



**EARLY MARRIAGES AMONG SCHOOL GOING GIRLS: THE ROLE OF
SCHOOL MANAGERS IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM IN SELECTED
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAPIRI MPOSHI**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Ruth Mbebeta declare that this dissertation presented to the University is my own piece of writing and all works done by other people have been duly acknowledged, and that this work has not been previously printed at The University of Zambia, Zimbabwe Open University or any other university.

Signed **Date**

DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to my mother Catherine Nachalwe Mbebeta, my father Lovewell Mbebeta, my brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews who encouraged me and gave me moral support to continue with my studies.

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ABSTRACT

Early or child marriage is defined as any marriage carried occurring below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing. This study addressed the early girl-child problems which is a global issue particularly in the global South. Research has shown that the poorest countries had the highest child marriage rates. In Zambia, some parents marry off their daughters when they are still young at school going age. This early girl-child marriage practice contributes to a lot of problems such as illiteracy and poverty. The researcher addressed the issue of early girl-child marriages by involving school managers in selected primary schools in Kapiri Mposhi district.

The fight against early marriage among school going girls has often been thrown to traditional leaders and parents ignoring the school manager. This study sought to establish the factors that led to early marriages among school going girls in Zambia and assessed the viability of possible remedies from the perspective of school managers.

The general objective of the study was to ascertain what role the school manager could play in addressing early girl-child marriages. The research paradigm was qualitative and the research questions comprised to what extent early girl-child marriages in selected schools were, what factors cause early girl-child marriages from the school manager's perspective and what solutions could be provided by school managers to address the problem.

The findings revealed that most participants had common knowledge of the meaning of early girl-child marriages. Data generated from the school manager through interviews indicated that poverty was the common factor that contributed to early girl-child marriage.

The study concluded that school managers had full knowledge on early girl-child marriages but were not doing much to address the problem. It is evident from the study that, most of the young girls of school going age faced challenges of early girl-child marriages as they were not allowed to give their own opinion on the issue. Amongst the causes of early girl-child marriages, poverty was viewed to be the prominent one as it had a greater influence on the girl-child's education.

It is recommended that the Guidance and Counselling teachers should continue guiding the girl-child, government to build more schools within a radius of five kilometres and the District Education Board Secretary's office should involve schools in order to come up with policies.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS- Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

CAMFED- Campaign for Female Education

CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

CRC- Child Rights Commission

DEBS - District Education Board Secretary

FAWEZA- Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia.

GRZ - Government Republic of Zambia

HIV- Human Immuno Deficiency Virus

ICRW - International Center for Research on Women

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

MOCTA - Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs

NGO - Non Governmental Organisation

SDGs -Sustainable Development Goals

UNESCO - United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

UNFPA- United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF -United Nations International Children’s Education Fund

WHO - World Health Organisation

ZDHS -Zambia Demographic Health Survey

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the general introduction, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, delimitation, limitation and operational definition of terms.

1.1 The Problem of Early Marriages World over

The issue of early marriages world over has been in existence for a long time especially in the global south. This kind of marriage has been a challenge in most countries in the world. Early marriage is the kind of marriage in which children and adolescents below the age of eighteen years are married off or forced into marriage by either their parents or guardians. Early or child marriage is defined as any marriage below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing (*African Journal of Reproductive Health*: 2012). A girl-child has no choice over such marriages. To conform to this, child marriage also referred to as early or forced marriage is defined as any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing. (*The Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices*: 2003).

Globally 36 per cent of women aged between 20 and 24 were married off or in union before they reached 18 years of age (UNICEF: 2005). Early or forced marriage is a violation of human rights that prevents the girl-child from obtaining an education or expressing herself on the choice of a life partner. This kind of marriage is a human rights violation that hinders the girl-child from

obtaining an education, enjoying optimal health, bonding with others of the same age group, maturing and decisively choosing their own life partners. According to Population Council (2002), Human rights advocates argued that marriage before eighteen years contravenes the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, which defines age eighteen as the end of childhood.

Child marriage was further prohibited by the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the major international agreement defining the rights of girls and women which requires government to condemn all forms of discrimination against girls and women and pursue all appropriate means to eliminate it (UNICEF: 2014). In accordance with this, the Child Rights Convention (CRC) and the 1979 CEDAW also provided the foundation for the perspective which needed a holistic approach to early marriage. However despite that, the trend has continued.

Croll (2010) asserted that, whether with or without the consent of the child, a girl-child marriage remains a serious violation of the child's rights because the young girl is unable to make decisions. It simply shows that, the girl-child rights are violated as she cannot make informed choices. Early girl-child marriage can be a violation of children's basic rights to education as they cannot get good health or make informed decisions about their lives. Unfortunately these kinds of marriages are still going on. This marriage withdraws girls from their respective families and friends, hence leading them into social and psychological isolation. Globally 36 per cent of women aged between 20 and 24 were married off before they reached 18 years of age. UNICEF (2007) reports that, the latest international estimates indicate that, worldwide more than 60 million women aged 20-24 were married before they reached 18. It denotes that, globally 60 million of women were married off early at a school going age. The assumption on early

marriage is that once a girl is married, she is regarded as a woman even though she is only twelve years old or below.

Early girl-child marriages have contributed to a lot of problems in the world such as illiteracy and poverty among others. Zambia happens to be one of the countries affected by this problem. . Most of the girls in Zambia enter marriage without any opportunity of exercising their right to choose their spouses or husbands to be which an infringement of their right is. It has been noted that many people viewed education as less important for girls than boys because society believed that the girl's place was in the kitchen according to the social norms. Hence, the reason for marrying them off at an early age immediately after they became matured at thirteen years or less. UNICEF (2001) states that, research shows that, the highest child marriage rates mostly happen in poor countries. It denotes that, UNICEF has reported that the high rates of child marriages are among the poorest nations or South global.

In Zambia, some of the girls are married off by their parents or guardians when they are still very young at school- going age (GRZ: 2008). It implies that, these girls who are forced into early marriage are too young to make informed decisions about their marriage partners who they hardly know or understand because they are not allowed to express their own feelings. Normally, these girls are married to older men. Often, these young girls have little choice over the age at which they marry, much less the partner they marry, because the marriage is typically arranged by the parents. The young girls are subjected to such kind of treatment because they are not given chance to choose when or to whom they can get married to.

According to Jensen (2003), marriage is typically a barrier to education, since women are often expected to leave school in order to devote their time to the care of their new home or to child

bearing and childcare. This means the girl-child has no knowledge about the implications of marriage itself. This early marriage issue deprives the children of school going age their right to education and leaves them far less able to take advantage of economic chances, their arrangement for adulthood as well as their competence contribution to the well-being of both their families and society in the future. Research from around the world proposes that child marriage or early child marriage rather than safeguarding the girls, frequently has far-reaching negative consequences like denying them their education rights. Until in the recent past the government started taking girl-child education seriously so as to improve the literacy levels in Zambia.

In some circumstances when a girl is married off at an early age, her right to education is denied which means when she becomes a mother, chances of educating her own children become low. This is because she may be unable to afford the costs of schooling for her children leading to high illiteracy levels in the country. It becomes easier when she is educated as she will make an effort of educating her own children especially that she will have understood the importance of education herself and contribute to the economic development of the nation and high girl's participation in various fields. UNESCO (2009) reports that, education plays a key role as a catalyst for human development as it helps the human being's mind to be developed and also opens one's progression in nutrition, health and poverty alleviation. It means that, education plays an important part in the development of the human being as it opens the human mind and later reduces poverty levels.

Female play a major role in the development of the country because when the nation educates a girl child, then it educates a nation. As a result, a girl child needs to be educated in order to bridge the gap between the educated males and females by stopping early marriages. Most

countries now believe that education is a basic human right and not a privilege for only a few and hence must be designed to meet the needs of every citizen and individual. Population Council (2002) observes that, early marriage undermines other rights guaranteed by the Child Rights Convention, including the right to be protected from physical abuse and sexual exploitation and the right not to be separated from parents against one's will.

In some societies girls are engaged when the mother is pregnant or immediately they are born. Bruce (2003) argued that, some marriages even happen at birth, in such circumstances the girl is sent to her husband's home at the age of seven. Hence, leading into acts of physical and psychological abuse. This further results into gender based violence.

