008) who argued that school girls' pregnancy only accounts for about 20% of school dropouts among female adolescents in the Sub-Saharan African Region. They further said that the circumstances that predispose young women to have

premarital sex or to marry early, such as poverty, poor performance and other factors may themselves lead students to drop out of school.

The study by Ondere (2012) was in the Kenyan context, The researcher recommended for further studies in other districts in order to find other factors for school dropout among girls. However, this study sought to establish factors contributing to secondary school dropout among girls in Nakonde District.

The current researcher has observed that the study by Ondere was purely quantitative in methodology and was little supported by qualitative input. Therefore, the current study employs a mixed research approach. Ondere had no room for probing in order to have in-depth information because the nature of study required a lot of interaction between respondents and researcher in order to establish factors leading to dropout among girls. Hence, the present researcher decided to use also interview guide for teachers and parents and focus group discussion for students.

Furthermore, a number of researchers concentrated on school dropout among girls in Basic and Primary schools. Little has been done on secondary school level this encouraged the researcher to conduct a study on school dropout among girls in Secondary schools of Nakonde District. In addition, the present researcher did not adopt the theories of institutional perspective development by Rumberger (2004) used by the previous researcher because it focused on the characteristics of school, policies and practices instead opted to use Social Feminism which encourages equality for both men and women. It also advocates for change which can only be achieved through change of institutions such as education in this way dropout among girls can be reduced.

Besides, factors leading to drop-out of school in other areas may be different from the ones in Nakonde district and this was what this study sought to establish.

2.5 Definition of Terms

Drop-out: refers to pupils who stop school from at any given grade level before completion of Grade 12

Likert Scale: refers to attitude scale in questionnaires based on scaling from 1-5.

Rate: the number of pupils in percentage who stop school before completion (of Grade 12)

Factors: things that contribute to someone to leaves school before completion of education Cycles

Persistent: process of continuous occurrence of school for a long period of time

Feminism uncovers the ways in which social and cultural factors, assumptions and structures are shaped by gender

2.6 Summary

The chapter presented some literature available on school dropouts especially among girls globally, in Africa and Zambia. The main focus was to look at factors leading to persistent school dropouts among girls in secondary schools. The available literature has confirmed that dropout of school among girls worldwide is still a challenge. The factors leading to the school dropout differ from one country to another depending on their cultural beliefs. According to the literature, the outstanding factor leading to school dropout among girls is pregnancy followed by early marriages. In order to address the school dropout rates among girls, some policies like re-entry were introduced so as to encourage young mothers to continue with school after delivery. But some reviewed literature has indicated that many girls do not go back to school after delivery. Furthermore, dropout rates among girls have continued despite the policies and interventions to curb this challenge in secondary schools. This scenario attracted the current researcher to embark on the research to establish other factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in Nakonde District of Muchinga Province. The next chapter presents the methodology for the study. This has described research design, population, instruments, sample size, data collection and data analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed literature relevant to the study. It discussed the factors leading to school dropouts among girls in three perspectives that is, Global, Africa and Zambia. However, this chapter presents the methodology used in the study. It further describes the research design, target population, sampling techniques, study sample and procedure, data collection methods and instruments, data analysis techniques, validity testing and ethical considerations.

Methodology is a way to find out the result of a given problem on a specific matter and it acts as the nerve center of the entire research (Guba, 1981).The methodology was appropriate because it assisted the researcher to produce information on persistent school dropout among girls, which is of interest to policy makers and educationalists in Zambia.

3.2 Research Design

This study used a descriptive case study. Descriptive case studies set to describe the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question. Taylor etal (2008) define case studies as those research projects, which attempt to explain holistically the dynamics of a certain historical period of a particular social unit. It excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. This method ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. In order to have in-depth information on persistent school drop-outs among girls both qualitative and quantitative instruments were used to collect data. By including both quantitative and qualitative data, case study helps explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation (Tellis, 1997). The researcher opted for this in recognition of the fact that the strength of one approach makes up for the weaknesses of the other approach (Creswell, 2009).

Preference was given to Qualitative instruments as it was found to be the most appropriate for this study. It further allows for detailed investigation of issues, deals with human experience and is suited for sensitive issues that might require probing for more information (Guba, 1981).

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches had inherent strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, Onwuegbuzie and Frels (2013) argued that an increasing number of pragmatic researchers were advocating for conducting studies that utilized both qualitative and quantitative techniques within the same inquiry.

3.3 Target Population

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) a population is a group of individuals, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement. Therefore, this study comprised the head teachers, teachers, pupils and parents in five selected public secondary schools of Nakonde District. The target population contained members of a group that the researcher was interested in studying because they all had significant traits in common. The target population for this study was the current pupils in selected secondary schools.

Sample Size

The population sample was 130 respondents to represent the population under the study area. These were 5 head-teachers, 65 teachers (13 from each school), 50 pupils (10 from each school) and 10 parents in Nakonde District to represent the population under study. The sample size criteria under the quantitative approach were done through the use of published tables which provided the sample size for a given set of criteria. These sample sizes have been calculated according to three combinations which are precision, confidence and variability levels (Singh and Masuku , 2012).

Sampling Procedure

Five secondary schools out of twelve were selected. Since it was simple random sampling, to ensure that there was no biasness names of schools were written on small pieces of papers and were put in a box and then the required numbers of schools were picked. The head-teachers and Grade teachers were purposively selected because of the position they held in schools. Parents, who had children in schools were purposively selected. As Ball (1990) notes, purposive sampling is used to access knowledgeable people who have in-depth knowledge about particular

issues by virtue of their professional role. While Pupils from Grades 10 to 12 were selected by using simple random sampling. Class lists were appropriate for this method, Kombo and Tromp (2006; 78) state that the researcher may simply obtain a list of residents, and then using a sequence of numbers from a random numbers table may select say 10% or 20%, or some portion of names on the list.

3.4 Research Instruments and Data Collection

The research instruments are tools that are used to collect the required data. The research instruments that were used to collect data included: questionnaires, focus group discussions and in-depth semi-structured Interview guide. From literature review, it was discovered that many researchers had used these tools to collect data and they proved to be efficient. Therefore, these three research instruments were selected.

In this study, semi-structured interview guide, focus group discussion and structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. These methods are cheap and quick as data collection can be done in the shortest period of time. Questionnaires were used by teachers, focus group discussion by pupils and semi-structured interview guide by head teachers, teachers and parents.

Primary data were collected through face to face interviews with the respondents during interviews. During interviews the researcher took some notes. The interviews were used to get ideas and views from head teachers, teachers and parents on the factors that led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde. Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data from pupils and questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers. On the other hand secondary data were obtained from reports, internet, dissertations, theses, books in the libraries and documents from DEBS Office in Nakonde. The data collection was done according to stipulated time.

i Interview guide

Interview schedule is a written list of questions or topics that need to be covered by the interview (Kasonde, 2013). In this study interview guide were employed. It consisted of open-ended questions which were used to collect in-depth information from the parents and head teachers.

This instrument was used for data collection because it enabled participants to discuss their interpretation of the world in which they lived, and to express how they regarded situations from their own point of view. This method is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multisensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. Interviews have a higher response rate because respondents become more involved and hence motivated. At the same time, they handle more difficult and open ended questions (Cohen, et al, 2007).

The interview guide for parents sought to solicit information on factors contributing to school dropout among girls, how dropouts among girls affected their livelihood and community development, the attitude of girls and parents towards education and measures to curb school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District.

The interview guide for head teachers sought to solicit information on factors leading to school dropout among girls, rates of dropouts for the past three years, attitude of girls towards education, their views and what measures the schools had been put in place in order to address the issues of dropout among girls in their schools.

ii **Questionnaire:**

The questionnaire was used to collect datum from teachers. Orodho (2009), recommended the questionnaire as an effective instrument that had the ability to collect a large amount of data in a reasonably quick space of time. In addition, the questionnaire has privacy. This encouraged respondents to express themselves freely. The instrument comprised closed questions. Confidentiality was upheld and it saved time.

The questionnaire for teachers sought to establish information from the respondents on the causes of persistent school dropouts among girls, the rate of dropout and the attitude of teachers towards girls. The records on school dropout rates were collected from the DEBS Office in Nakonde District from the period 2013 to 2015 Nakonde District.

iii **Focus Group Discussion**:

Focus groups are a form of group interview, though not in the sense of a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group (Cohen et al, 2007). Under this instrument data collection depends on the interaction within the group that discusses a topic supplied by the researcher. In

this study, it was used to collect data from the pupils in the selected schools. The instrument comprised open-ended questions and sought to solicit information on factors leading to persistent school dropout, attitude of girls towards school and their views on school dropouts. This enabled the researcher to generate and evaluate data from different subgroups of a population under study area. It further allowed gathering data on attitudes, values and opinions (Bailey, 1994, Robson, 2002).

Pilot Research Instruments

The research instruments were tested before conducting the actual study. Gay and Alvasian (2011) states that pilot testing is the practice of pre-testing research instruments and their usefulness for identifying questions that are vague, with unclear directions and insufficient space to write the responses. A sample of two schools, two head teachers, 6 teachers, 6 parents and 10 pupils were selected. . The schools where pilot research was conducted did not participate in the actual study.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) recommend at least picking 10 participants. This helps to clarify the questions, ease difficult questions, eliminate ambiguities and identify redundancies (Mugenda, 2011). Pre-testing also helped to determine the time to be taken to answer the questionnaire so that the research would not disrupt the normal running of the school. This exercise was important as it helped the researcher to assess the validity of questions in the instruments.

3.5 Data Analysis

Thematic analyses were used in qualitative data after coding and arranging it in themes while quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages. Sandelowski (2000) states that in some qualitative descriptive studies ‘Quasi-Statistical analysis methods are added using numbers to summarize data with descriptive statistics. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enhance the analysis where Computer generated tables of frequencies and percentages which were used in describing the variables in terms of tables, graphs and pie charts.

In analyzing qualitative data the researcher employed the method of organizing the analysis by research questions. Cohen et al. (2013) advised that this was a very useful way of organizing data, as it drew together all the relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher and preserved the coherence of the material. It returned the reader to the driving concerns of the research, thereby 'closing the loop' on the research questions that typically were raised in the early part of an enquiry. In this approach all the relevant data from various data streams (interviews, questionnaires among others) were collaborated to provide a collective answer to a research question.

3.6 Limitations:

Since the study was conducted in Nakonde District, the results of the findings may not be generalised to other districts of Zambia as there may be other factors leading to persistent drop-outs among girls in secondary schools. Some head teachers were not comfortable to give the records of school dropout rates. Instead the researcher obtained the records that showed school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District from three schools and DEBS Office.

3.7 Delimitations

The study was conducted in five selected secondary schools of Nakonde District in Muchinga Province.

3.8 Ethical issues

Mugenda (2011) encouraged ethical issues to be considered in the planning of the study, data collection and analysis, dissemination and use of the results. The principle of confidentiality was adhered to as much as possible in the research. All the questionnaires contained a statement to guarantee confidentiality in bold letters treated as confidential.

Respondents were assured of confidentiality and that the findings of this study were for academic purposes only. The Forms of Consent were collected from the respondents. Permission was sought from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee, District Education Board Secretary of Nakonde and head teachers of schools where the study was conducted.

In order to maintain confidentiality during the research, respond names were not mentioned and they were told not to write their names on the questionnaire. Nachmias and Nachmais (1992),

cited by Cohen, et al (2007) pointed out that the essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity and this can be achieved by using aliases, codes for identifying people and password-protected files.

3.9 Summary

The chapter presented the methodology used during data collection and the justification for the method used. It described the research design, target population, data collection instruments, and procedure and data analysis among others. The chapter also explained in details the meanings of the research instruments and how they were being used by the respondents in the data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology used in the study. This study employed a descriptive case study design. Both quantitative and qualitative instruments were used to collect the primary data in the field. It further discussed sample size, sampling procedure, research instrument used, limitation and ethical issues. This chapter presents the findings of the study which aimed at establishing factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in selected secondary schools of Nakonde District. It is organised into two major sections. The first section describes the demographic information of the respondents that participated in the answering of the questionnaire and the second section presents the findings of the whole study. The findings are presented according to the research questions and some emerging themes. The presentation starts with the responses from the questionnaires of 59 teachers followed by the in-depth information from five teachers, five head teachers, 50 pupils and those from ten parents.

4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

Teachers were asked to indicate their sex. Figure 1 below shows the SEX of the respondents who participated in answering the questionnaire.

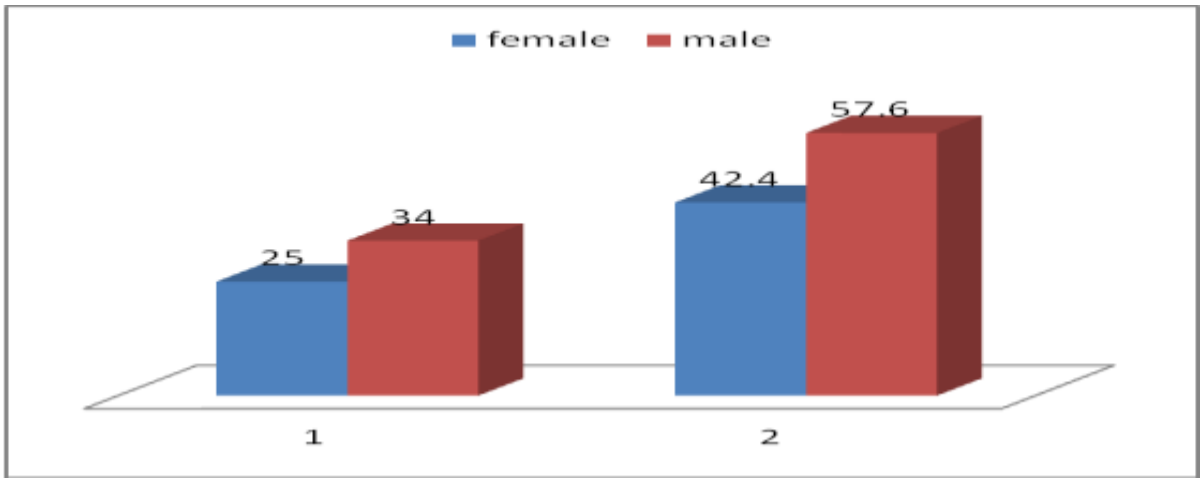

Figure 1: Sex of respondents

The table above shows that the majority of the respondents were males (34) representing 57.6 % while female respondents were 25 representing 42.4%.