More than 700 million women alive today were married off before their eighteenth birthday and that is the equivalent of 10% of the worlds' population. (WHO: 2015). It shows how this trend has affected the population of women. Moreover, the children of the young brides suffer from health complications and also are more likely to be illiterate and this would affect the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The fight against early girl-child marriage has often been thrown to traditional leaders and parents ignoring, very often, the school managers. The research aims at bringing school managers into the fight against early girl-child marriage. Therefore, this study sought to establish factors that lead to early marriages among school going girls in Zambia from the perspective of school managers and to assess the viability of possible remedies.

1.3 Objectives

General Objective

To ascertain what role school managers can play in addressing early girl-child marriages.

Specific Objectives

- (i) To establish the extent of the problem of early girl-child marriage in the selected schools.
- (ii) To ascertain the main causal factors responsible for early marriages from the perspective of school managers.
- (iii) To explore solutions offered by school managers to address the problem of early girl-child marriage.

Liberal feminism theory was used in this research as it is an individualistic form of feminist theory which focuses on female's ability to maintain their equality through their own actions and choices.

1.4 Research Question

The proposed study attempted to answer the following questions in relation to the objectives stated above.

- (i) What is the extent of the problem of early girl-child marriage in selected schools?
- (ii) What factors cause early girl-child marriages from the school manager's perception?
- (iii) What solutions should school managers come up with to address the problem of early girl-child marriage?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in providing information to key stakeholders in education to recognize the pivotal role that, school managers could play in preventing early girl-child marriages.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

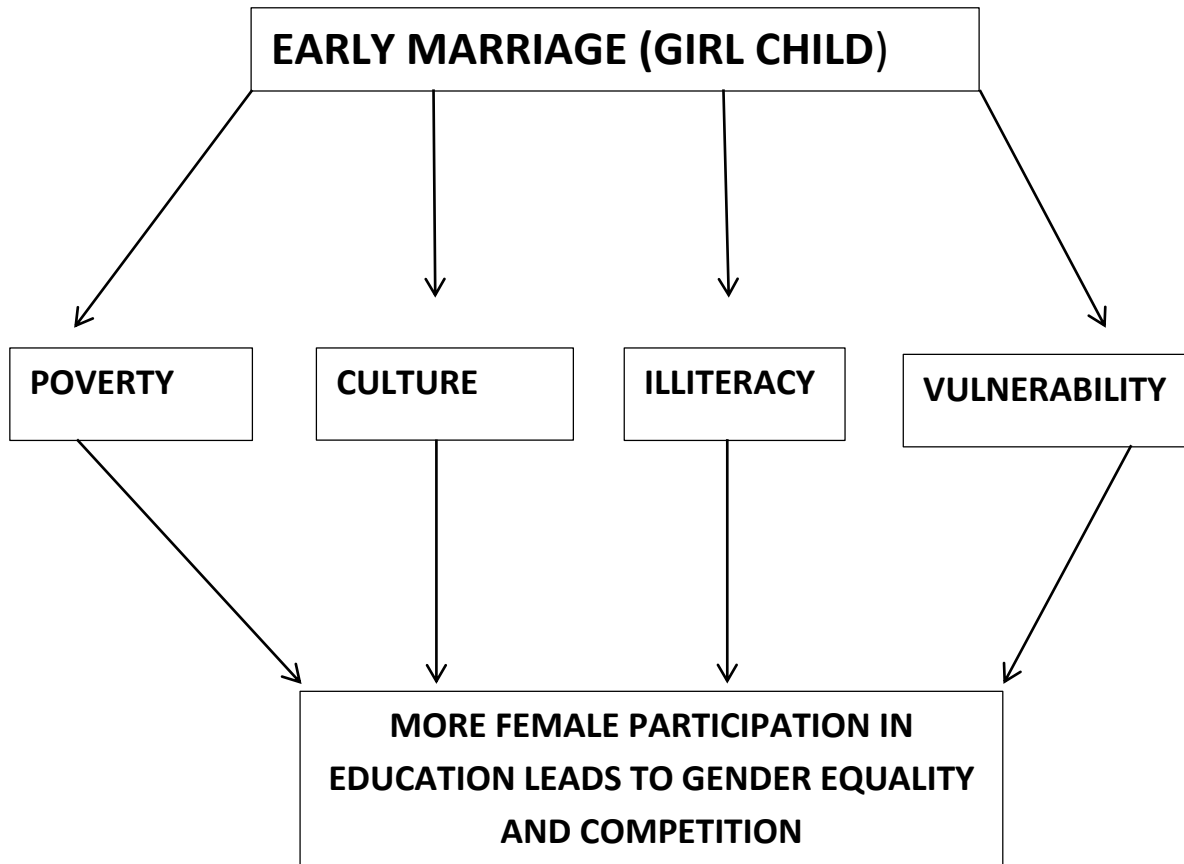
A theoretical framework accounts for or expounds phenomena. It tries to explain why things are the way they are based on theories. Kombo (2005: 56) states that, “A theoretical framework is a general set of assumptions about the nature of phenomena.” The theory is important in the research because it guides the research. The study was enlightened by the theoretical framework governing females. Thus, the theory that was used in this research was liberal feminism. The proponent of this theory was the British philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft who was regarded as a pioneer. Falco (1996) asserted that, liberal feminism is an individualistic form of feminist theory which focuses on women’s ability to maintain their equality through their own actions and choices. This theory is based on the assumption that school is positive and improves women’s welfare. It further states that, it enforces the idea that schooling is meritocratic and that success in it relies primarily on the initiative and intellectual ability of the individual. Yokozeki (1998) stated that, liberal Feminism stems from the idea that women must obtain equal opportunities and equal rights in society. Therefore, liberal feminism argues for better allocation of resources so that women can obtain a fair share of educational opportunities.

Brink (2007) further expounded that John Stuart Mills another proponent argued that, three major parts of women’s lives underlying them included society and gender construction, education and marriage. This meant that, these proponents looked at the women’s welfare by

promoting autonomous self-fulfillment through equal rationality of the sexes and stresses the significance of structuring social, familial and sexual roles. Liberal feminism theory was applicable in addressing the problem of early marriages as it emphasised on equal opportunities and equal rights in society of females by becoming educated as a way of obtaining their fair share of educational opportunities.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

Orodho (2009) defined a conceptual framework as a model of presentation where a researcher represents the relationship between variables in the study and shows the relationship diagrammatically.



The above framework looked at the possible causes of early marriages among school going girls which include poverty, culture, illiteracy and vulnerability. Once the girl –child experiences such problems, they will resort to early marriages as a solution to their problem. However, this problem can be addressed with the use of liberal feminism theory. This leads to finding solutions such as more female participation in education which led to gender equality and competition.

This will potentially result in the positive contribution to the development of the country by the more females as well.

1.8 Delimitation/Scope of the Study

This was carried out in five selected schools of Kapiri Mposhi district.

1.9 Limitation

The major challenge that was faced by this research included school managers being too busy. However, every effort was made to persuade the school managers to accord the researcher time so that the research would not be compromised.

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Early girl-child marriage- Marriage of a girl-child carried out below the age of 18.

Marriage- The formal union of a man and woman, typically s recognised by law, by which they become husband and wife

Poverty- condition of lacking basic needs and financial resources.

Illiteracy - Inability to read and write.

Teenager - Ranging from 13-17 years of age.

Culture – It the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.

Re-entry policy - Re-admission of girls in school after delivery.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter served as the background to the study. This chapter outlines early marriage in Asia, Latin America, Africa and Zambia.

Globally, forced child marriage is much more common in poorer countries and regions, and within those countries, it tends to be concentrated among the poorest households. Research from around the world indicates that early girl-child marriage rather than dealing with the protection of girls frequently has far-reaching negative effects. At the individual level, child marriage deprives girls of basic human rights and marks an abrupt end to childhood, bringing on a rapid transition to adulthood and forcing girls to take on adult roles and responsibilities before they are developmentally ready (UNICEF: 2005). The girl child starts playing adult roles because she has no choice but to do whatever she is subjected to especially because of the cultural and traditional norms.

Worldwide complications answering out of pregnancy or childbirth each year cause the death of 70,000 women between 15 and 19 years just in developing countries. (UNFPA: 2013). It indicates that, these young girls die during childbirth worldwide especially in developing countries. To concur, according to one report by UNICEF (2008), worldwide approximately 70,000 girls aged 15-19 die each year during pregnancy childbirth. The bodies of young girls are physically unprepared for sexual activity and childbirth, greatly increasing the risks of physical harm such as tissue damage, disease, and infection, and complications in pregnancy and delivery,

including obstetric fistula, hemorrhage, and obstructed labour (On Health Rights International Women's Health Coalition : 2008). Raj (2013) asserted that, moreover, child marriage is strongly associated with poverty and maternal mortality at a national level.

Therefore, early marriage is a global challenge that cuts across countries, culture, religion and ethnicities. According to research, annually millions of girls around the world are subjected to forced or early marriages or become brides before they reach the age of 18. For example, UNICEF's (2001a) report indicated that, early marriage is most prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia because of poverty, illiteracy, custom or tradition and gender discrimination. For many poor families, marrying their daughter at an early age essentially is a strategy for economic survival; it means one less person to feed, clothe and educate (ICRW: 2007). In addition, Patton (2009) stated that, regardless of whether young age increases risk for complications relative to older women, obstetric complications are the leading cause of death among 15-19 year old girls in developing countries.

Anderson (2013) indicated that, six of the eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals for developing countries, specifically the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, provision of gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction in child mortality, improvement in maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases cannot be fully realised so long as the practice of child marriage continues. The exercise of child marriages hinders the achievement or eradication of the above mentioned things.

Apparently, the countries with highest rates of early girl-child marriage include India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Brazil and Ethiopia among others. A projected 10-14 million girls are

newly married off each year worldwide. Child marriage is a leading impediment to achieving 6 out of 8 Millennium Development Goals (*Giving What We Can*: 2014). This denotes that, child marriage is a barrier to girl-child's attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which has to be addressed.

Furthermore, studies show that, child or early marriage affects girls' enrolments which in turn affects the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNICEF: 2014). The practice of forced child marriage stands in direct conflict with the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted by the Congress, which include promoting education, women's empowerment and reducing poverty, maternal mortality and HIV and AIDS. This problem of early girl-child marriage hinders the achievement of both the MDGs and SDGs.

2.1 Early Marriage in Asia

Early marriage occur frequently in Asia. Child marriage rates in South Asia are the second highest in the world where 48 per cent of women aged 15-24 have been married (UNICEF: 2005). Child marriages in Southern Asia are frequently forced into early sexual activity and early childbearing. Unbren (2012) postulated that, early marriage often leads to early child bearing which in turn increases the risk of pregnancy complications and premature child birth and even maternal and infant death. It shows that, this kind of marriage poses a great danger to the girl's health which may result into maternal and infant deaths.

Marriage patterns are more diverse in Asia and the extreme cases are Afghanistan and Bangladesh where 54 per cent and 51 per cent of girls respectively are married by age 18 (*Innocenti Digest: Early Marriages Child Spouse*: 2001). The girl-child is married off before 18

years of age. In Afghanistan girls are largely used as an economic burden on the family as well as to parents who are quick to marry off their daughters to receive bride price.

In Bangladesh most girls are married off at an early school going age. A Plan Report from Bangladesh found that parents feel obliged to find husbands for their girls in spite of the fact that the same parents know of child marriages' bad effects (Plan: 2013). The report explains that, despite parents or guardians having full knowledge about such kind of marriage they still go ahead to subject the girl-child to these marriages by choosing husbands for their girls. Even if the man is either older or already with other wives they will still go on to marry off their daughters to such kind of a man.

Many Bangladeshi girls are married off soon after puberty, partly to free their parents from an economic burden and partly to protect the girls sexual puberty (*Innocent Digest: Early Marriages Child Spouse: 2001*). It asserts that, the girls are subjected to this kind of marriage in order to help the selfish parents to become economically sound and protect the girl's sexual puberty because they believe a girl can become pregnant out of wedlock if not married off early. Parents or guardians are not concerned with the girl-child's education welfare.

Muhammad (2000: 127) observes that, "In Bangladesh, a girl will be withdrawn from school if a good marriage prospect arises." Their parents prefer marriage to school as they look down or degrade the girl-child to merely taking care of the household chores, procreation and being submissive to the husband and in-laws. Temporary marriages are often used as an excuse for transactional sexual exploitation among the girl-child. Non-Governmental Organisations report that there is a rise in incidents of hostile groups operating in the northern districts of Bangladesh, putting pressure on the poor to marry off their girl-children to older men (*Protecting the Girl-*

Child: 2014). The poor parents or guardians are forced by the unfriendly influential families to marry off their girl-children to any man older than them so long he is financially sound. To them girl-child education is unimportant. Thus, many parents and guardians strongly believe that investment in girl's education is a sheer waste of time and resources.

Further, in Nepal where the average age at first marriage is 19 years, 7 per cent of girls are married off by the time they are 15 years old (*Innocenti Digest: Early Marriage Child Spouse*: 2001). The girls are married off as early as fifteen years and below without their consent. Additionally, Parrinder (1999) stated that, a girl in Nepal who was married at 15 years to a man twice her age suffered domestic violence for over five years and she had been told by her mother-in-law that such abuse was sound and it was a wife 's duty to bear it. A girl-child suffered the consequences of abuse due to cultural norms because people feel females should be subjected to such treatment regardless of age. More than half or 51 per cent of Nepalese women between the ages of 20-24 were married before they turned 18. (Nepal Demographic Health Survey: 2011).

Girls who are married early are more likely to be exposed to sexual, physical and emotional abuse. An International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) study in India shows that girls who married before age 18 reported experiencing physical violence twice as often, and sexual violence three times as often as girls who married at a later age (*African Journal of Reproductive Health*: 2012). Further, forced or early child marriage is also a source of strengthening family, clan, and tribal connections or settling obligations between them. An example is that of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, Afghanistan and some parts of the Middle East, where marrying young girls is a common practice to help the grooms' families in offsetting debts or to settle inter-family disputes. In Pakistan child marriage is intensely rooted in poverty and in

centres of old patriarchal traditions, with devastating effects on girls that lost a life time. A girl is used as a tool through early child marriage in solving the parents or family's financial problems or disputes. Monischa (2013) observed that, Afghanistan, for example, where the declining opium trade has left many in severe debt, farmers will marry off their young daughters as “opium brides” to their creditors as a means of settling their debts. Afghanistan has been ranked as the most dangerous country in the world for women because of its high levels of child and forced marriage, female illiteracy, and maternal mortality (Afghan Ministry of Public Health: 2010).

In Sri Lanka, child marriages rates were particularly high in places where Muslim law permits girls to marry at 12. For example, in Ampara and Puttalam districts where the occurrence of child marriages was 50.8 and 35.7 per cent respectively. Further, Nanda (2011) stated that, young brides experience domestic violence with the most common perpetrator being husbands followed by fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law and sometimes even mothers- in-law.

Furthermore, Syria is another country which in 2011 had thirteen per cent of girls under eighteen being married off (UNICEF: 2013). These early marriages have an impact on the future of the girl child as it leads to fewer females participating in leadership roles. Child marriage is usually the product of gender discrimination that reckons the survival, development protection as well as the higher participation of boys than girls

2.2 Early Marriage in Latin America

In Latin America, young girls are married off at an early age. Nearly one in four girls across Latin America is married off before the age of 18 (UNICEF: 2016). Girls who are most at risk of child marriage are from rural areas and poor households and often belong to indigenous groups. (UNICEF: 2014). The girls from rural areas and poor families are the victims of child marriages.

The rates are very significant across the region between 8 and 41 per cent. Latin America and the Caribbean hosts one of the top 20 countries with the highest rates of child marriage currently prevailing. In Latin America, like in the rest of the world, child marriage disproportionately affects girls (Regional Overview, Latin America and Caribbean: 2009). Additionally, Nicaragua has an estimation of 41% of girls being married off before 18 years old.

In most countries in Latin America and Caribbean, educating girls often is less of a priority than educating boys as a woman's most important role is considered to be that of a wife, mother and homemaker. In 2012 UNFPA estimated that 37 million girls in Latin America and Caribbean are likely to marry in the next fifteen years.

In Latin America and Caribbean, like globally, child marriage is rooted in gender inequality and discriminatory social norms around girls' and women's roles in the family, communities and society (Plan and UNICEF: 2014).