The number of questionnaires distributed were 60 but 59 were returned which was satisfactory to make conclusions on the target population.

Regarding the age, respondents were asked to indicate their age group. Figure 2 shows the age of the respondents.

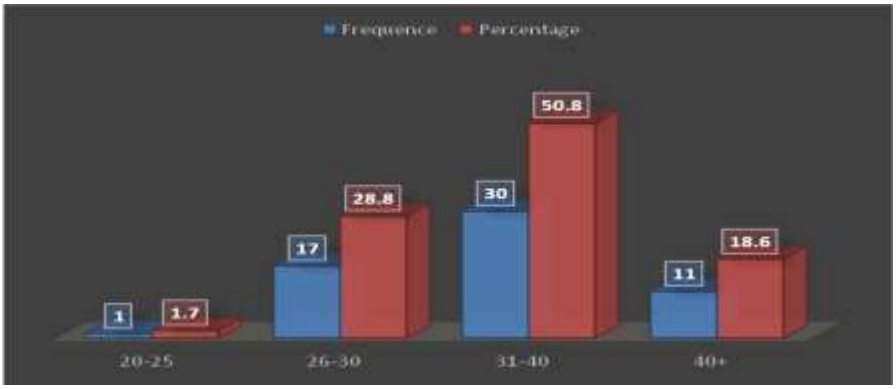

Figure 2: Age group of respondents

The following responses were given as it is shown in figure 2 above. From the 59 teachers who participated in answering the questionnaires in this study most of them were in the range of between 31-40 years (30 in number) representing 50.8% followed by 17 with the range of 26-30 years representing 28.8% then those with 40 years and above were 11 representing 18.6% and the least was 1 in the range of 20-25 representing 1.7%

Table 3: Qualification of respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	2	3.4
Diploma	34	57.6
Degree	23	39.0
Total	59	100.0

Source: Field research (2016)

The respondents were also asked to indicate their levels of education. Table 1 above shows that the majority (34) 57.6% respondents had a diploma, followed by 23 (39.6%) with degree and 2 (3.4) respondents had a certificate. Therefore, the level of education was satisfactory to answer the questions accordingly.

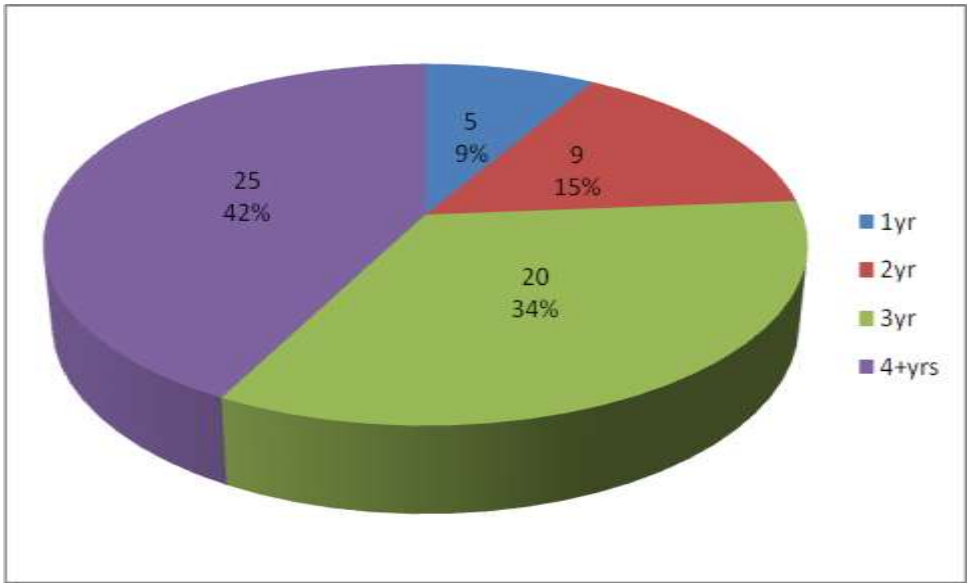

Figure 3: Period worked in a school by respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they had been working at their respective schools. As it can be seen in figure 3 above, it shows that 25 (42.4%) respondents had worked for 4 years in their schools, followed by 20 (33.9%) who had worked for 3 years while 9 (15.3%) respondents had worked for 2 years and 5 (8.5%) had worked for 1 year in their schools. The majority were those who worked for more than 3 years, hence, this was satisfactory to know the dropouts for the past three years in their schools.

4.3 Factors that led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District

The first objective sought to establish factors that led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. In response to this objective the following themes emerged; early marriage, pregnancy, poverty, business ventures, prostitution, cultural beliefs, distance, human trafficking and clearing and forwarding.

Early Marriage

In response to the first objective, 59 teachers participated in this study by answering the questionnaire. Under the first objective teachers were asked to indicate factors led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District

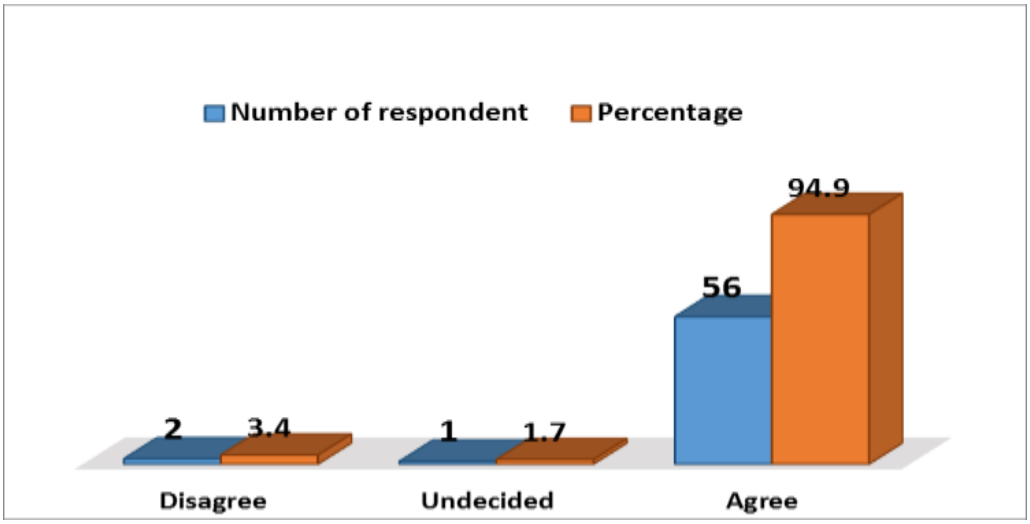

Figure 4: Whether early marriage led to persistent school dropouts

Figure 4, above shows the responses. Early marriage was indicated as the main factor contributing to school dropouts among girls. 56 respondents representing 95% agreed followed by 2 respondents representing 3 % who disagreed that early marriages did not lead to school dropouts while 1 respondent representing 2 % was undecided whether or not early marriages contributed to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District.

Early Pregnancy

Early pregnancy was observed as the second factor that contributed to school drop-out among girls in Nakonde District. Teachers were asked to indicate whether pregnancy among school girls led to persistent school drop-outs.

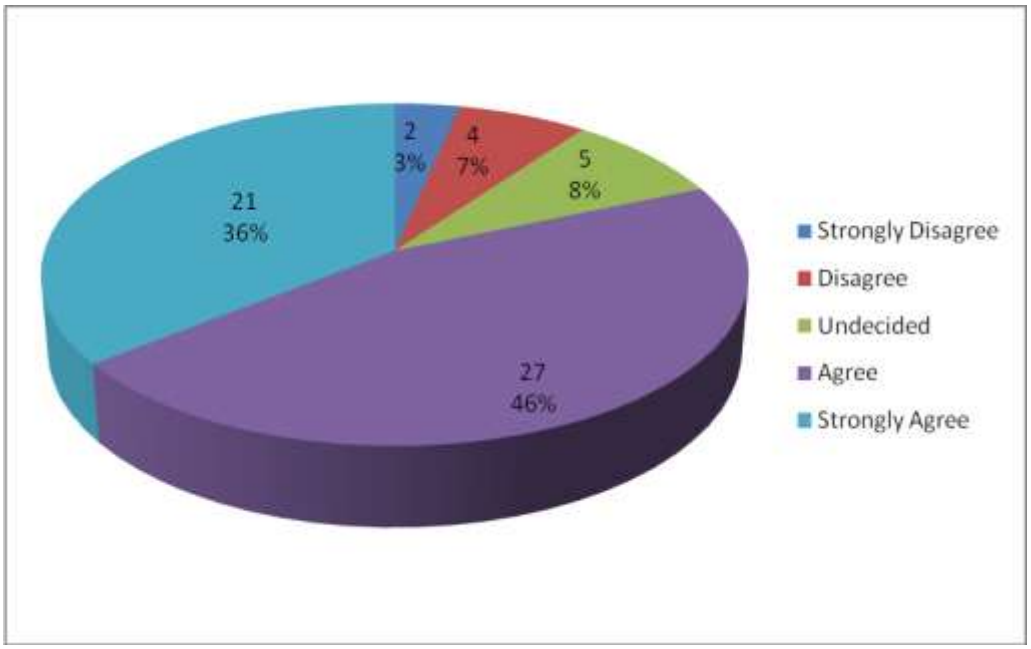

Figure 5: Whether pregnancy led to persistent school dropouts

According to figure 5 the majority of the teachers 27(46%) agreed that pregnancy led to dropouts among girls, 21 (36%) strongly agreed, 5 (8%) respondents were undecided, 4 (7%) disagreed while 2 (3%) strongly disagreed. These results clearly show that pregnancy was also a contributing factor.

It was discovered during the interviews with the teachers that in Nakonde there were many aspects that contributed to teenage pregnancies. Almost all the respondents who participated in this study complained bitterly that their children were being spoiled by the majority of the clearing and forwarding agents at the border. School girls were attracted by these agents by giving them a lot of money at the end of the day girls were pregnant and were not even married.

Cultural beliefs and Practices

The teachers were asked to indicate whether cultural beliefs contributed to persistent school drop-outs among girls in Nakonde District.

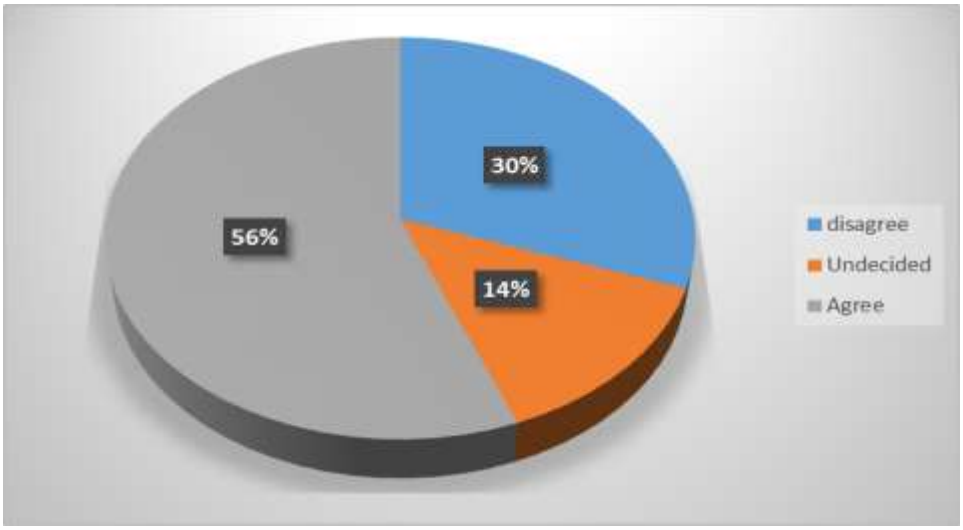

Figure 6: Whether cultural beliefs and practices led to persistent dropouts

Figure 6 above shows the responses from the respondents. The majority of the respondents 33 (56%) agreed that cultural beliefs contributed to dropout while 18 (30%) respondents disagreed and 8 (14%) respondents were undecided.

Business and Trade

Business and trade were the other factors which were revealed as hindrances to girls' education in Nakonde. As regards to business and trade, teachers were asked to indicate whether or not business and trade led to school dropout among girls

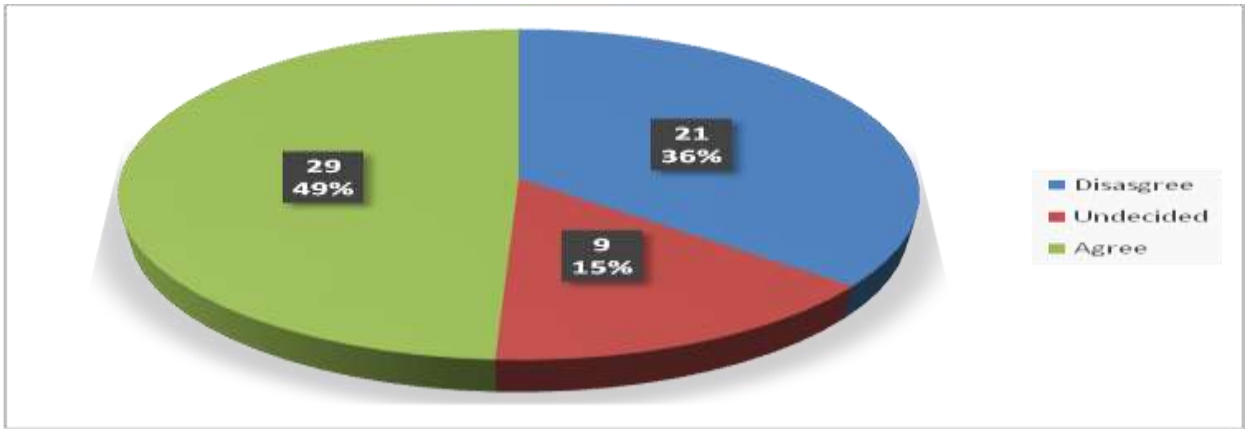

Figure 7: Whether or not involvement in business and trade led to drop outs.