In some contexts girls themselves may see marriage as a way of finding some freedom where families place strong restrictions on their sexuality, or where they come from violent homes. (Conversations with Girls Not Brides partners working on child marriage in the region; Report produced for Girls Not Brides: Exploratory research: child marriage in Latin America, 2015).

In addition, adolescent pregnancy is another cause of girl-child or early marriage. In this region, which has one of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the world, early pregnancy, sexual violence among minors and child marriage are closely linked, either as a driver or a consequence of one another (Plan and UNICEF: 2014).

Early marriage in Latin America leads to death when giving birth. The risk of maternal death in Latin America and Caribbean is four times higher among adolescents under 16 than among

women over 20 (World Health Organisation: 2016). Further, Child marriage traps girls and their family in a cycle of poverty and often results in profound physical, psychological and emotional consequences (WHO: 2016). Girls from poverty stricken families are victims of such child marriages.

Recent research from Central America and Brazil found out that poverty can also drive child marriage in the region (Population Council: 2013). Further, Bang (2014) stated that indigenous girls living in impoverished areas can be especially vulnerable to the practice.

The American continent has four countries which are among the most affected globally and trends over the past thirty years have shown that it is the only region that have not seen a significant change in rates of child marriage (The Global Population: 2013). The continent has not done enough to address the problem of child marriages. Field (2005) argued that, child marriage may limit girl's educational opportunities where schooling systems are relatively strong and girl's education is socially supported.

2.3 Early Marriage in Africa

All African countries regardless of the rate of early girl-child marriages experience the challenge that has deprived girls of their education, health and future prospects. Most girls in Africa go into marriage without being given an opportunity to exercise their own choice on who they want because they are too young to make conversant decisions about the person they are getting married to. To agree with the above, many girls in Africa enter marriage without any chance of exercising their right to choose; too young to make an informed decision about their marriage partner, implications of marriage itself (Ending Child Marriage in Africa: Impact of Child Marriage on Empowerment: 2015).

Further, child marriage is a universal human rights violation in Sub-Saharan Africa that may hinder progress toward development and public health goals. Mensch (2006) observed that, previous studies have reported that half of the girls aged 20-24 years marry before the age of 18 in many African countries despite programmatic and legislative efforts to prevent child marriage.

According to research in Africa the highest rates of early marriage are found in Niger 70 %, Central African Republic 68%, Chad 68% and Mali 55%. These early marriages are most likely to happen among girls who are poor because they have low education levels and live in rural areas. Besides the two countries with high prevalence rates are found in Uganda and Zambia, Uganda had 50% of girls between 15 -19 married off and Zambia had 27% of girls married off (World Marriage Patterns: 2000). In the Northern part of Nigeria, they believe that a girl-child's first menstrual period should be in the husband's house. In extreme cases the girl-children are even given out before they are born to older men enough to be their father according to the traditional norms. Another example is that of sub-Saharan Africa were 60 per cent of women with no education were married off before the age of 18 per cent compared to 23 per cent of these who went to school after the age of 12.

Most recent socio-economic indicators in Africa show that Child, Early and Forced Marriage (CEFM) continues to limit the capacity of young girls of developing skills, knowledge and the resources required to become autonomous contributing members of society (Ending Child Marriage in Africa: Impact of Child Marriage on Empowerment: 2015).

Child marriage is a violation of a girl's rights, it also seriously compromises efforts to reduce Gender Based Violence, advance education, overcome poverty and improve health indicators for

girl's abuse (Ending Child Marriage in Africa: Impact of Child Marriage on Empowerment: 2015).

Additionally, indicators also show that the issue of child, early and forced marriage is closely associated with cyclical poverty, low levels of education poor health and abuse (Ending Child Marriage in Africa: Impact of Child Marriage on Empowerment: 2015). However, poverty seems to be the main cause of child marriages in most parts of Africa. Poverty is a major factor underlying child marriage as many parents genuinely believed that it will secure their future and that it is in their best interest (Marrying Too Young End Child Marriage: 2012).

Further, Louis (2000) indicated that, the combination of extreme poverty, civil unrest and religious fundamentalism that plagues North Africa has circled a fertile environment for the sexual exploitation of young girls including child marriage.

Giovanni (2013) specified that, in low-income families, lack of economic alternatives contributes to the practice as marriage to older men may be seen as bringing economic , security for the girls and sometimes for her entire family.

In Africa, the importance of financial transactions at the time of marriage also tends to push families to marry their daughters early especially in sub-Saharan cultures where parents get a high bride price for a daughter who is married (International Center for Research on Women, 2007). Mutombo (2010:19) states that, "There has been growing disparities, particularly in the Sub Sahara Africa between women and men in terms of access to education." The males are favoured more than females in the accessibility of education because society believes that even if a girl does not access education she will get married someday.

The girls from the poorest families are the victims of early girl-child marriages. For instance, in Senegal, a girl from a poor household is four times more likely to marry as a child than a girl from a rich household simply because she is just forced into marriage to help the family. In some countries such as South Sudan where child marriage is common, the dowry comes by the groom, that gives it to the family in exchange for her work and fertility. (Human Rights Watch: 2013).

The UN ECA (1999) report has highlighted social and economic structures, poverty, illiteracy, socio-cultural values, and gender discrimination as the major reasons why girls are married off early in Africa, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Many girls do not get the opportunity of making their own decisions because they cannot exercise their rights unlike the boys who have a say on when and who they would marry and what to do once they are married. To be in accord with this, many girls enter marriage without any chance of exercising their right to choose (*Innocenti Digest: Early Marriage Child Spouse: 2001*).

The young girls are exposed to a lot of complications during child birth. Raj (2013) indicated that, it follows that child marriage is strongly associated with the early onset of childbearing, short inter-pregnancy intervals, unwanted pregnancies and high life time fertility, all of which are associated with poor obstetric outcomes. This kind of marriage leads to maternal deaths or difficulties during child delivery.

Abuse or sexual violence is also experienced by the child bride as the parents do not care about that and she has no say because she cannot object to what the husband suggests. In most cases this leads to gender based violence. A further effect of child marriage is higher rates of domestic violence and rape. Klasen (2002) stated that, girl brides are twice as likely as 60 women brides to experience domestic violence. In addition, girls are also affected by social consequences,

because they are most at risk of abandonment, separation and divorce, but also to be widowed, especially if they are married to much older men.

Early child marriages in some African countries happen where they lack schools because they are in distant places. In areas where schools are unavailable or girls' education is considered unimportant, even undesirable this lack of opportunities may lead to child marriage. Lack of schools in some areas may lead to child marriages because the girls are never exposed to education (Institute National ICF International: 2013). For example, in Niger 75% of women between 20-24 years of age had no formal schooling in 2012.

Orphaned children especially girls are also victims of early girl-child marriages. Orphaned children may be particularly susceptible to early marriage in poverty-stricken areas, as struggling caregivers may view marriage to a financially established older man as an opportunity to better provide for their wards, or at least to relieve their costly caretaking obligations at a profit (Early Marriage: Whose Right to Choose, Forum on Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls: 2000). In addition, for example in East Africa, girls, more than boys, who have lost one or both parents because of AIDS, are particularly at risk of being forced to marry very early, because there are no adults who can support them (UNICEF, 2006). A study conducted in Kenya and Zambia in 2004 found that married girls aged 15-19 were 75 percent more likely to contract HIV than sexually active, unmarried girls of the same age (UNICEF: 2005).

Current research on child marriage in Africa also shows that most national governments in the region are either not aware of the seriousness of the issue and or have not prioritised child marriage as a serious problem that has far reaching impacts on health, education and development indices (Ending Child Marriage in Africa: Impact of child Marriage on Empowerment: 2015).

2.4 Early Marriage in Zambia

In Zambia most of the school going girls are married off at an early age. Mulenga (2010) stated that, marriage in Zambia can be customary, legal and religious although religious unions are not recognized by the state. Experts blame customary marriages for fuelling child unions, as they often disregard the law in that they are arranged without the bride's consent.

In some cases, child brides are pulled out of school and deprived of further education thereby killing off the skills to help lift their families out of poverty. The Zambia Demographic Health Survey (2014) stated that, one in every four Zambian girls is married off at an early age with a large share of this quarter marrying below the age of 18 and cases of those before the age of 15 recorded.