In response to this question figure 7 shows the responses from 59 teachers who participated. The majority 28(49%) respondents indicated that business contributed whereas 21(36%) did not and 9 (15%) were undecided.

It was also observed that the border town had highly influenced girls' education in a number of ways. For example many school girls involved themselves in business of *'ifyamba'* (marijuana) as they believed that it could give them a lot of money.

Distance

Distance from home to school was another impediment for girls' education in Nakonde. Teachers were asked to indicate whether distances from home to school contributed to school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District.

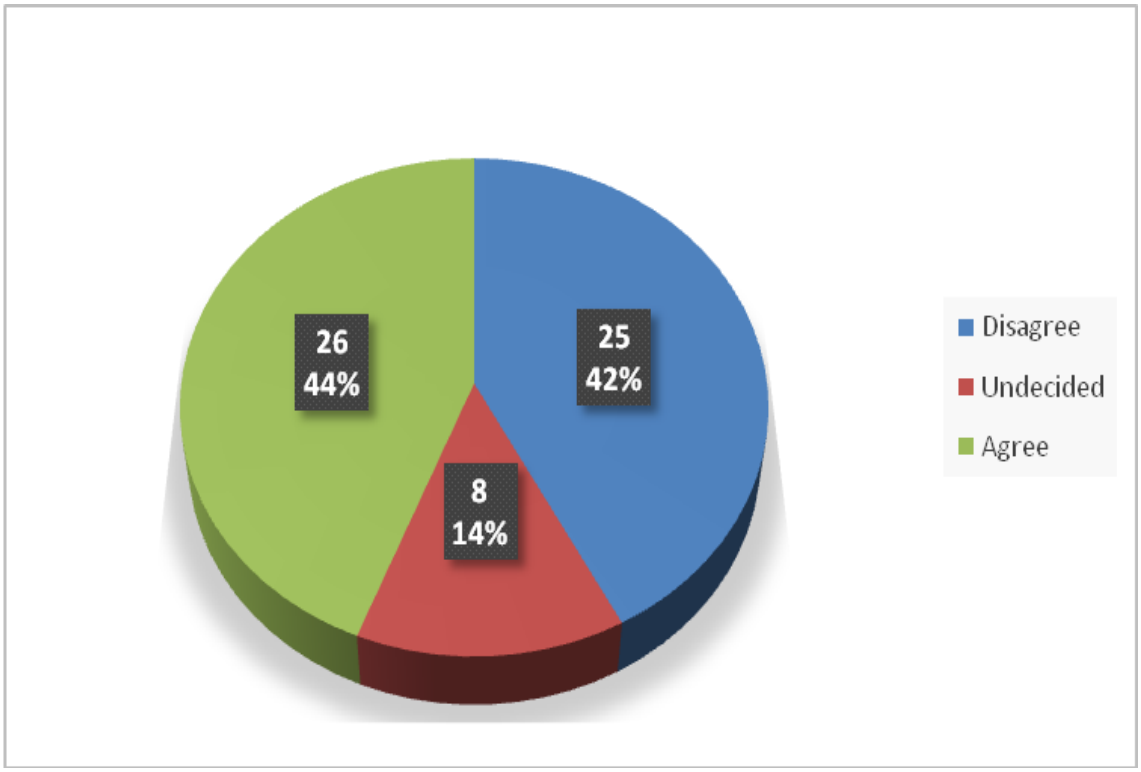

Figure 8: Whether distance from school led to persistent dropout

It was noted that some secondary schools were located in far off places and a question was asked as to whether or not distance from school led to persistent dropouts among girls in Nakonde as it

is shown in figure 8. Most of the respondents 26 (44%) agreed, 25(42%) did not agree while the least 8 (14%) remained silent.

Since Nakonde is a border town, the researcher wanted to know if there was human trafficking and whether it affected girls' education.

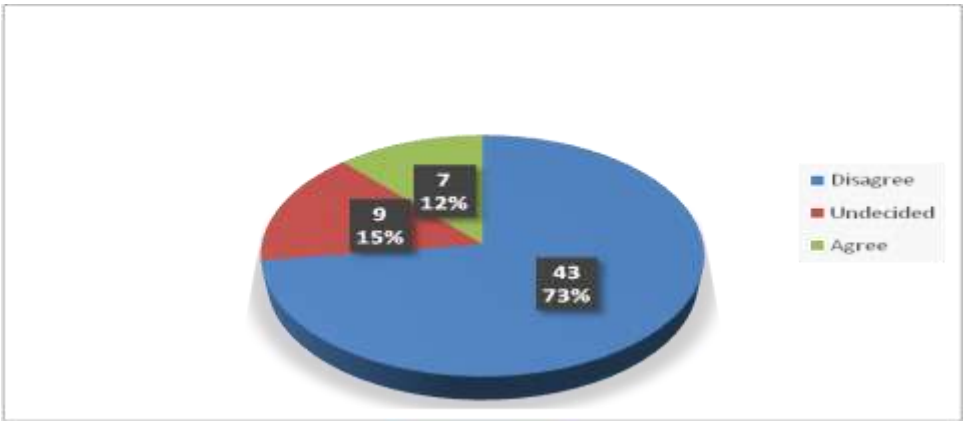

Figure 9: Whether or not human trafficking led to school dropout

Teachers were asked to indicate whether or not human trafficking led to school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. Figure 9 shows that 43 (73%) of respondents disagreed, 9 (15%) were undecided and only 7 (12%) agreed that there was human trafficking in Nakonde District.

Poverty was revealed as another hindrance to girls' education. Therefore, teachers were asked to indicate whether poverty led to school drop outs among girls.

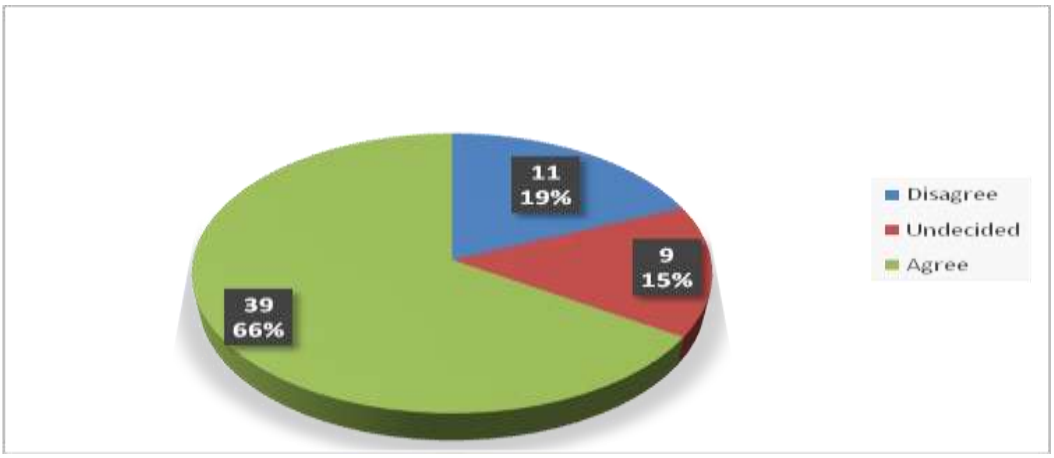

Figure 10: Whether or not poverty led to school dropout

Figure 10 shows respondents' views as regards to whether or not poverty led to persistent school dropouts. Figure 10 above indicates that 39 (66%) of respondents agreed that poverty contributed to school dropouts among girls while 11 (19%) disagreed and 9 (15%) were undecided.

With regards to prostitution, teachers were further asked to state whether or not prostitution contributed to school dropout among girls in Nakonde. The responses were given as it shown in the figure below.

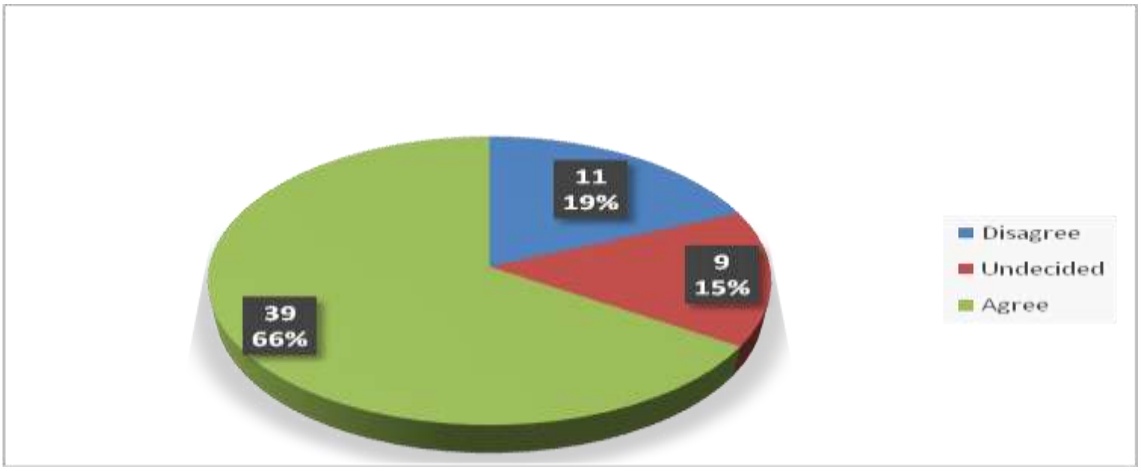

Figure 11: Whether or not prostitution led to school dropout

Figure 11 above shows that the majority of the 30 respondents representing (51%) agreed that prostitution led to school dropout while 19 representing (32%) disagreed and 10 representing (17%) were undecided.

4.4 To establish the Rate of dropout among girls from Grade 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015

This was the second objective of the study

Teachers were asked to indicate whether the school dropout rates among girls in the period 2013 to 2015 was high. Figure 12 below shows the responses.

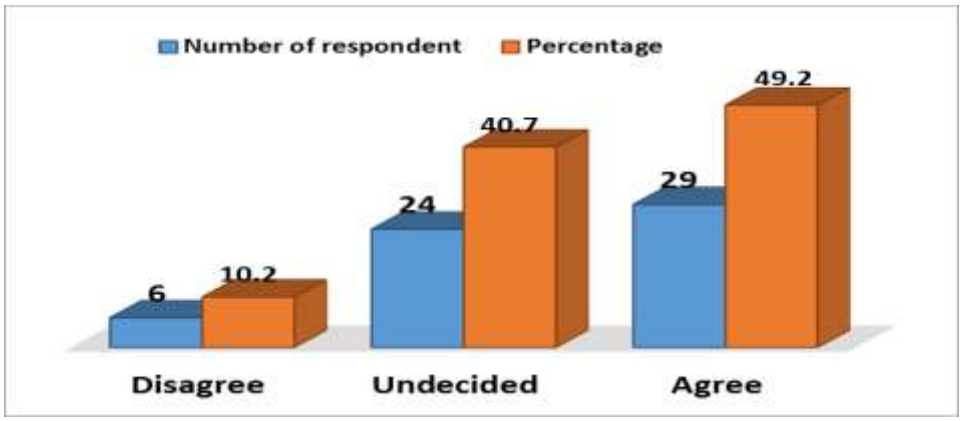

Figure 12: Shows the rates of school dropout from 2013 to 2015.

Figure 12 above shows that 29 respondents representing 49.2% agreed that the rate of dropouts from 2013 to 2015 was high whereas 24 respondents representing 40.7% were undecided and 6 respondents representing 10.2% disagreed that the dropout rates during that period was high.

The researcher further asked the teachers about the Grade in which majority of pupils dropped out of school (in their schools). The table below shows the responses.

Table 4: Shows the Grade where dropout was high

Grade	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 10	16	27
Grade 11	23	39
Grade 12	20	34

Source: Field research (2015)

Table 4 above indicates that 23 (39%) the respondents said that the rate was high in grade 11 while 20 (34%) said that the dropout rate was high in grade 12 and the least 16 (27%) respondents indicated that the dropout rates were high in grade 10. This suggests that the school dropout rates among girls were high when they reached grade 11 level.

The researcher also wanted to find out whether or not the rate of dropouts was high among the day scholars in Nakonde District. Thus, teachers were asked to indicate whether or not the dropouts were high among the day scholars. The responses are shown in figure 13 below,

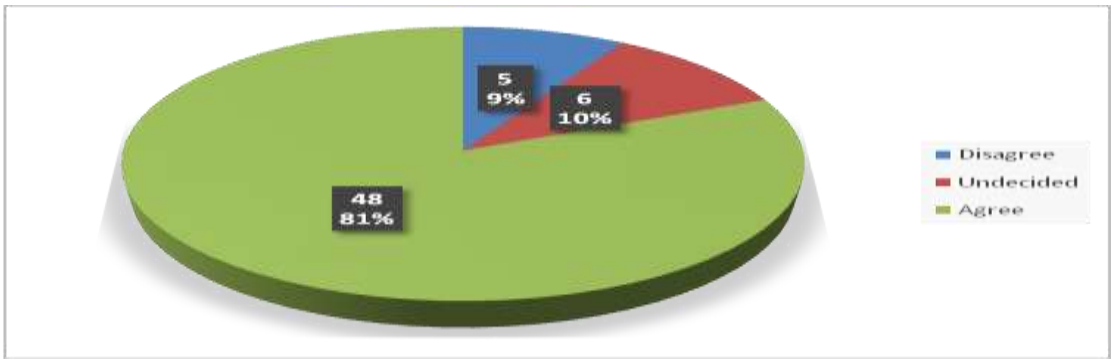

Figure 13: Whether or not the rate of dropout was high among the day scholars.

Figure 13 above shows that the majority 48 (81%) respondents agreed that the rate of dropouts was high among the day scholars, while 6 (10%) were undecided and 5 (9%) disagreed.