To correspond, with the above mentioned information, it was observed that, in Zambia, girls are married off by their parents and guardians when they are still very young at school going age (GRZ: 2008). This mostly happens in rural areas. According to research, Zambia is the third highest country with cases of early child marriage in the SADC region and nineteenth in the world. Normally, the rates differ from province to province with Luapula and Eastern province exceeding 70 per cent and 60 per cent respectively. Research indicated that, not only are people unaware of the potentially negative effects of child or early marriages but also cognizant of the brief short term nature of the benefits related with it. For instance, the parents desire to benefit from dowry or bride price which was widely cited as the main driver of early child marriages despite the widespread acknowledgement that dowry was paid in full.

Moreover, the issue of early marriage is linked to a range of both health and social effects for these innocent young girls. In fact despite their young age, married girls often are forced to

become pregnant immediately or shortly after the wedding (UNFPA: 2013). It means that, girls are subjected to such kind of treatment in which they may become pregnant and die during delivery. Normally, the girls were and are still being forced into these marriages by their parents, guardians and society at a very early age.

Zambia's 2013 Millenium Development Goals (MDG) progress report indicated early marriages as one of the triggers of maternal mortality in Zambia as it is estimated that 38 mothers die each month due to complications relating to pregnancy and child birth in Zambia.

Additionally, Mutombo (2010: 18) observes that, "Society perceives a girl-child as an object of marriage and source of wealth to the family through bridal price (lobola)." Parents as well as society regard the girl-child as objects for marriage as they are required to make ends meet on their behalf. As a result, they could not make conversant decisions about their marriage partners which led to a greater risk of domestic violence as well as abuse.

In Zambia, early and forced marriages are common in Luapula province, where the incidence of early pregnancy and underage marriage is estimated at about 70 % among teenage girls (UNFPA: 2002). Mulenga (2010) stated that, underage marriage is more rife in Luapula Province and are affecting the education of girl-children and exposing them to HIV and AIDS at a tender age.

Furthermore, Mulenga (2010) indicated that, Chief Kasoma of Luapula Province reported that early marriages are exposing young girls to complications when giving birth, resulting in increased maternal and infant mortality.

There had been reports from Mumbotuta Primary school in Milenge district in Luapula province which show that only one girl sat the grade 7 examination in 2016 while thirty-five were married

off by either the parents or guardians. At the same school, only three and two girls were in grade 5 and 6 respectively as the rest of them had been married off despite all the efforts by authorities. (*Zambia Daily Mail*, Monday, December 19, 2016). This is due to the negative attitude by both the parents and society towards girl-child education. Mutombo (2010) postulated that, the image and treatment of the girl-child is that of a passive and submissive person who remains quietly in the background. Besides, early marriage is a human rights issue due to the nature of the child's permission which has some lack of consent to enter into such kind of a relationship.

Moreover, these early marriages do not last long as there is a degree of fear that the cycle of poverty, lack of education and employment may continue into future generations. Thus, hindering the progress of the individual as well as society. These marriages deprive many girls the well-established benefits of schooling like the improvement of economic prospects and better health status. Hartwell (1998) stated that, poor, rural families with many children often do not choose to spend the little money they have to pay school expenses for their girl children. As a result, they have a perception that educating a girl child is a waste of resources as she may soon get married.

In Zambia, the girls' participation in education seems to be poor among rural families as a result of cultural practices which promote early marriages among school going girls. Mutombo (2010:18) affirms that, "The participation of girls in education in Africa to a large extent is influenced by the cultural and societal perception of the girl-child." Since a female is deprived of her right to education, she is married off at an early age which means that she would not educate her children as well because she would not afford the cost of schooling for her children and does not understand the importance of education.

According to the Mfuwe Project in Luangwa it was observed that, there are very few role models in rural areas as the Education Board Secretaries sends less female teachers to the remote schools. Thus, the importance of school fades quickly when all awaits them is planning maize (Child Marriage Situations for Zambia, 2015).

Studies on harmful effects of early marriage on girls health reveal that girls who are married off before the age of consent of 18 years, experience earlier sexual debut, give birth to more children and lose more children to neonatal and childhood diseases, (*African Journal of Reproductive Health*: 2012). It denies the fact that, the girl is too young to understand the consequences of childbearing. The girl ends up having many children as she is ignorant about family planning or the use of contraceptives. In reality, child marriage subjects a young girl to sexual activities at the tender age in which they are not physically mature, also young mothers face higher risks during pregnancies including complications such as heavy bleeding, fistula infection, anasemia and eclampsia, which contribute to higher mortality rate of both mother and a child (Children Dignity Forum, 2010).

Further, the girls married off at an early age suffer a lot of consequences as they are exposed to a lot of difficulties in their lives. Reports indicate that young girls are exposed to many health risks which include teen pregnancy, fistula, childbearing and motherhood before they are physically or psychologically ready for such huge responsibilities and pressures (Ministry Of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs, 2015). Early marriage vice denies the girl-children of their right to both education and employment which makes them more vulnerable to the risks of sexual as well as physical violence. The girls who are married off as teenagers are psychologically affected and more likely to experience among other things depression, anxiety and other mood disorders.

Further, as these girls are married off, there is a possibility of dropping out of the education system hence having less number of female participants in different institutions.

The issue of early or child marriage is not just a personal or family matter but for the entire nation. Each time a girl misses out on her education through a forced marriage her family as well as the country miss out too on her potential contributions which include economic and social aspects. Mutombo (2010: 18) states that, “The attitude of African society towards the girl-child can be traced even in the way the school curriculum was designed, which placed the girl-child in the subservient position.” However, this trend is slowly changing as the curriculum is being changed to suit girl-child education in order to reduce or eradicate child marriages. Without access to education, the young women who happen to have been married off at an early age will not gain both the skills and knowledge relevant to be competitive for employment purposes.

The causes of early marriages include poverty, conflicts and emergencies, gender inequality and cultural norms, school proximity or neglect of the area by the government. Burns (1998) stated that, in West Africa as a whole, a recent UNICEF study shows that economic hardship is encouraging a rise in early marriage, even among some population groups that do not normally practise it. Worth (2008) argued that, poverty is one reason so many families marry their children off early. Thus, families resort to early marriage because of high poverty levels.

Poverty is one of the major factors underpinning early marriage. Malhotra (2003) affirmed that, poverty leads to a higher prevalence of child or early marriage because poor families feel they have fewer resources and incentives to invest in alternative options for girls. The family’s only option for the girl-child is early marriage as they cannot afford to educate her. When the girl-child is married off early, she is more likely to be trapped by poverty which limits not only their

potential to support adequately their families but also constrains the economic growth in their communities as well as countries. When daughters marry, parents are relieved of the economic responsibility of rearing them and sometimes receive economic benefits in the form of bride wealth (UNICEF: 2001).

Additionally, early marriage is widespread in communities where poverty is prevalent, birth and death rates are high while access to education and health care is low too. Many families force the girls into early marriage because they regard girls as their economic burden that can relieve them through marrying them off. Lauro (2013) observed that, where poverty is acute, giving a daughter in marriage allows parents to reduce family expenses by ensuring they have one person to feed, clothe and educate. Bad attitude by the parents towards the girl-child's welfare leads them into only wanting to satisfy their selfish needs by marrying her off. This happens because most poor families reap economic burden benefits from dowry or bride price wealth by marrying off girls at younger ages. Poverty does not only contribute to risk of early age marriage, it also increases the likelihood that a girl will give birth at a very young age as child brides tend to have children early than expected.

Many parents believe that a marriage can be an investment in the interest of the girls (UNFPA, 2012). It suggests that, a girl-child is used to uplift the standard of living for the parents. For many families marrying their daughter at an early age basically is a strategy for economic survival.

Research indicates that the poorest countries have the highest child or early marriage rates (UNICEF: 2001). These kinds of marriages are concentrated in poorest countries with the lowest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which tends to have the highest child or early marriage

prevalence rates. UNFPA (2002) reports that, poverty and tradition were behind child or early marriage, with the remote rural areas being the worst hit.

Illiteracy is another cause of early marriages. Barret (2010) stated that, when parents fail to educate the girl-child no one else will educate her and it means her future life is doomed. She will remain illiterate. Reports indicate that 20 per cent of the ever married vulnerable girls who got married before 18 years from the poorest households could not read and write. There is no doubt that these young wives cannot make decisions in their marriage or engage in mutual negotiations with their adult husband (Population Council Report: 2003). The significance of this is, these girls have no say because they are not educated and they do not know their rights. As a result, the older husbands tend to take advantage in the name of submissiveness of these young wives.

Social cultural norms have also contributed to early marriages because society believes that a girl is supposed to be married off immediately she becomes matured according to traditional practices. A girl is supposed to be submissive to the husband. It is for this reason that there has been a lot of gender based violence cases in the country. The child brides are often isolated from their peers and therefore it widens gender inequality and in situations where child marriages often results in separation from family and friends and lack of freedom to participate in community activities, it can have major consequences on girls' mental and physical well-being (UNICEF: 2011). The girls are married off to older men who are rich and this means that a child bride should be submissive to her husband. No objection from a girl-child is allowed in marriage instead she should submit to her husband. The traditional customs encompassing marriage include the desirable age which is early marriage and the manner in which a husband is chosen that relies on a society's perception of the family.

Consequently, during initiation ceremonies, girls are taught on how to look after their husbands and this makes them to fall prey to early marriage because they would want to practice what they have been taught. There are more chances of children leaving school for early marriage because of what the society teaches them on marriage. Evidence indicate that the various factors that make the girl-child vulnerable in early marriage include education and literacy levels, orphanhood, single parentage, levels of access to sexual and reproductive health services, Gender Based Violence and health levels (Child Marriage Situation in Zambia, 2015). As a result initiation ceremonies lead to an increase on the number of child marriages or brides in society and the country at large.

Early marriage leads to early pregnancy which poses a great health risk as the child bride is not fully developed for child bearing. Not only does early or child marriage affect 14 million girls a year but also the consequences which are far reaching. There is a high number of school girl drop-outs due to pregnancies and early marriages in Zambia and only half of the girls who drop out of school because of pregnancies return to school after giving birth (Educational Statistical Bulletin, 2015).

The demand and supply is based on how the society views early or forced marriage among the school going children. Some countries in the world have tried to put measures in the fight against early marriages. The eradication of early marriages is done by providing opportunities for services; reforming or enforcing laws and policies pertaining to early marriage; supporting girls and developing their skills; and using advocacy as an intervention strategy to prevent early marriage (Early Marriage and Poverty, 2003). Early marriages can be lessened by supporting the girls through developing their skills. However, there has been a gap in the previous studies because school managers have not been included in the study.

Zambia has tried to put in some measures to curb the vice on early girl-child marriage. To start with, Zambia is the member of the continental Campaign on ending child marriages of the African Union Commission which is aimed at increasing the continental agenda on child marriages (Child Marriage Situation for Zambia, 2015). Due to the high number of early pregnancies and marriages especially in rural areas, the Zambian government has necessitated to put in place the structures and systems offering counselling, guidance and other forms of support (*Zambia Daily Mail*, Wednesday, July 19, 2017). Forum for Women Education in Zambia

In 2016, the Zambian government implemented the Girls Education and Women Empowerment and Livelihood (GEWEL) project with the support from the World Bank which aimed to empower poor and vulnerable girls and women in the country. It further has components such as Keeping Girls in School Initiative and 16 districts from all the provinces have been identified through the earlier notes social welfare programme at Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) (*Zambia Daily Mail*, Wednesday, July 19, 2017).

The country has revised the age of legal marriage from 18 to 21 years. Anyone who is below the age of 21 years should not be married off in order to give chance to girls to finish school including tertiary education (*Times of Zambia*, Wednesday, October 11, 2017).

The country has also been helping the girl-child through NGOs such as Forum for African Women Educationalists of Zambia (FAWEZA) and Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) who support the vulnerable girls and those who are in re-entry policy. Educating girls promote gender equity as it is an investment, the highest return available in the developing world as it provides positive values and skills or personal and national development ; it has a multiplier effect empowering women to bring positive change in a nation (FAWEZA: 2006).

Most countries worldwide are still experiencing the problem of early girl-child marriages because of some factors such as poverty and illiteracy. However, the countries are trying to put measures to lessen or eradicate early girl-child marriage cases. In Zambia, early girl-child marriages are being reduced through NGOs such as GEWEL, FAWEZA AND CAMFED though still more has to be done.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at Literature Review. This chapter outlines the aspects of methodology in this study with the focus on research design, research instrument, study population, study sampling procedure, sample size, validity and reliability, ethical issues, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Research design is a plan that holds the elements in a research project. Orodho (2003) asserted that, “Research design is a scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problem.” It is a plan of enquiry. McMillan (2001: 31) states that, “The purpose of the research design is to provide within an appropriate mode of inquiry, the most valid and accurate answers possible to the research question.” The research design used was the qualitative method to collect, analyse and interpret data. Descriptive survey was used to explore the nature of early child marriages in Zambia, its manifestations and prevalence. Kombo (2006: 71) states that, “Descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing a sample of individuals.” Purposive sampling was used because the researcher purposely targeted school managers who were deemed to be reliable for the study. This study examined the underlying cultural, social and economic factors that underpin the practice of early child marriages among school girls to understand its origins, dynamics and implications.

3.2 Research Instrument

The instrument that was used in this research was a structured interview guide. Kombo (2006: 94) states that, “structured interviews involve subjecting every informant in a sample to the same

stimuli for instance asking each informant similar questions.” It means that, similar questions are asked in an interview. Interviewing calls for probing and amplification of responses. The in-depth interview was used in this study. McMillan (2001: 42) asserts that, “The in-depth interview merely extends and formalises conversation and is often characterised as a conversation with a goal.” Its focus is on the individual as it offers an opportunity to address complex experiences. All interviews occurred in a mutually and friendly manner. The data was a combination of flexibility and this made data to be captured in a natural form.

In order to make certain on the significance of this study and its findings the researcher took into consideration issues of validity and reliability. Silverman (2004: 283) states: “Validity and reliability are two important concepts to keep in mind when doing research, because in them the objectivity and credibility of research are at stake.” McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 470) postulate that, “Validity refers to the degree to which explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world or the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participant and the researcher.” In this case, validity can be considered as a descriptive word or the way variables are utilised in assessing precisely the issue aimed to measure such as the problem of early girl-child marriages.

With reliability, the researcher maximised the reliability of the data collection process. Reliability is the probability in which a specific method happen to produce the same findings of the study if repeated or conducted by another person. To develop reliability, the researcher conducted the interviews in a mode that was objective and professional for the researcher to cope. Consequently, the interviewee’s responses were both recorded and transcribed verbatim.

3.3 Sampling Techniques

The participants in the study were school managers. The sampling techniques were employed at the school level to determine particular people for the study. The study used purposive sampling in non-probability method and participants were carefully chosen on the basis of their status. Kombo and Tromp (2006) stated that, the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues under study and targets a group of people believed to be reliable for the study. This sampling technique which was used was typical sampling. It was used because the school managers were familiar with the early girl-child marriages situation. The researcher transcribed the tape recording.

3.4 Target Population

Population is the number of people in a certain area. Kombo (2006) stated that, “Population refers to a group of persons or elements that have at least one thing in common.” It may include some of the overall demographers such as gender, district and school of the school manager. The target population comprised school managers from five selected schools in Kapiri Mposhi district.