In addition, the respondents were asked to indicate whether or not the rate of dropouts was high in co-education schools.

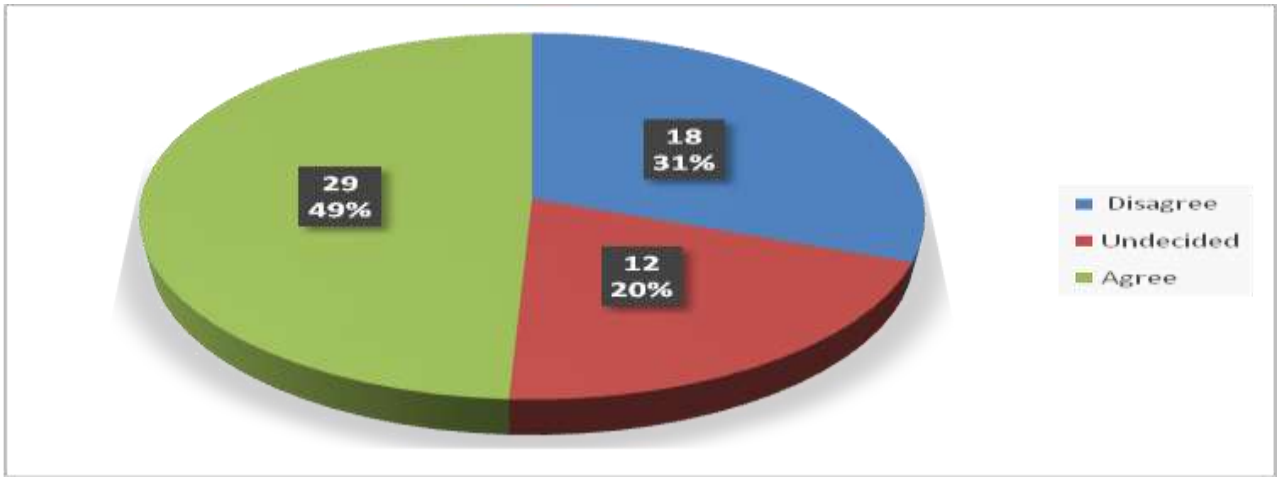

Figure 14: Whether or not the rates of dropout was high in co-education schools

29 (49%) teachers indicated that the rates of dropout was high in co-education schools whereas18 (31%) disagreed and 12 (20%) were undecided as shown in figure 14 above.

4.5 The third objective was to determine the attitude of girls towards education

With regards to girls' attitude, teachers were asked to indicate whether or not the attitude of girls led to persistent school dropouts among girls.

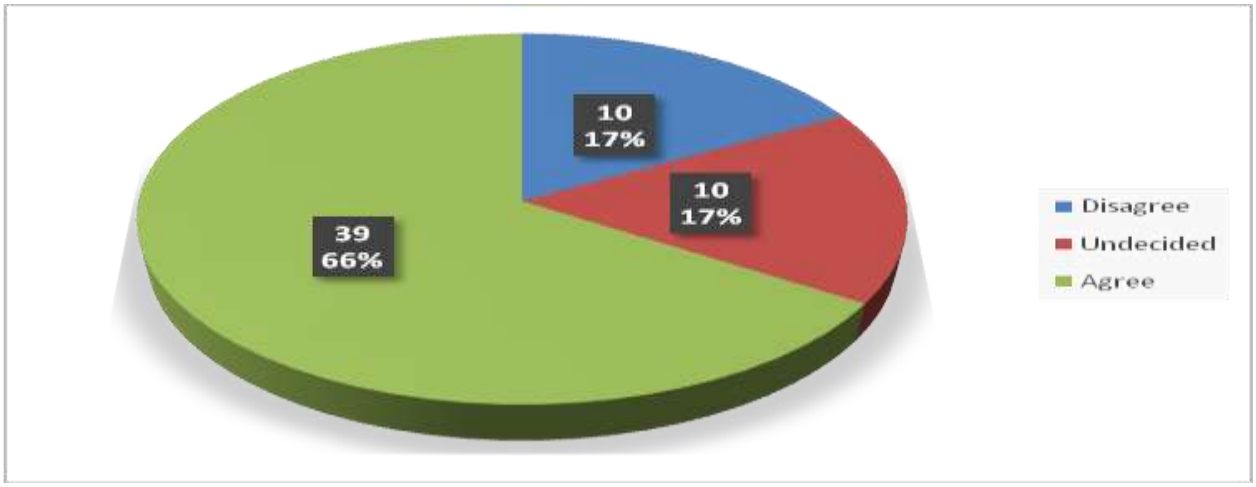

Figure 15: Whether or not the negative attitude of girls led to drop outs of school

Figure 15 above shows that most respondents 39 (66%) agreed that negative attitude of girls led to dropouts then 10 (17%) disagreed and 10 (17%) were undecided.

4.3 Factors that led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District

The researcher wanted to have wider knowledge on the subject matter as a result, the same objectives were used to collect the in-depth information by employing interview guides to 5 head teachers, 5 teachers 10 parents and focus group discussions with 50 pupils as is presented below**;**

The first objective sought to establish factors led to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District

In order to have in-depth information on factors led to school dropout, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. In response to this objective all the respondents who participated in this study said that there were some factors in Nakonde District which led to dropouts among the girls, early marriage was cited as the major factor that contributed to the persistent school dropout in Nakonde District. Two teachers argued:

> *"The mentality of the community on the education of girls leads to a lot of dropouts among girls. The communities have higher regard for marriages than education. They think educating a girl-child up to Grade 12, 'ninshi konaula abana' (spoiling the children) and is seen as wasting time to go to school instead of doing other things or just getting married"*

One teacher went on to say that girls lacked education or sensitization when they got mature. They thought that they were old enough to get married especially to truck-drivers, taxi-drivers and clearing agents who attracted them with a lot of money. It was also observed that, "eloping" a strong traditional practice of the Namwanga people was a barrier to the majority of girls more especially in Nakonde rural areas. This was common if an elderly person was being observed going out with a school girl. At one time the parents would chase their daughter from home to the same man that they had been seeing him with their daughter several times entering in his house or with him and they would force this man to marry their daughter.

In addition, one teacher observed:

> *"In Nakonde district there are no colleges where pupils can go after completion of Grade 12. Their dreams are shattered after school. Therefore, many girls think that when they reach Grade 10 or puberty, to them is enough and they decide to stop school and get married."*

It was further revealed that in rural areas of Nakonde parents shift to farmland areas leaving their children alone. One teacher explained:

> *"Many girls drop out of school during rainy season when their parents go to farms. They stay there for about two to three months leaving children* alone. *Due to poverty levels children go to Tanzania to source for money. In the process, they end up in marriages."*

In an interview with the head teachers, one head teacher had this to say:

> *"Namwanga people do not seem to have boundary of who should marry their daughters. Even those girls who are on CAMFED and Government support, once the girls start looking well parents withdraw them from school and force them into marriage as they are more interested in 'mpango' (bride price) than in girl-child education. He further said children sometimes lacked vision due to uncompetitive environment in Nakonde to attract girls, as a result, they drop out of school.*"

Dropouts became higher because parents considered girls' schooling of no benefit when they left their own family after getting married. It was found that early marriage was the foremost cause of early school drop-outs among girls in Nakonde.

Focus Group Discussions were conducted with girls in all five selected secondary schools. From the discussions with 50 pupils the following emerged:

Girls in all five schools (50) agreed that there were school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. The main factors according to the girls were early marriages, poverty, pregnancies, peer pressure, drug abuse, love of money and lack of support from the parents. One girl from one school said:

> *"We enter into marriages at a tender age; sometimes our parents are not even aware that we are married. But in most cases our parents withdraw us from school and force us into marriage because marriage is more valued than education"*

The researcher had interviews with ten parents, five males and five females. These respondents were selected from Nakonde Township because all schools where the study was conducted were day schools and the majority of the pupils came from within the town. The parents were also asked their views on factors that led to their girl-children to drop out of school.

The parents complained that the location of Nakonde had a lot of impact on school going children and had highly contributed to school drop-out among girls in the District. They observed that many girls had been spoiled by the so called 'Clearing and Forwarding Agent' boys. The girls were being attracted to agents who gave them a lot of money which led to pregnancies. Once they impregnated them, they did not even marry them. Such girls found it difficult to go back to school but to dropout.

It was revealed by 10 parents who participated in the study that the Re-entry Policy was one of the factors which had contributed to school dropout among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District. One female parent argued:

> *"Re-entry Policy nayonaula abana elyo taisunga na buvirgin bwabo, balenga ukutila nabanabo abashakwata abana ukonaikilamo," (Re-entry Policy has spoiled the children and is not helping them to treasure their virginity even those without children are copying from them).*

Furthermore, they said that teaching of family planning and giving contraceptives to school girls had contributed also to school drop-out among girls in secondary schools. These encouraged girls to engage themselves in sex or prostitution which ended up either in HIV/AIDS infections or pregnancies, which in turn resulted into the increase in absenteeism, deaths to some, and dropout of school.

When parents were further asked to comment on girls' dropout four parents said that technology had contributed to dropout among girls. They argued that children were in the habit of watching bad films up to mid-night on television and phones. At the end they practiced what they saw. This affected the performance of the children in schools because children had no time to study but to watch television throughout. Girls were also involved in clearing and forwarding of vehicles entering into Zambia at Tanzania-Zambia Boarder, and business and trade. Beer drinking and smoking and group influence were also common among girls of school age in Nakonde though minimal.

Effects of dropout among girls on their livelihood and community development

Parents were further asked to state the effects of school drop-out among girls in Nakonde District and the following were the responses:

i. When girls dropped out of school there was an increase in cases of theft.

ii. Girls broke marriages of other people.

iii. Girls involved themselves as sexual workers in some places within the township.

iv. Less presentation of women in socio-economic development of the country.

It was further revealed by some teachers and pupils that in some schools of Nakonde there were some teachers and school boys who also impregnated girls. These teachers were protected by the parents of the girls so it was difficult to control the situation.

Re-entry Policy

The researcher asked the respondents to comment on the re-entry Policy since pregnancy was one of the main causes of school drop-out among girls in Nakonde District.

Views of head teachers on the Re-entry Policy

The head teachers had different views concerning this Policy. Three head teachers said that the re-entry Policy was working well in their schools because the number of girls who continued with school after delivery was bigger than those who did not come back. Whereas, one head teacher argued that the Policy was not good at all because pregnant girls came to school with divided minds which reduced concentration in school and the end result was dropping out of school. The other head teacher stated that in his school the Policy was not working well as the number of girls who continued with school was smaller compared to those who did not come back. He continued to say that the Re-entry Policy was being abused by the majority of the victims, many girls had been oriented but they did not take it seriously because they knew that once they got pregnant they would go on leave and later on they would continue with school hence, pregnancies continued.

Parents' views on Re-entry Policy

All 10 parents pointed out that the re-entry Policy had contributed to school drop-outs among girls in Nakonde District. It encouraged girls to involve themselves in bad behavior such as prostitution, beer drinking and so on which led to pregnancies because they knew that after delivery they would continue with school. It was discovered that there was fear among some groups that the Re-entry Policy had led to the increased cases of pregnancies among school girls that's why there was a lot of dropouts among girls.

Views of girls on Re-entry Policy,

In Focus Group Discussion with the girls, almost all girls said that the Re-entry Policy was not working well and did not support morality among some girls. They said that the number of pregnant girls who continued with school was very small. To the majority, it marked the end of their education sometimes even the parents who had resources refused to continue supporting their daughters after they fell pregnant as they thought that they were just wasting their resources.

Cultural beliefs and Practices

In support of this during the interviews with five head teachers, it was discovered that among the Namwanga people many parents still had strong beliefs in cultural practices like *'Ukusemya'* (eloping) which contributed to dropout among girls. This was common in rural areas of Nakonde. Sometimes a girl may made an arrangement for marriage with a man without the consent of the parents or sometimes they were aware of it. But at the end parents arranged the marriage and asked for other requirements and the dowry from the man instead of encouraging their daughter to continue with school.

Business and Trade

Business and trade were the other factors which were revealed as hindrance to girls' education in Nakonde. It was revealed that the border town had highly influenced girls' education in a number of ways. For example many school girls involved themselves in business of *'ifyamba'* (marijuana) as they believed that this business would enable them to get a lot of money at the shortest period of time. One head teacher lamented:

> *"In Nakonde area children are exposed to money at a tender age, so they know how to handle money that's why they do business of 'ifyamba' (marijuana) because it gives them a lot of money. He further said that this activity has been becoming a serious concern especially that Nakonde is located at the border town, therefore, Children take school as a time waster."*

It was also found that due to girls' involvement in business and trade they engaged themselves in smoking dagga, beer drinking, and clearing and forwarding activities. In focus group discussion with the pupils, one girl said:

> *"Some girls drop out of school due to drug abuse and to peer pressure. Once a person is addicted to drugs she thinks that, drug is the only solution to everything. This encourages or leads to absenteeism and finally to drop out of school*

Distance

In order to have an in-depth information, head-teachers were asked to comment on the school distances since many schools had been up-graded to enable more children to had access to secondary school education. In response one head teacher complained:

> *"Pupils who come from distant places rent small houses in nearby compounds where they stay as weekly boarders. This makes girls to become vulnerable to men especially to clearing agents, truck-drivers and taxi-drivers who attract them with a lot of money. This encourages pregnancies and dropouts among girls".*

Furthermore, it was explained that the whole District had no public boarding secondary school except one grant aided Girls' school. The rest eleven secondary schools were day and co-education schools. The majority of the pupils from distant places rented small houses. It was noted that pregnancies were common on girls who were renting small houses than those who were coming from their homes.

Human trafficking

In addition, two head teachers bitterly complained that though human trafficking was minimal it was common in the area. They said that if it was not taken seriously, it would be worse as it led to school dropout among girls especially those from poor families. One head gave an example of five girls from one school who were sold by their parents to the 'Swahilis' in the year 2015. These girls were taken as far as Dar es Salaam. Fortunately, the case was reported to police and the Government came in to help and the girls were rescued.