3.5 Study Sample

This study was carried out in five selected primary schools in Kapiri Mposhi district. This was done with the aim of establishing the problem of early girl-child marriages among school going children with the involvement of the school managers.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used was interview guide which was piloted in five selected primary schools in Kapiri Mposhi district. Interviews were regarded a very reliable way of accessing people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and their constructions of reality (Marshall and

Rosseman: 2006). For this particular study, the interview was the most prominent data generation strategy that allowed the participants to describe the phenomenon under study (Punch, 2009). This was used to gather additional information from the respondents who happened to be school managers so as to have good understanding of their suggestions and interests. Data was collected through the use of oral interviews in which information was obtained about early girl-child marriages. This was because the situation and the respondents demanded the use of this type of interview. The researcher conducted face to face interviews or simply read out the questions and recorded the responses on the answer sheet that was created for each participant.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

In order to access entry into the field of study the researcher sought an introduction letter from the University of Zambia/ Zimbabwe Open University and a research letter from the District Education Board Secretary's office in Kapiri Mposhi district. Once permission was granted the researcher booked appointments with selected schools through the DEBS office in the district and the school managers themselves. It was emphasised in the permission letters prior to the interview that the participation in the interview was voluntary. Data was collected from the five selected primary schools using the interview guide. The researcher visited each of the sampled primary schools and administered the interview guide herself. The participants were given necessary instructions orally and assured them of confidentiality after which they were accorded enough time to answer. The respondents from all the selected schools were willing to answer the interview and permission to record the interview was sought from the same participants. Therefore, the whole data collection process was successful.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis started during data collection exercise by arranging the collected data according to the salient arguments in relation to the objectives of the study. The interview results were first analysed to check on the content and be put in related or common themes using qualitative methods. The manual method in the analysis of data was used by reading the findings. Relevant interpretation, discussion and recommendation were drawn from the analysed data. Data was analysed and interpreted to give a clear idea of the situation in the selected schools of Kapiri Mposhi district by using thematic approach. It was done qualitatively and descriptively using the emerging items. It also looked at what the school manager and educational authorities were doing about it.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The researcher ensured that ethical consideration was adhered to during the study. Some measures were taken into account while planning and conducting the study in order to ensure that the rights as well as the welfare of each subject would be protected. The researcher was ethical by treating all information confidential and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. The respondents were free to express themselves according to the questions in the interview.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter looks at methodology. This chapter presents the main findings on the role of school managers on early girl-child marriages.

4.1 Findings

1. The extent of the problem of early girl-child marriage in selected schools.

Regarding the definition of early girl-child marriage, the findings of the study from the data generated indicated the following definitions that emerged. Respondent from school A, defined early girl-child marriages *as marriages that occur before reaching the age of 18*. School B, the meaning given was, *period involved in marriage when it not supposed to*. School C, the definition was, *marriage of a girl-child below the age of 18 years*. At school D, the meaning given was, *marriage conducted at a tender age below 20 or 21 years*. At school E, it was defined as *girl-children who are married off before they attain the age of 18 years*.

With regard on how long the early girl-child marriages had been going on in the selected schools. The findings from the data generated included: School A respondent said that, *it has been going on since the school was opened*. School B, it has been going on for some time now. At school C, it was stated that, *early marriages have been going on for some time now because of the high number of children who are involved in the trend*. At school D, it has been happening especially in female child headed homes where young children are left to run a home after the death of their parents. At school E, it has been going on since the school was opened in 2002.

Concerning the prevalence of early girl-child marriages at these selected schools, the following emerged. School A respondent stated that it was high. At school B the respondent said the *prevalence rate is high as in 2016 term 1, four grade 6 and three grade 7 girls respectively got pregnant and later married off and only a few came back after giving birth through the Re-entry policy.*

At school C, the respondent stated that, *the rate of early girl-child marriages at this school is high because children's rights are suppressed by marrying them off at a tender age.* At school D, the rate is high as these girls leave school to get married on their own because they envy others who are in marriage. At school E, the respondent said that, this occurs often every year as many girls are married off at a very tender age.

2. Causes of early girl-child marriages

With regard to the factors that cause early girl-child marriages, the findings included the following from the data generated from the selected schools. School A respondent stated that, *parents sent their girl-children to sell foodstuffs where they met their fate by either being married off or being impregnated leading to stopping school.* Insofar as distance is concerned, a *girl-child from a distant area was a victim of these marriages because she moved long distances to access education as they there were no schools within or anywhere near the area. The parents and the community had a very negative attitude as they have no regard for girl-child education.* Poverty as well as peer pressure from their colleagues has also contributed to early girl-child marriages.

At school B, the respondent said that the contributing factors were poverty and child headed households where the girl-child would be looking after her young ones and had to engage in sex

in order to make ends meet. School C indicated that, *the parents of the girl-child lacked initiative as they were unproductive in the midst of natural resources such as land and water to help in the education of a girl-child. Poverty and the infringement of children's rights by forcing them into marriage at a tender age and parents do not value girl-child education.*

School D respondent mentioned that poverty was the cause of early girl-child marriage as parents had no money to let the girl continue with her education. Lack of role models in their area also led to early marriages. Some girls left school to get married because they envied their friends who are married and think that they are comfortable. Vulnerability led to early marriages especially the female child headed homes. It was stated that, *the parents and the community had a very negative attitude as they had no regard for girl-child education. On the pregnancy, only a few pregnant girls returned to school after giving birth (re-entry policy) while most of them were forced into early marriages. Some pregnant girls experienced complications during childbirth resulting in to maternal and infant mortality.*

At school E the respondent mentioned that, *poverty was the main cause of early girl-child marriages as the girl-children were forced into marriages in which they could not make informed decision.* Unemployment of parents and guardians made them to marry off their daughters at a school going age as she is regarded as a source of wealth for the family. Ignorance of the parents also brought about early marriages because they could not draw a line between education and its benefits and child marriage. Underperformance at school made the girl-child to resort to getting married at an early age as she thought that she could do better there.

Regarding the consequences or effects of early girl-child marriages the following findings from respondents emerged. School A respondent said that, *the girl-child suffered a lot when she*

stopped school to be married off as she experienced problems in giving birth leading to maternal or infant deaths. The girl-child continues to be illiterate.

At school B, it was mentioned that, *the girls were not psychologically prepared for marriage or carrying a pregnancy. The girl-child failed to cope up with marriage leading to abuse and later ended in divorce. At school C it was stated that, the nation suffers by having a cluster of female illiterates leading to low literacy levels. Some of the young girls contracted HIV/AIDS when they were married off because their husbands had many sexual partners.*

At school D the respondent observed that, *more females become illiterate as they do not have chance to go or continue with school as a result they will be no development in the country. It was further stated that, it led to maternal deaths as most girls die during childbirth. It leads to rapid population in growth which makes the children born to end up living in poverty and run to the streets especially the orphans. The girl-child's marriage ends up in divorce as she is too young to run a home.*

At school E, it was mentioned that, *the nation will become poor because of the caliber of the females who will remain uneducated and this will lead to the underdevelopment of the nation. Some children are orphans and they are kept by guardians who mistreat them and later run to get married or be sexually abused in the streets. The vulnerable girls are also victims of early child marriages as females are perceived to be a weaker sex.*

3. Solutions to early girl-child marriage

The findings on how the schools have handled the cases of early girl-child marriages included the following. At school A, the respondent mentioned that, the headman and traditional leaders were involved in the fight against early girl-child marriages. At one point, the headman worked

with school management team to punish the parents and guardians to work in his field as a deterrent to would be offenders. The respondent said that, *the Community Action Group (CAG) partnered with Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) to help in sensitizing the girl-child together with their parents and the community. Some young girls who have completed school were invited to talk to the school going girls as role models on education. Some elderly community women were invited to school to sensitise the girl-child on the benefits of education and consequences of early marriages.*

At school B the respondent said that, some cases were extreme and so the Victim Support Unit (VSU) section was involved to talk and counsel the victims (girl-child). The Guidance and Counselling office is incorporated in school as it plays the role of sensitising the girls on the benefits of completing education. The health personnel are invited to sensitise the girls on the disadvantages of early marriages later getting pregnant when they are still very young. *For those who get pregnant, they should come back to school through the re-entry policy so long they are sensitised on this policy.* Former pupils (girls) who had completed school were invited to talk to them about the benefits of education.

At school C the respondent said that, government should build more schools within the radius of five kilometers in order to encourage the accessibility of school places by the girl-child. The Guidance and Counselling office guides and sensitise the girl-child on the value of education. It was indicated that, school managers played a major role by involving the traditional leaders, parents and the community in addressing this issue. During Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings parents were sensitised by interpreting government policies on girl-child education with the focus on the fight against early girl-child marriages.

At school D, it was mentioned that, some female teachers are invited in school to counsel the girl-child and parents as well when they find out that parents are involved in these marriages. In the case of those girls who marry themselves, parents are advised to involve the Victim Support Unit (VSU) to intervene as it is capable of putting a stop to it. The school is being assisted by an organisation called Restless Development found in most schools by giving advice so that pupils abstain from sex.

At school E the respondent stated that, the Guidance and Counselling teacher is given a task to talk to the girl-child and the parents if need be. External people such as those from Victim Support Unit (VSU) and health are invited to sensitise the girl-child on the importance of education and the punishment to be meted on them if they marry off their daughters.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of discussion of findings of the study. The research study set up to answer the following research questions by critically analysing, all pertinent issues in order to come up with precise answers. However, the researcher was mindful of what other people had found before.