It was also revealed by parents during the interviews that human trafficking was becoming a serious threat to vulnerable children in the area. One male parent argued:

> *"Some parents are selling their daughters to Swahilis and when these daughters are sold they go for good unless the case is reported to police or Victim Support that's when they can be retrieved if not it becomes the end. Parents are just interested in money they do not care or worry about what would happen to their daughters. The majority of the victims of human trafficking are girls."*

Poverty was another factor which 50 girls in all five schools (10 from each school) pointed out as a hindrance to girl-child education in Nakonde. They said that many parents in Nakonde failed to pay for their children. This made parents to pay for the boys rather than girls' education because they thought that girls would get married, hence, educating them was the wastage of money. Furthermore, lack of financial support was also indicated as a factor leading to dropout among girls. One girl said:

> *"The parents have no enough money to support their children to school and the majority of the parents are ignorant of organizations that support girls' education. At the same time the conditions put in place make it difficult for vulnerable children to access it. As a result they drop out of school."*

Another girl pointed out that:

> *"Competition is common among us, so you can find that those who come from poor families also want to compete with others. At the end, they start going out with sugar daddies or clearing agents. This contributes to pregnancies and dropout of school."*

In addition, almost all girls that participated in focus group discussions complained that some girls stopped school because of being orphans. The guardians and step-parents failed to pay school fees and they didn't treat them well. One girl said:

> *"When our parents die we face a lot of challenges in a number of issues. Sometimes they say that they would pay for us in school for one year. So it becomes difficult to source for our school fees and other requirements. Limo limo balatucusha no kututana ifyakulya panganda (sometimes they mistreat us and deny us food at home) in the end we stop school."*

When asked further why some vulnerable pupils dropped out of school when there were organizations which sponsored girls. One head-teacher revealed that in some schools of Nakonde district, parents did not accept the Non-Governmental Organizations such as CAMFED, FAWEZA, Social Warfare and others to sponsor their children to school. In an interview with one head-teacher, he explained that:

> *"Some churches in the outskirts of Nakonde town do not accept their Children to be sponsored by Non-Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders because they believe that these organizations work under the influence of Satanism. Therefore, sponsoring their daughters is one way of initiating them into satanism practices. Hence, parents opt to withdraw their daughters from school and marry them especially when they fail to pay for them"*

Parents interviewed in this study also complained about school girls' prostitution in Nakonde district. They argued that the children had been spoiled in the area as there were many girls who engaged themselves in sex work. Parents said that in some parts of Nakonde there were women who rented out their houses specifically for sex workers as their business. So some girls had put themselves in this work in order to earn some income in the end they stopped school and concentrated on this business.

Effects of school dropouts among girls on school development

The researcher wanted to find out whether dropout among girls had some effects on the development of the school. In response to this question all five head teachers said:

i. Dropout of school reduced school income e.g. if the school were collecting let's say K60, 000 from pupils the income went down.
ii. Purchase of school items were affected due to low income from pupils.
iii. School pass rate went down if the girls who were performing well stop school.
iv. Reduction in school enrolment.
v. Participation by girls became low.
vi. It had negative effect on the remaining pupils in school.

Human Rights

In an interview with the 10 parents they complained about human rights. The parents argued that, it had been difficult for them to control their children in homes. Whenever they tried to discipline their children, they threatened them that they would report them to the Police or Victim Support Unit. As a result children misbehaved, for the girls it even led to pregnancies and finally dropped out of school and other bad behaviors.

4.4 To establish the Rate of dropout among girls from Grade 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015

The second objective sought to establish the rate of dropouts in the schools, three head teachers were interviewed. The table below shows the information extracted from school records on the rate of dropouts among girls,

Table 5: School dropout rates among girls from 2013 to 2015

Year	School A	School. B	School C
2013	18 (28%)	79 (43%)	11 (28%)
2014	26 (31%)	62 (36%)	09 (23%)
2015	57 (37%)	47 (26%)	14 (43%)

Source: School records from three schools (2015)

The table above indicates that in school A the dropout rate was high in 2015; the rate was 57 (37%) while for school B the rate was high in 2013 and it was 79 (43%) and for school C the dropout rate was high in 2015 and it was 14 (43%). Factors led to drop out in the above table based on early marriages and pregnancies.

4.5 To determine whether the attitude of girls towards education led to persistent school drop outs among girls.

For in-depth information from teachers on attitude of girls, one teacher observed that:

> *"Many girls are not so serious with school. Being a border town, when boys bring them in cars to school they think that 'balifika' (they have arrived) and they like a luxury life in the way they behave hence they stop school before completion of Grade 12"*

On the other hand, one teacher said:

> "*Girls have negative attitude towards school. When they come to school they behave as if they are being forced by someone. But there are some who value education as they see it as one way of fighting poverty*".

Attitude of teachers towards girls

Head teachers were further asked under the same objective whether the attitudes of teachers contributed to persistent school dropouts among girls. In response one head teacher had this to say:

> *In my school some teachers are not interested in girls' education, others are not concerned whether girls come to school or not. He explained that the new generations of teachers who are coming want to compete with pupils. For example, during civilian days, female teachers want to be like girls in the way they dress. In most cases they do not even caution the pupils, there is less guidance from the teachers. Female teachers are not concerned with the discipline of girls and only few male teachers are well disciplined and concerned about children (especially 'old timers'). This has contributed to school dropout in my school.*

Another head teacher from another school contended that:

> *In Nakonde District it is common to find teachers quarrelling with pupils. Sometimes even on trivial matters they get offended more especially girls. Some girls even drop out of school. In my school the relationship between female teachers and girls is not good, male teachers understand girls' problems better than females.*

With regards to the same objective, it was discovered that in some schools in Nakonde some teachers were still proposing and impregnating school girls. The majority who did this were protected by the parents of the girls. At the same time the boys also impregnated girls. Pregnant girls were being laughed at, bullied by the boys and looked at as mothers; one head teacher said *"The pregnant girls in my school are told by boys to find a school for mothers."*

In focus group discussions with girls it was discovered that the majority of the girls had negative attitudes towards school because they did not show seriousness in learning and studying. Some girls thought that going to school was a matter of wasting time instead of making money. One girl stated that:

> "Some *of our friends say ukwikala musukulu kuposa nshita" twalibelesha ukwikata mpiya (staying in school is a waste of time,*

we are used to having money) while some fear Science Subjects that's why they stop school."

Girls were further asked their views on the attitude of teachers towards girls in their schools. One girl from one school said:

> *"Female teachers discourage us in a number of ways, sometimes when they see us with male teachers they think that "twalikwata icibeleshi no kutila tulebalansha" (we like over familiarity and we propose to them). When we dress well they say we are competing with then. Such words make some of us to lose interest in school and drop out of school."*

In addition, in all schools girls revealed that the male teachers treated them equally when it came to learning in class but again there were some who discouraged them by their words like. One girl said:

> *"Imwe mulifikopo tamumfwa nalimufunda na mailo,(you are lazy even yesterday l taught you the same thing) idiots is better you stay home than coming to school'*

Furthermore, girls argued that there were some teachers who proposed girls and impregnated them. This applied the same with the boys. After girls were pregnant they were being bullied by boys, laughed at them and told them to find a school for mothers. These and other factors forced girls to abandon school before completing Grade 12.

Parents' views on the girls' attitudes towards education

In response to the above research question, parents pointed out that the children had negative attitude toward education because among the Namwanga people marriage was more valued by the parents than education. In addition, they said in Nakonde District there were no job opportunities to attract girls therefore; the parents thought that educating them was wastage of resources. One parent said:

Our daughters value marriage more than education. Ifwe fwebafyashi bambi tulafwaya abana basambilile pakutila bakesetusunga nomba tabomfwa. Limbi kumulandu wa gender iisile kuti bacinja baposa mano kusukulu, (some of us parents we want our daughters to get educated so that they can take care of us when we are old, but they don't understand may be they will change because of gender)

Another parent said:

"ifwe fwe bafyashi tulabeba abana ukutila isukulu enoko kabili ewiso Nomba tabomfwa" (us parents tell our children that school is your mother and father but they don't want to listen"

4.6 The fourth objective was to establish the views from the head teachers, teachers, and parents

Teachers' views on school dropouts among girls;

In response to this objective one teacher stated:

"*Drop out of school among girls does not augur well because these are the future leaders who can help to develop this nation but if they stop school at an early stage, we are not going to have representations of females in all areas of developmental aspects"*

Another teacher argued:

"In order to reduce on school dropout among girls, there is need of a task force and committees in schools to look into issues of girl-child education. At the Same time the Government also should intensify the law especially to parents who force their children into marriages as they are contributing to low educational Levels of girls in Nakonde District."

During the interviews with the teachers it was revealed that in Nakonde, trade of all forms increased the dropouts. These included; child labor, prostitutions, early marriages, unwanted pregnancies which were as a result of poverty, children engaged themselves early in these practices resulting in them dropping out of school at a premature age. One teacher said:

> *"Girls are not given the necessary attention needed by parents or care givers, Hence resort to go into prostitution and being married off early, in most schools we have less sporting activities to keep these girls busy and focused in life"*

Another teacher pointed out:

> *"The dropouts among girls were usually high due to negative attitude the girls had about education. Some girls would prefer to get married than going to school. In addition, traditional beliefs of viewing marriage to be very important in society also affected the girls to had negative attitude towards school."*

Furthermore, one teacher added on to say:

> *"Motivation talks should be extended to the communities where girls are coming from and not to leave this responsibility to the teachers only. Public and other stakeholders should continue to sensitise girls on the importance of education by telling them the reality of live."*

Views of the head teachers on school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District,

One head teacher said:

> *"It was important to have programs of taking pupils to towns to see some important female figures like doctors, lawyers, members of parliament, and others or calling them to the District to have talks with them and see them so that they can be motivated. This*

can encourage girls to remain in school up to grade 12 hence reducing dropouts among girls."

Besides, some head teachers said that building of public boarding secondary school would have been of great help to the District because all pupils who were renting small houses could be in the boarding hostels which could reduce on pregnancies among girls who were renting and those coming from distance places.

One head teacher explained:

> *"The community lacks education information, hence, it needs sensitization. Parents also need balance in paying for their children both boys and girls. The aspect of valuing boys' education only should be looked into it not a situation whereby girls are expected to get married, thus, not valued in terms of education."*

Another head teacher argued:

> *"Re-entry policy was not clear to some parents especially in rural areas, the government would come in to educate parents about this because some think that the establishment of this policy has made the children to be the property of the government".*

One female head teacher strongly wishes her school to be free from school dropout among girls to enable them to complete secondary level of education.

Measures put in place to curb school dropout among girls in Nakonde District

Head teachers in five schools were asked about the measures which their schools had put in place to curb persistent dropouts among girls in Nakonde District. Their responses were as follows;

i. three head teachers said that their schools were sponsoring some vulnerable girls on school bursary scheme by paying school fees for them in order to retain them in school

ii. all five head teachers pointed out that Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Executive followed those who stopped school and absentees in their homes and talked to their parents intensively so that their children could go back to school.

iii. head teachers said that the mentor teachers educated pregnant girls who were about to stop school in order to understand the re-entry policy

iv. in all five schools it was found that once the pupil was pregnant the parents had to be talked to so that they could encourage their daughter to continue with school up to the time of delivery or come back after delivery

v. In case of human trafficking two head teachers stated that if they were aware of .the cases they involved police officers and victim support groups who followed up the cases. Sometimes head teachers followed wherever the pupils were taken such Tanzania.

vi. In all schools matrons talked to the girls on several issues as one way of motivating them.

vii. Sometimes pregnant girls after delivery were transferred to other schools in order to protect other girls in school from 'bad' influence.

Teachers were asked to suggest measures that could be used to curb school dropouts among girls. They stated the following:

i. to sensitize both the girls and parents especially those showed some signs of dropping out from school.

ii. the government to introduce free education from Grade one to twelve

iii. to turn someday schools into boarding schools in order to reduce on a distance

iv. to build more colleges for training girls in life skills to reduce poverty levels

v. to punish both boys and girls who involve in sexual relationships while at school

vi. involving the Chieftainess to sanitize the parents on the importance of education

vii. feeding pupils in day schools to be taken seriously

Parents were asked to suggest measures to curb school dropout rate among girls. Parents suggested the following:

i. Government to build a girls' boarding secondary school in Nakonde district

ii. Skills Center to be opened in Nakonde in order to attract girl-child

iii. Job creation in the District

iv. to educate parents on the importance of girl-child education

v. Re-entry Policy should be revised because it did not serve its purpose.

4.7 Summary

The findings of the study presented in this chapter indicated that there were several factors both from the community and schools which contributed to school dropouts among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District. The findings revealed that the main factor was early marriage followed by pregnancies, poverty and business ventures among school going children. Other factors included long distance to school which forces children to be renting small houses as weekly boarders, clearing and forwarding activities, human trafficking, lack of support by the parents, and others. It also revealed that the negative attitude of girls themselves towards school led to dropping out of school.

Community environment was also a factor as parents had higher regard for marriages than education. It was noted that parents withdraw their children from school when they reached puberty or just in grade 10 or 11 and married them off so that they could benefit from bride price. The majority of the parents especially in rural areas of Nakonde thought that educating a girl-child was just a matter of wasting the resources thus parents educated more boys than girls. Re-entry Policy was also found to contribute to dropouts as girls who fell pregnant did not take it seriously. After delivery the pregnancies continued. There were some measures which the schools had put in place which if intensified would reduce on the dropouts among girls in Nakonde District.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the findings of the study were presented. They were presented according to the research objectives. The main factors contributed to school dropouts were early marriages, pregnancies, poverty, business ventures and distance to and from school among others. These factors were presented using the charts. In addition, the chapter outlined the measures put in place by the schools to address the issue of school dropouts among girls in the District. However, this chapter presents the discussions of the research findings of the study that aimed at establishing factors that led to the persistent school drop-outs among girls in selected senior secondary schools of Nakonde District. It was discussed in relation to the objectives. The objectives of the study were; to determine factors associated with persistent school drop-outs among girls, to establish the rate of dropouts among girls from grades 10 to 12 in the period 2013 to 2015, to investigate whether the attitude of girls towards school led to persistent school dropouts among girls and to examine the views of the head-teachers, teachers and parents on school dropouts among girls.

5.2 Factors leading to persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District

From the findings of the study it was shown that in Nakonde District there were persistent school dropouts among girls in the period 2013 to 2015 and that there were various factors that led to girls' dropping out of school. The findings of the study were almost the same among all the respondents who had participated in the study. The main factors discovered were early marriages, pregnancies, poverty, distance, prostitution, cultural beliefs and business across the Zambia-Tanzania Border. Minor factors included; human trafficking, clearing and forwarding, competition and peer pressure.

This study had revealed that among the Namwanga people marriage was more valued than the education of a girl-child. It was believed that educating a girl-child was the wastage of the family resources as she would get married. This is in line with Malwa et al (2011) who argued that in

Nigeria women still continued to be under educated and the girl-child did not have the privilege of a good education. Parents and guardians also did not see any obligation to be involved in girl-child education as they were usually given off for marriage immediately they attained puberty. All these practices in Nigeria made girls abandon school and concentrated on house work

This is in agreement with Nisha (2014) states that in South Asia, girls' education is not valued as they believe that girls are trained for a role as a wife, mother, and daughter in law. Furthermore, Nisha (2014) states that families also think that the cost of education both monetary and psychological is wasted on a girl as she will get married. Such beliefs should be discouraged in Zambia if the country is to develop through women participation in the aspects of socio-economic development. Forced early marriages are a big threat to the human rights and well-being of children. It denies the young an opportunity to grow and empower themselves. It hampers the basic rights of these children to education, health, protection and development. The girls were forced into it a lot more in comparison with their male counterparts. This impacted adversely on girls particularly in rural areas and much more those who came from poor families. Statistically, the vulnerable girl-child of Nakonde District was twice more likely to be married early than the girls who came from higher income groups.

This is in line with what the theory of feminism stated that women were being suppressed by a male dominated society both in education and later life, and that the stereotypical views of women's part in society of becoming housewife, marrying early and having children contributed to low education levels and concentrate on household chores (Feminism and Education, 2014).

It is important for the various Government Ministries and other stakeholders to combine efforts and combat the scourge of early marriages and its inherent consequences. In contemporary times, parents should also learn that men want to marry women who are educated enough with a reasonable income which should be able to supplement the husband's earnings. Perpetual dependence of women on the menfolk has several consequences one of which is the increased number of divorces in Zambia and the so many street children lingering around towns and cities. It is time that parents and guardians begin to fight for the rights of the girl-child.

The situation in Nakonde district was similar to what Chege and Sifuna (2006) observed in their study that some parents in some parts of Kenya tended to discourage their daughters from acquiring too much education for fear that they would have difficulties in finding educated husbands or being good wives. It is also in agreement with Hari (2014) who observed that in some parts of Ghana many parents and community members had the attitude that educating girls was a waste of time and money, because they would eventually be married off and their education would therefore only benefit their husbands and the families they marry into. Money spent on the girls' education would thus be considered a loss to the girls' families. Since there was also the expectation that boys would become the "breadwinners" of their future families, many parents and community members felt that boys should for this reason be provided with every opportunity to help them fulfill this role, this includes educating them as far as possible. Girls, on the other hand, it is expected, will have husbands who will provide for them and an education is therefore not essential for them.

It should be noted that not all educated women would fail to get married and sustain their relationship; there are a lot of highly educated women working in very high institutional portfolios who are married with flourishing relationships. In our communities there are also a lot of uneducated women who are not married and a lot more of them who have drastically failed to sustain their marriages. Thus, the situation also poses a challenge because both the uneducated and the educated women are able to marry and sustain marriages and vice versa.

It is time that African countries should refrain from such beliefs and practices and remove the notion of placing the woman in the kitchen. Society is dynamic and it needs a woman who is empowered in all the spheres of life so much so that she should be able to surmount all the social setbacks that might arise. Over and above, women participation in socio-economic development is vital. After all, women constitute a larger population as compared to men hence their empowerment through education is critical.

Generally, forced early marriages have affected the girl-children in all the areas educationally, socially, economically and physically. Most of these young girls with teenage pregnancies end up having Vesical-Vaginal Fistula (VVF). VVF is the abnormal connection between the urinary tract and the vagina that there is an uncontrollable leakage of urine into the vaginal tract. It is

usually caused by prolonged, obstructed labour, without timely medical intervention. The sustained pressure of the baby's head on the mother's pelvic bone damages soft tissues, creating a hole or fistula between the vagina and the bladder or rectum. Once the dead tissue comes away, leaving a fistula, it causes a constant leaking of urine and / or faeces through the vagina (Roush, 2009). This disease was common among the young mothers who were forced into marriage while they were still young. It was observed that fistula was global problem with an estimated 14 million girls with the highest rate of child marriage were in Africa. It was further found that the toxic combination of a young girl having sex, getting pregnant and going through childbirth when her body was not developed enough accounted for at least 25% of known fistula cases. Fistula could only be prevented by discouraging early marriages through sensitization to both girls and the parents who force their children into marriages at the tender age. It should be noted that when a young mother is affected with this disease it may be difficult for her to sustain her marriage as she may be divorced or just abandon because she cannot perform her duties. Hence, the best is to refrain from early marriages or involvement in sexuality at a tender age. The World Health Organization estimated that more than 2 million women live with obstetric fistula and up to 100,000 new cases occur each year in Africa (Wall, 2006).

The study also revealed that in Nakonde District there were no playing parks, cinema halls, public libraries, colleges, trade schools or any training institution where the young girls including school leavers could go and engage themselves. Respondents complained that this had affected the girl-child because they knew that even if they did well they would just remain at home. They had seen many of their friends who finished secondary education doing business or get employed as clearing agents and at times ending up on the streets. This unfavorably made them think that going to school was a sheer waste of time and resources. This situation implied that the community was looking for immediate results of investing in education which was not always the case hence the need for continued sensitization on the importance of education. This is in line with Social feminist who believe that without education women will remain oppressed in society hence, it advocates for equal education opportunities for both boys and girls in all areas of life (Kimberly, 2015).

The study revealed that pregnancies among school girls were common in Nakonde District. This was because girls involved themselves in a number of activities such as beer drinking, prostitution, smoking Duggar and part time jobs as clearing agents which exposed them to sugar daddies who gave them a lot of money in exchange for sex. This is similar to Botswana Education Statistics (2007), who found that pregnancy was the number one reason that accounted for girls' dropping out from school and was common among girls from lower socio-economic families. Snelson (1990) also observed that pregnancies among school going girls had been the main hindrance to girls' education since the introduction of formal education. This led to the introduction of the Re-entry Policy by the Government in 1997. However, the MESVTEE (2013) argued that despite the Re-entry Policy being in existence for close to 18 years, there were still less than 50% of girls being re-entered after giving birth as it was shown in table 1 of Chapter two. This clearly indicated that there was still a lot to do concerning this policy as many people still had questions on its effectiveness. For instance, in 2012 there were 14,849 pregnancies only 6,000 were readmitted to school and in 2013, out of 14,928 only 5,829 were readmitted (FAWEZA, 2014).

The Policy aimed at encouraging pregnant girls to continue with school after delivery. However, this study revealed that in Nakonde District the majority of the girls did not go back to school after delivery and some who went back fell pregnant again. This was in line with Mbolela (2010) who found that in Chongwe District the re-entry Policy contributed to low completion rate of girls in Basic education. She observed that girls indulged themselves in sexual activity because they knew that even if they became pregnant they would still go back to school after giving birth. But once they went back to school, they became pregnant again.

This behavior of girls suggested that the Re-entry Policy was being abused by the majority of those who got pregnant while they were at school. This means that the policy was not working well if the same girls continued getting pregnant even after being re-admitted into school after the first pregnancy.

On one hand, some respondents pointed out that the Re-entry policy was working well in their schools while on the other hand it was considered to be a hindrance to the education of the girl child. It was considered that girls became complacent that they would still be re admitted once

they fell pregnant again. It was evident that there was need to revisit the Policy as observed by one Civic leader, Mr. Mwamba that Government should revisit the re-entry policy for girls, arguing that it had contributed to increasing numbers of school drop-outs and early marriages in our country (Kambilima, 2015).

Mr. McDonald Mwamba, Kabwe deputy mayor said the policy promoted immorality among children and caused more harm than good in society (Kambilima, 2015). On the other hand, Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, Sydney Mushanga said it was sad that the re-entry policy was being abused despite efforts by the government to give an opportunity to the girl-child to return to school after being pregnant. But the question being asked by many people is, should the government abolish the re-entry policy?

Girls who were given a second chance should see re-entry Policy as a golden opportunity to finish their education and become independent and successful in future. However, this study revealed that some School authorities were not taking the policy seriously. This is in agreement with NCES (2009) found that in America some schools did not implement the law of re-admission which was introduced in 1976 to promote girl-child education.

This is supported by Nyoike (2015) who said that teenage pregnancy was a prevalent problem in many countries. Young school going girls had relationships with boys and older men (sugar daddies) in order to sustain themselves and they ended up falling pregnant, worse still being infected with HIV. She further stated that in Kenya there were a lot of campaigns going around about "Books first babies later", which they taught young girls to concentrate on their studies first before engaging in sexual relationships but pregnancies among girls had continued. In order to encourage girls' education, Kenya Government had allowed girls to go back to school after giving birth. The challenge rose after child birth because without the support from parents and guardians these girls ended up putting their education on hold so as to care for their children. Hence, the majority of the girls did not continue with school.

The situation was similar to Nakonde District, it was discovered that some girls failed to continue with school in Nakonde because most of their families were poor and could not support the girl and her child. Some who were lucky went back to school depending on the financial

strength of their parents. The girls that did not have resources to support themselves started leading miserable lives and did not continue with school. This is in line with the study in Afghanistan where it was observed that motherhood was a significant obstacle to girls continuing their education after delivery. It was argued that in schools there were no facilities where to keep their children, it would be an extra burden for someone else in the family to take care of the child, and then the family might not support the girl to go to school (Shayan, 2015).

In Nakonde District Government and the community need to come up with some form of education and empowerment mechanisms of these girls by giving them information that would help them abstain as taught by some religious groups or Churches. If they cannot abstain and avoid these unwanted pregnancies other measures such as using contraceptives and condoms should be encouraged among school girls.

Distance from home to school was another obstacle to girls' education in Nakonde District. The findings of this study revealed that renting of small houses was common to pupils who came from distant places. It was revealed that in Nakonde District there was no Government boarding school and this compelled pupils to rent small houses in compounds as weekly borders. This posed a big challenge to school girls as they fell pregnant and stopped school. Nekatibeb (2002) noted that school distance was the foremost obstacle for girls' education in many countries in Africa. In Afghanistan, it was observed that harassment of girls on their way to school, kidnapping, elopement and cases of sexual assault appeared to have a dramatic effect on school attendance. These behaviors made parents to keep their daughters home than to walk long distances to school (Shayan, 2015).

This is in agreement with Ainsworth (2005) who found that the likelihood of attending secondary school for girls decreased with the greater the distance compared to the nearer secondary schools. He further observed that in Tanzania school dropout increased in areas where distance to school was longer. For instance, in rural areas where there were no roads and vehicles; as a result, children had to walk for long distances through difficult terrain and dangerous environment which consequently affected their performance. In addition, DFID (2005) found that school environment that may be acceptable to boys may be hostile to girls. The physical and sexual violence against women that is common in many societies is reflected in the

school environment in a number of countries. Physical abuse and abduction are not only a major violation of girl basic human rights; they also present a major practical constraint in getting to school. Parents feel a duty to protect their daughters and may decide to keep them at home if they feel the school is too far away.

Distance was not supposed to be an issue of dropping out of school especially in areas where schools have been built and upgraded to secondary schools which aimed at increasing the accessibility to education regardless of gender. This could be used by some parents as an excuse for not sending their daughters to school. However, this study revealed that in Nakonde girls were forced to walk long distances to school, this promoted dropout among girls. This is similar to Ainsworth (2005) and Nekatibeb (200) observed that school distance could discourage girls from being educated for two major reasons. One of them was the length of time and energy needed to cover the distance for children with empty stomachs. Another was parental anxiety about sexual safety of their daughters

Wainaina (2009) concurs and explains that building schools near homes and making them girl-friendly increases the feeling of safety in school. This agrees with the World Bank (2005) which in addition contends that building secondary schools near homes reduces walking distances and brings about relief concerning girl safety on the way to and from school. This is closely related to sexual harassment for the reason as revealed by Ruto (2009) that considerable amount of sexual harassment occurs on the way to and from school.

Parents need to develop interest of educating the girl-child because harassment and violence sometimes are happening within households. 90% of child sexual abuse victims knew the perpetrators in some way 68% are abused by a family membe (Saffron Centre, 2015).

Human trafficking was another factor which was revealed as a contributing factor in Nakonde though it was minimal. Human trafficking was basically trading in human beings. Most girls sold in this context were taken into brothels where they were involved in commercial sexual activities others were taken into forced labour (UNODC, 2011). Human trafficking was a crime against the person because of the violation of the victim's right and this could occur within a country or

outside. During the study two head teachers, a teacher and parents argued that human trafficking was becoming dangerous in the area though it was minimal.

It was revealed that human trafficking was common in Nakonde District especially among poor households. Parents sold their daughters to Tanzanians who took them to various places for different purposes. According to the respondents, sometimes when the cases were reported to the police and the victim support unit, they pursued cases until children were retrieved from Tanzania. Now the concern was that relevant Government institutions should intensify sensitization campaigns so that parents who failed to report such cases to the police the members of the community should take it up and have the matter reported.

The issue of human trafficking should not be left in the hands of schools and victim support groups alone but requires consented effort from various stake holders for the scourge to be brought to a halt. This global problem requires a global, multi-stakeholder strategy that builds on national efforts throughout the world. To pave the way for this strategy, stakeholders must coordinate efforts already underway, increase knowledge and awareness, provide technical assistance, promote effective rights-based responses, build capacity of state and non-state stakeholders, foster partnerships for joint action, and above all, ensure that everybody takes responsibility for this fight. This can be achieved by encouraging and facilitating cooperation and coordination of other stakeholders.

For instance, in India, the trafficking in persons for commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, forced marriages and domestic servitude is considered an organized crime. Because of this the Government of India applies the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013, active from February 3, 2013, as well as Section 370 and 370A IPC, which defines human trafficking and "provides stringent punishment for human trafficking; trafficking of children for exploitation in any form including physical exploitation; or any form of sexual exploitation, slavery, servitude or the forced removal of organs." Additionally, a Regional Task Force implements the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on the prevention of Trafficking in Women and Children (UNODC, 2011).

Zambia can also re-enforce the existing pieces of legislation to bring to a halt human trafficking. The Zambian approach in fighting human trafficking may not be as rigorous as the case is in India due to the rate at which the crime is committed. However, any vices and practices that underestimate the value of any human being before another constitute a criminal act and appropriate legal actions against the perpetrator. Institutions such as the Zambia Police Service and the Human Rights Commission play a critical role to ensure that human trafficking cases are kept to the barest level.

Though sometimes traffickers in school girls may take advantage of the parents' extreme poverty, Parents may sell children to traffickers in order to pay off debts or gain income, or they may be deceived concerning the prospects of training and a better life for their children. They may sell their children into labour, sex trafficking, or illegal adoptions, people of Nakonde need to be educated on all these issues in order to protect their children as they may be ignorant of what is involved in human trafficking.

It was argued that in Nakonde children were exposed to business at a tender age so they thought that sitting in class learning was wastage of time instead of making money. Trading in marijuana was common among girls after copying from boys who were believed to be making a lot of money from the illicit marijuana business. This was of a great concern especially that it led to school dropouts among girls, putting their lives in danger and other consequences. This needed to be dealt with so as to protect girl-child.

Prostitution was another factor revealed in this study. It was complained by the parents and some teachers that prostitution was becoming a serious concern among school girls in the area. Some girls engaged themselves in prostitution in order for them to obtain some income this made it difficult for them to concentrate on school. It was revealed during the discussion that many school girls involved themselves in prostitution. There were some who did prostitution on the streets, night clubs and others as sexual workers. Some school girls involved themselves in sex by working in some unregistered brothels which operated as guest houses in order for them to earn some income. Education became difficult especially to the sex workers as it resulted into a number of issues such as early pregnancy and contraction of sexually transmitted diseases. This tended to push them out of school.

Benzault et al (2012) state that prostitution is a multi-faceted phenomenon: victims of exploitation and networks, housewives in precarious situations, female students, children, men. Who prostitute themselves in the streets, on the Web, in bars, in massage parlors, along the roads? The situations are diverse. However, whatever the political, economic, or cultural contexts are, all of these situations relate to the same phenomenon: sexual exploitation.

Benzault (2012) observed that prostitutes suffered from moral collapse and lost their status and position which other respectable men and women enjoy in society. Respectable people hated them, avoided their company and wanted to isolate them in society. As a result, the pimp and the prostitute became 'hated and isolated islands'. They led a life with their own definition of promiscuous sex conduct and immoral principle.

Cultural beliefs were revealed as other hindrance to girls' education in Nakonde. Among the Namwanga people there were some people who strongly believed that educating a girl-child was wastage of resources thus they opted to educate more boys than girls. It was revealed that many people especially in rural areas valued marriage rather than education so that they could benefit from dowry. People should not always cling to some beliefs especially those which continue to marginalize their way of living but it is very important to respond to change. The general misconception of people to say the place of a woman is in the kitchen should change with time, the girl- child should be supported to attain tertiary education so that she can also contribute to the development of the country. Feminists support this by arguing that to eliminate gender stratification, laws and cultural norms that limit the income, educational and job opportunities for women should be opposed (Kimberly, 2015). Girls and women need to be empowered from their childhood through education as this is the only way of liberating them. This is in support of Nelson Mandela who said, "Freedom can't be achieved unless women have been" emancipated" (Mokone, 2014).

This is in agreement with Sandhu, et al (2005), Bunyi (2004) and Idabawa (2004), who observed that the belief that education made women to look down on men negatively impacted female education and the old customs, traditions, caste systems, rural community and wrongly understood religious knowledge, had denied female children quality formal education. There is need to shift and try to abandon cultural practices which discourage girl-child education. This is

in support of Feminism and Education (2014) who argued that the liberation of women or shift from oppression would only be achieved through women's empowerment and girl-child education which in return would enable them to fully participate in socio-economic development of nations.

However, among the Masai people the culture of fear of early pregnancy forced girls into marriage. It was observed that children as young as nine years old were not allowed to live in the same house with their father, and instead slept in a separate house without supervision. In addition, girls were not told how a woman became pregnant. This combined lack of supervision by the parents and ignorance made girls highly vulnerable to became pregnant, and pregnancy before marriage brought disgrace and a reduced bride price. Thus, fear of premarital pregnancy was a common reason for parents to insist that their daughters leave school and marry early (Akaro, 2010).

Chondoka and Bota (2007) argued that the practice of polygamy among the Tumbuka which was intended to deal with the problem of the barren wife limited girls' education. There seemed to be more emphasis on the biological capacity of the women which may render women mere vessels of child production. Polygamous families could be too big and too many children might not be easy to educate and hence the girls might be discriminated against on the basis of lack of resources or as care givers to other siblings.

It was discovered that the majority of people in Nakonde were still living in extreme poverty. This was a big challenge to the parents because they failed to pay school fees for their children. A study by Theresa and Sossau (2008) observed that in Uganda, 28% of girls stopped school because their parents failed to pay for them in school. It was observed that despite the introduction of sponsorships from Non-Governmental Organizations many children had no access to these. During focus group discussion with girls it was revealed that the conditions which were put in place for bursaries were difficult and that the majority of the parents in Nakonde were ignorant about it. On the other hand, it was discovered that some parents denied their daughters to be sponsored by NGOs. It was believed that those organizations worked under the influence of Satanism. Therefore, children were withdrawn from school even when they could not manage to sponsor them solely. Government intervention was very important to

sensitize the community on the organizations involved in sponsoring girl-children education as this was the positive move by the Government. Therefore, many girls dropped out of school because of lack of support by the parents and guardians.

In addition, the study established that some parents failed to provide food for their children in Nakonde area. In such situation pupils decided to go to Tanzania to look for some piece work so that they could source for some money to buy food for their families. So the way children lived at home influenced their education system. Hunt (2008) observed that poverty appeared to influence the demand for schooling, not only because it affected the inability of households to pay school fees and other costs associated with education, but also because it was associated with a high opportunity cost of schooling for children. As children grew older, the opportunity cost of education was even larger, hence increasing the pressure for children to work and earn income for the household as opposed to spending time in education. Extreme poverty levels increased and promoted absenteeism which eventually led to school dropouts among school girls. Introduction of feeding system in day schools in Nakonde would be one way of addressing poverty levels and absenteeism which might result into school dropout rates to decrease.

5.3 Establishing the rate of dropouts among girls from Grade 10 to 12 in the period 2013-2015

With regard to the rate of school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District, the findings of the study revealed that the rate of dropouts was high in the period 2013 to 2015. This was evidenced by 48 (81%) respondents who agreed that the rate of dropouts was high in the past three years. This is similar to Okediji (2012) who observed that dropout rates of girls in Africa is still very high due to cultural practices, vulnerability to violence and issues of sexual harassment from male teachers and boys. This study found that, the rate was high because the schools were still new and the infrastructure was poor and user unfriendly, so some parents thought that keeping their children in those schools was risking and a mere wasting of their resources. Therefore, they opted to withdraw their children from schools and took them elsewhere, preferably into marriages. It was also discovered that, this period was the time when basic schools were being upgraded to secondary schools. So, schools lacked human resource to handle secondary school classes. Besides that, the schools had no resources to purchase enough teaching and learning

materials to cater for their learners in all the schools in the District. These posed a big challenge to the school Managers to run the schools effectively and led to poor performance of pupils in the schools. Subsequently, lacking of resources in schools eventually promoted an increase in girls dropping out of schools in the District.

A study by Alexander (2008) identified boredom as a factor contributing to high dropout rates among girls. Boredom comes in when pupils experience limited learning opportunities frequently, and subjected to overcrowded classrooms with insufficient learning materials and under qualified teachers. This situation leads to boredom because pupils end up viewing school experience as a worst of time and eventually dropout. The teachers need to be both personally and professionally involved with the pupils in order to create an enabling school learning environment, which may facilitate in reducing the rate of dropping out as a result of strong relationships established with learners.

In contrast, Statistics Canada's Annual Labor Force Survey (SCALFS, 2009) observed that in Canada school dropout rates were high for boys than girls. The decrease among girls was experienced since the 1990s from nearly 17% to 9% in 2008 and 2009 school year. This is in line with all European Union (EU) member states where men were observed to have a more likelihood to leave education earlier than girls. For instance, in Cyprus, Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Portugal and Italy early leaving or drop out of school was twice as high as or more for men than for women (Europe educational statistics, 2015). This suggests that reduction of dropout rates can work out if good measures are to be identified in Africa. What is important is to copy what some European countries did to reduce dropout rates among girls in schools.

However, this study established that the dropout rates are still high among girls than boys. It was discussed that some teachers contributed to the rate of dropout among girls in the way they treated them. This is similar to Epstein & Mc Portland (1976) who stated that teachers are not supposed to be threats to pupils' existence. As noted in Tanzania, teacher quality affects dropout rates, good quality teachers mean low dropout rates. Ineffective teacher-pupil relationship leads to high dropout rates because it makes pupils to develop low personal satisfaction when measured on the quality of school life.

It was further revealed that the dropout rates of girls were higher among day scholars than in boarding schools. This was due to a number of factors such as long distances, lack of accommodation, shyness, bullying by boys, poor feeding facilities and poor performance. These

challenges posed a big danger to girls' education especially to those who came from far places of Nakonde. This research also learnt that in Nakonde District all eleven government secondary schools were co-education schools. This was found to be a challenge for girls' education as the environment was not girl-child friendly. Thus, it led to school dropouts among girls to remain high.

Oigara (2011) in her study discovered that girls in mixed schools in Kenya performed poorer than those in single-sex schools. it was found that girls felt intimidated and threatened by male teachers and boys, their ability was undermined and were treated as feminine even when choosing career subjects. Girls had special needs for physical protection and tradition often demands special concern for girls' safety especially for those who were day scholars.

It was discovered that other factors that led to school drop out rates in Nakonde District were neglected the attention was only on early marriages and pregnancies as it is indicated in Chapter four table 5. The rate of dropout was expected to be higher than it is shown in the table if other factors were taken care of.

5.4 Determining whether the attitude of girls towards education led to persistent school dropouts among girls

Concerning girls' attitudes toward education, it was found that the majority of girls in Nakonde had no interest in education; this was shown in the way they participated in school activities. What was needed was to sensitize the girls on the importance of education. Girls were expected to change their attitudes toward education unlike forcing them, especially that there were a number of Non-Governmental Organisations which were sponsoring them. This would have helped them to remain in schoosl up to Grade 12 level. In addition, it was revealed that the attitude of some teachers contributed to school dropouts among girls. For instance, Competition between female teachers and girls that arise during civilian days when girls wear their own clothes and the way female teachers handled them, forced some girls to stop school as they could not remain in the same vicinity with their rivalry teachers.

Kabesiime (2007) found that in Uganda the teacher's attitude towards girls in the classroom was crucial for retention of girls in school. This study revealed that in Nakonde there were some teachers who still impregnated school girls, this was said to be a challenge because girls became

pompous, indiscipline and uncontrollable. This was a sad state of affairs because pupils were entrusted to teachers by their parents, and if teachers could compromise the trust of parents then it would be difficult for them to send the girl-child to school. This is in line with NCES (2009) who observed that some girls dropped-out of school because they feared to be sexually harassed at school by both male teachers and boys.

In addition, this study revealed that in some schools pupils feared the school managers. This is because the managers were not ready to assist girls whenever they approached them when they had problems with their class teachers. This also promoted dropouts among girl. The challenge here was that the school managers should play multipurpose roles. They should more often than not be parents, counselors, arbitrators, educators, career advisors, nurses and colleagues. This is similar to Strauss (2013) who found that school managers by virtue of their position were expected to provide safety and a friendly atmosphere so that students should be free to approach the management whenever they had a problem. The school policies should be child friendly. Policies which are harsh and punitive are most likely to increase school dropouts. On the other hand, in Cameroon, the practice of Female Genital Mutilation made some girls' to develop negative attitudes towards school (Hari, 2011).

Hari (2011) observed that the main reason for low enrollment and high dropout of girls from schools was the negative attitude that many parents had towards the education of girls. The negative attitude interfered with girls access to education. This inertia resulted in absenteeism from school. After a girl child reaches secondary school level, society considered them as ready for marriage and this is attributed to traditional socio-cultural beliefs regarding gender roles and abilities; women were expected to exclusively assume the roles of mother and wives, therefore girls' dropped out of school and concentrated on house chores.

Munsaka (2009) observed that in the Southern part of Zambia most parents indicated that they were not satisfied with the quality of teaching that their children received from teachers. He discovered that some parents complained that those days' teachers were only interested in getting to the end of the month so that they could get their pay. The teaching had become devalued". For this parent, the drop in the educational standards was as a result of teachers losing the passion for their career and only focusing on personal interest.

5.5 Establishing the views from the head teachers, teachers, and parents

With regard to respondents' views, it was established that there was need to emphasise on the importance of education and on the effects of girls dropping out increased rates in the District. It was suggested that building of a boarding secondary school in the district would be of great help as this could enable children who were living in far off places to be in the boarding schools rather than renting small houses as weekly borders. This can immensely reduce on pregnancy cases which were very high in Nakonde as girls became vulnerable to men and in the process they stopped school. This agrees with the World Bank which suggested that building secondary schools near homes reduces walking distances and brings about relief concerning girl-child safety on the way to and from school (World Bank, 2005).

The study established that the community had no hope for future generations, especially in terms of girls' participation in developmental affairs due to low levels of education. As a result, some respondents had the view to have programs of taking pupils to towns such as Lusaka, Ndola, Kitwe and others to see some important female figures like doctors, lawyers, members of parliament, and others or calling them to the District to have talks with them and see them so that they can be motivated. This can encourage girls to remain in schools up to grade 12 hence reducing dropouts among girls

Furthermore, teachers had the view that, community participation in the issue of dropouts could help to fight the battle. This can be actualized by extending motivation talks to the community of Nakonde and to discourage parents who forced their daughters into marriage while they were at school. Ighedalo (2006) pointed out that teachers on the other hand believe that parent needs to be the girl child's advocate though that role has to be delicately played in order to get along with the child's teacher, a parent also should help a Girl-child in every productive way possible with school tasks and school responsibilities, because as a teacher, one may have more domain knowledge about teaching the children, but the parents know their girl child better. Only

Joint collaboration can meet the needs of girl child education development. Ferrara and Ferrara (2005) add on to say, teachers believe that Parents have different educational aspirations for their sons and daughters.

In the same way, Socialist feminists proposed the complete eradication of all political, economic and social foundations of contemporary society specifically; education, work, sexuality and parenting to undergo thorough transformations if women have to participate in national development. This could be achieved through encouraging girls' enrollment, retention and completion of their secondary education levels which can enable them to continue their education in higher learning institutions (Enns, 1997).

5.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the discussions of the research findings. It has discussed the factors that led to persistent school drop outs in Nakonde District. The main factors included early marriage, pregnancy, poverty, cultural beliefs, business and trade, human trafficking and distance to and from school. It was observed that in order to reduce dropout rates among girls, there was need for government participation in all areas that hindered girl-child education. On the other hand, some factors which were cited as contributing factors, though minimal, should be taken seriously before they reached their peak. Parents too needed to be sensitized on the importance of girl-child education so that they could encourage their daughters to remain in school up to Grade 12 level.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In chapter five (5) research findings were discussed. Factors led to school dropouts among girls were discussed and some means to overcome them had been suggested. The main factors observed included early marriages, pregnancies, poverty, distance and business. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations from the findings of this study. The study was conducted in order to establish the factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in selected secondary schools of Nakonde District.

6.2 Conclusions

This study had revealed that there were various factors that contributed to school dropout rates in Nakonde District. Some factors were home based while others were school based. It was very difficult to know the main factors that led to the persistent school drop-out since some respondents seemed to be reluctant in answering the questions. Besides, records collected from the DEBS Office also showed that some schools had not submitted their school reports on dropouts among girls in the past three years.

However, the findings of this study had revealed that the main cause of persistent school drop-outs among girls in Nakonde District was early marriage. It was also observed that among the Namwanga people some parents still valued marriage more than the education of a girl-child. They believed that educating a girl-child was a matter of wasting resources hence when a girl reached puberty they thought she was old enough to get married. This belief was very strong especially in rural communities of Nakonde. It was observed that girls had been fed with the same information that is why they too had a negative attitude towards education. Pregnancy was another impediment noted as an obstacle to girl-child education. It was cited that in Nakonde there were various activities which girls involved themselves in that led to pregnancies. These included prostitution where girls engaged themselves as sex workers, beer drinking, drug abuse, clearing and forwarding piece work and peer pleasure. For others, the decision to drop out was a response to conflicting life pressures -- the need to help support their family financially or the demands of caring for siblings or their own child.

Dropping out was sometimes about students being bored and seeing no connection between academic life and "real" life. It was about young people feeling disconnected from their peers and from teachers and other adults at school.

Parents with lower socioeconomic status faced difficulties to bear the expenses of their daughters' education. In addition, parents sometimes used the gender of their children to decide who gets more education so that children could give benefit in the future; in these circumstances male children eventually got more priority than female children. Some feminists have argued that women would only gain equality with men when institutions and social relationships are changed. Furthermore, education and work must be restructured in order to eliminate male domination and other oppressions (Enns, 1997).

Besides these, girls also experienced disadvantages for the unequal gender roles in society hence they spent much of their own time on household chores after school and this affected their academic performance and led to dropping out of school.

Schools in urban areas favored girls than schools in rural areas. Sometimes it depends on parents on how to perceive girls' education. However, dropping out of school was a serious problem which government should look into. These posed a lot of challenges on the girl-child. Human trafficking was another challenge although it was cited to be minimal but its consequences were of great concern.

In addition, the re-entry policy needed to be revisited as many people had bitterly complained as encouraging immorality in schools. Schools should also intensify the measures which they had put in place so as to address the issue of dropouts among girls. Parents' involvement in addressing this pandemic would be of great help to Nakonde and the nation at large. Schools should develop programs or initiatives that would attract and ensure that girls remain in school. Parents' involvement should be one of the key strategies to enhance retention. Furger (2008) asserts that parents' ongoing engagement from regular communication with school staff to familiarity with their child's schedule, courses, and progress towards graduation remains central to students' education. It is also important to find out other factors leading to continuous school dropout among girls in both primary and secondary schools in order to address this issue.

Zambia can still learn from other countries which have successfully managed to reduce inequalities in education system. For instance, Yemen had gender disparities in education enrolment at secondary school, the enrolment was low for girls but since 2003 this issue has been address because the government of Yemen committed itself to full primary enrolment by 2015, with special emphasis on gender equity. The argument is that girls education is now a central element of Yemen's poverty reduction strategy and Basic education development strategy (DID, 2005).

It is possible for Zambia to record a decline in dropout rates among girls just like any other country. What is needed is to intensify the Education Reforms enshrined in the document of 1996 'Educating Our Future' which aimed at supporting equality, equity, access and construction of more girls' schools in order to enable girls to have access to secondary schools.

6.3 Recommendations

Following the findings and conclusions made, the following recommendations were made by the researcher, which if implemented, will reduce on school dropout rates among girls in Nakonde District.

1. The Government should construct at least a boarding secondary school in Nakonde District in order to accommodate pupils who are renting small houses and reduce on school drop-out rates among girls
2. Re-entry Policy should be revised because in Nakonde District the majority of the respondents complained that it had contributed to school drop-out among girls. Girls who fall pregnant while at school should be given one chance not twice may be this will help them to take the Policy seriously.
3. Government should continue to sensitize parents and girls on the importance of education so that school can be valued by the parents and girls.
4. To re-enforce the law of punishing parents and guardians who force school girls into early marriages so that others can learn from them.
5. Government to work hand in hand with the community of Nakonde in protecting the girl-child from human trafficking activities

6. The Ministry of General Education also to look at other factors leading to school drop-out among girls rather than concentrating on pregnancy and Re-entry Policy
7. To establish social amenities such as colleges and skills centers in Nakonde District so as to motivate girls to continue with education and training.
8. Government to ban the engagement of school going age girl children in clearing and forwarding activities at the border.
9. To introduce school feeding programs or the distribution of food through schools as a way of addressing barriers related to poverty.

Recommendations for further studies;

1 The same research to be conducted in other border towns of Zambia
2 To conduct a research on early marriages
3 To investigate the performance of teachers between three and ten years of their teaching experience
4 A study to compare the performance of female teachers in boys and girls secondary schools

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LIST OF APPENDICES

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDIES

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM FOR RESPONDENTS

Dear respondent,

You have been selected to participate in this research that is investigating the factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in Nakonde District. I am kindly requesting for your voluntary participation in this study. I would appreciate if you could answer all the questions asked and give me the feedback as soon as possible. Please read the information below and ask for clarification about anything you do not understand before deciding whether to participate or not.

CONDITIONS

1. Your views will be treated as confidential. Your name will not be written down during the research or in the final report.
2. In this research, you will be required to fill in a questionnaire or participate in an interview for about 30 to 40 minutes.
3. For interviews, you will be required to answer some oral questions on school dropout among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District and the researcher will use an Audio Cassette Recorder to record the proceeding accurately.
4. As for the questionnaire, you will be required to fill in them according to the given instruction

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APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR PUPILS

Section A:

Welcome note and Setting ground rules: I welcome you to this focus group discussion. Be assured of confidentiality and the information will be for academic purposes only. Each one will be allowed to speak. Discussion will take about 30-40 minutes

Section B: Questions

1. What are the factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in your school?

2. What is the attitude of girls towards education in your school?

3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards teaching of girls in your school?

4. What challenges do you face in your school which led to school drop out?

5. What measures has the school put in place to curb persistent school dropout among girls in your school?

Section C: Closing and Thank you

Is there anything else that you may wish to contribute that I did not specifically ask about? Thank you for your time. As mentioned earlier, the information will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only

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APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Section A:

I welcome you to this in-depth interview. Be assured of confidentiality and the information will be used for academic purposes only. This interview should take about 25-30 minutes.

This research seeks to establish the factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in secondary schools of Nakonde District. As a class teacher you have been purposively selected to participate in this interview. These findings are confidential and are for academic purposes only.

1. What factors lead to persistent school dropout rates among girls in your school?
2. To what extent is the school dropout rate among girls in your school in the period 2013 to 2015?
3. What is the girls' attitude towards education in your school?
4. What are the teachers' attitudes towards teaching girls in your school?
5. To what extent do the attitudes of boys contribute to persistent school dropout rates among girls in your school? How?
6. What measures has the school put in place in order to curb the persistent school dropout among girls?
7. What are the views of the teachers on school dropout rates among girls in your school?

Is there anything else that you may wish to contribute that I did not specifically ask about? Thank you for your time. As mentioned earlier, the information will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

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APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

SECTION A: I welcome you to this in-depth interview. Be assured of confidentiality and the information will be used for academic purposes only. This interview should take about 25-30 minutes.

SECTION B:

1. For how long have you been working in this school?

2. What factors lead to persistent school dropout rates among girls in your school?

3. How has been the school dropout rate among girls in the past three years (2013 to 2015)?

4. What are the teachers' attitudes towards teaching girls in your school?

5. What are the girls' attitudes towards education in your school?

6. What are the boys' attitudes towards girls in your school?

7. How does the school dropout rate among girls affect the development of the school?

8. What measures have you put in place in order to curb persistent school dropouts among girls?

9. What are your views on persistent school dropout rates among girls in your school?

Is there anything else that you may wish to contribute that I did not specifically ask about? Thank you for your time. As mentioned earlier, the information will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

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APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

SECTION A: I welcome you to this in-depth interview. Be assured of confidentiality and the information will be used for academic purposes only. This interview should take about 25-30 minutes.

SECTION B:

1. For how long have you lived in Nakonde District?
2. How do you rate school dropouts among girls?
3. What factors are leading to school dropout among girls?
4. How does persistent school dropout among girls affect:
   (i) Their livelihood?
   (ii) Community development?
5. What are the parents' attitudes towards girls' education in Nakonde District?
6. What are the girls' attitudes towards education in Nakonde District?
7. What do you think should be done to curb persistent school dropouts among girls in Nakonde District?

Is there anything else that you may wish to contribute that I did not specifically ask about? Thank you for your time. As mentioned earlier, the information will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

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DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDIES

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am a student at The University of Zambia.

I hereby request to access your school to carry out a study on the factors leading to persistent school dropout rates among girls in Nakonde District. The dropout refers to students who abandon school at any given grade or cycle of education before completion of Grade 12.

This study will help various stakeholders such as the Ministry of General Education, Non-Governmental Organization, School Administration, Teachers, Parents, and Students, in the Policy formulation and interventions to curb school dropout rates among girls in Nakonde District. While hoping for your favorable response I remain,

Yours Sincerely,

Cecilia Chaponda (Sr.)

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APPENDIX F: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This research sought to establish the factors led to persistent school dropout among girls. As a class teacher you have been purposively selected to participate in answering the questionnaire. The findings of this study are confidential and are for academic purposes only, please answer all the questions correctly. Below are statements regarding factors led to persistent school dropouts among girls in senior secondary schools in Nakonde District.

PART I: Social Demographic Information

1. Sex of respondent,

(a) Female [ ] (b) Male [ ]

2. What is your age?

(a) 20 – 25 [ ] (b) 26 – 30 [ ]

(c) 31 – 40 [ ] (d) 41 + [ ]

3. Level of education,

(a) Certificate [ ] (b) Diploma [ ]

(c) Degree [ ] (d) Masters [ ]

4. For how long have you been teaching in this school?

(a) 1 year [ ] (b) 2 years [ ]

(C) 3 years [ ] (d) 4 + years [ ]

PART II

Please read each statement carefully and **circle or tick** one appropriate number that suits your opinion. **CIRCLE OR TICK IN ONLY ONE COLUMN FOR EACH STATEMENT**. Use the following five point scale of the agreement and disagreement with the statement. **1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 =Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree**

S/N	Factors leading to persistent school dropout among girls	Five Point Scale				
5.	Pregnancy lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Early marriage lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Poverty lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Distance lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Bullying of pregnant girls lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Human trafficking lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Prostitution lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Cultural beliefs and practices lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Girls' involvement in trade and business lead to persistent school dropout among girls	1	2	3	4	5
14	**The rate of school dropouts among girls from the period 2013 to 2015 is high.**	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The rate of school dropouts among girls is high in Grade 10.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The rate of school dropouts among girls is high in Grade 11.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	The rate of school dropouts among girls is high in Grade 12.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The rate of dropout among girls is high among day scholars.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	The rate of dropout among girls is high among boarders.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	The rate of dropout among girls is high in co-education schools.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	The rate of dropout among girls is high in single-sex schools.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	**The negative attitude of girls towards education leads to persistent school drop-out among girls.**	1	2	3	4	5

23.	Teachers prefer teaching boys to girls in your school	1	2	3	4	5
24.	There is negative attitude towards girl-child education by male teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	There is negative attitude towards girl-child education by parents.	1	2	3	4	5

26. Suggest measures which will help to reduce on school dropout rate among girls in your school

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27. What are your views on school dropout rates among girls in your school?

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Thank you for your participation.