5.1 Main Findings

The study revealed that early girl-child marriages was still being practised among the school going girls despite the measures that were put in place. The following is what emerged from the findings.

1. Extent of early girl-child marriages

The research on the extent of early girl-child marriages showed that the respondents knew the definition of early marriages. The findings clearly indicated that most data generated in selected schools of Kapiri Mposhi district from the participants through interviews on the definition of early girl-child marriages showed that they had a common understanding of the meaning. Most of the participants defined it as marriage of a girl-child carried out below the age of 18 or before the girl-child attains the age of 18 years.

The findings of this research were in line with this explanation, early or child marriage is defined as any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing (The Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices: 2003). However, others had a different definition of

early marriage as one conducted at a tender age below 20 or 21 years. The responses above showed that, the school managers were aware of what early girl-child marriage was.

Regarding on how long early girl-child marriages took place in the selected schools the following materialized. According to the data generated from the participants, it was indicated that it had been going on for some time in most schools or since the inception of the school because girl-child pupils could not make informed decisions when their parents or guardians were marrying them off.

The revelations above are in agreement with findings by Croll (2010) who argued that, whether with or without the consent of the child, a girl-child marriage remains a serious violation of the child's rights because the young girl is unable to make decisions. Again the number was high because some children came from female child headed household where parents had died of HIV and AIDS and thus became orphans.

As regards to the prevalence of early girl-child marriages in the selected schools, the respondents identified high levels of poverty as the main reason for high prevalent rates of early girl-child marriages.

The findings of this research are consistent with the view that, Lauro (2013) observed that, where poverty is acute, giving a daughter in marriage allows parents to reduce family expenses by ensuring they have one person to feed, clothe and educate. It entails the bad attitude by the parents towards the girl-child's welfare as they only want to satisfy their selfish needs.

In the same vein, the reports from Mumbotuta Primary school in Milenge district in Luapula province showed that only one girl sat for grade 7 examinations in 2016 while the thirty-five were married off by either the parents or guardians because of poverty and cultural norms. At the same school, only three and two girls are in grade 5 and 6 respectively as the rest of them have

been married off despite all the efforts by authorities. (*Zambia Daily Mail*, Monday, December 19, 2016).

2. Factors that cause early girl-child marriages

The researcher also looked at the factors that cause early girl-child marriages. The research findings indicated that the factors that contributed to early girl-child marriages were numerous and these included poverty, distance to school, infringement of a girl-child's rights, pregnancy, lack of initiative, ignorance, vulnerability, envy, lack of role models in their area and parents and community's negative attitude.

Poverty

Most respondents cited poverty as the common theme regarding the main cause of early girl-child marriage. Four out of five school managers indicated that the common factor of early girl-child marriage was poverty. Parents married off the girl-child at a tender age to older rich men in the hope of alleviating poverty.

The findings cited above are supported by Malhotra (2003) who stated that, poverty leads to a higher prevalence of child or early marriage because poor families feel they have fewer resources and incentives to invest in alternative options for girls. The family's only option for the girl-child is early marriage as they cannot afford to educate her as indicated by respondents.

The findings are also consistent with the conclusion poverty is a major factor underlying child marriage as many parents genuinely believed that it will secure their daughter's future and that it is in their best interest (Marrying Too Young End Child Marriage: 2012).

Furthermore, in the same vein, Lauro (2013) argued that, where poverty is acute, giving a daughter in marriage allows parents to reduce family expenses by ensuring they have one person to feed, clothe and educate.

Negative Attitude

Negative attitude by the parents and community towards girl-child education was also another cause that led to early girl-child marriages, Both the parents and society had a very negative attitude towards girl-child education due to cultural norms where they believed a woman's place to be in the kitchen and never to express her mind. Hence, they had no regard for girls' education.

The revelation above is in line with Mutombo (2010: 18) who argued that, the attitude of African society towards the girl-child can be traced even in the way the school curriculum was designed, which places the girl-child in the subservient position.

Moreover, in some cases, it was the girl herself who wanted to get married because she friends of the same age group who were already married.

Infringement of girl-child's rights

Concerning the infringement of girl-child's rights on early marriage, the girl-child was not accorded an opportunity to express herself in the choice of a partner or to make informed decisions on the issue. These findings are consistent with the view that Mutombo (2010) who stated that, the image and treatment of the girl-child is that of a passive and submissive person who remains quietly in the background. This is what is expected of a girl-child in society

This is consistent with the view according to Jensen (2003) that, early marriages, even when they occur with the seeming consent of the child, violate the basic rights of the child, since by legal

definition a child cannot give consent. The girl-child cannot express herself freely but just follow what the parents impose on her as she holds them in high esteem according to the cultural norms of the society where she comes from.

Lack of initiative by parents

The data generated from the respondents showed that, the parents' of the girl-child were unproductive in the midst of natural resources such as land and water to help in the education of a girl-child because they lacked initiative. This meant that if parents utilise the land and water they would avoid poverty and hence stop marrying off their daughters especially to older men. The finding cited above is consistent with the conclusion that, early marriage is an effective mechanism for transferring a father's patriarchal rights over his daughter to an often time older male in the community, those practices reinforces the family's social status and consolidate economic relationships (UNICEF: 2001).

Vulnerability

Vulnerability as well leads to early marriages especially the female headed or child headed households. The vulnerable girls are also victims of early child marriages as females are looked at to be a weaker sex. At times children may be left alone when the parents die from HIV and AIDS leaving them vulnerable.

The findings above are in agreement with,UNICEF's study in East Africa girls to the effect that girls, more than boys, who have lost one or both parents because of AIDS, are particularly at risk of being forced to marry very early, because there are no adults who can support them (UNICEF, 2006). .

In the same vein, Jensen (2003) stated that, a vulnerable household such as female household or one in which an elderly grandparent is left to care for a child, may feel that the child would be better and safer if married into another household. When the children become orphaned, the remaining family members will not take care of those orphans forcing the girl-child to be in charge of her young ones regardless of age and when things become tough she is forced into early marriage

Health

In addition, some of the young girls who were married off at an early marriage contracted Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) or HIV and AIDS when they were married off because their husbands had many sexual partners. According to the study the girl-child was at a greater risk of contracting HIV and AIDS.

The findings cited above also corresponds with, evidence that indicate the various factors that make the girl-child vulnerable in early marriage include education and literacy levels, orphanhood, single parentage, levels of access to sexual and reproductive health services, Gender Based Violence and health levels (Child Marriage Situation in Zambia: 2015). When the girl-child is married off early, she becomes vulnerable as she remains uneducated, abused, and has no idea on reproductive health among others.

Lack of role models

In Zambia, some areas lack role models to motivate the girl-child in order for her to develop interest in education. The finding cited above is in agreement with the observation Mfuwe Project in Luangwa made that, there are very few role models in rural areas as the Education Board Secretaries sends less female teachers to the remote schools. Thus, the importance of

school fades quickly when all awaits them is planting maize (Child Marriage Situation for Zambia: 2015). Furthermore, the issue of not having role models in their area makes the girl-child who underperforms in class to opt for marriage as she has no one to look up to.

Ignorance

As far as ignorance is amongst the parents of the girl it, contributes to early girl-child marriages as the parents seem not to understand the rights of a child or importance of education. The only option they have is to marry her off instead of allowing her to be in school so that she becomes educated.

The revelation of the findings above are in agreement with, Jensen (2003) who said that, early marriage can adversely affect concerned women along several dimensions such as early termination of education and onset of childbearing and women's status and position within the household.

Pregnancy

With regard to falling pregnant, the respondents stated that only a few pregnant girls return to school after giving birth (re-entry policy) while most of the girls are forced into early marriages. When some girls fall pregnant, the parents force them into marriage though at times it is themselves who opt to get married. Only a few would return to school through the re-entry policy in which girls are re-admitted in school after delivery.

In the same vein, it is indicated that, there is a high number of school girl drop-outs due to pregnancies and early marriages in Zambia and only half of the girls who drop out of school because of pregnancies return to school after giving birth (Educational Statistical Bulletin: 2015).

Distance

Insofar as distance is concerned, a girl-child from a distant area is a victim of these marriages because she moves long distances to access education as they there are still facing challenges with no schools within or anywhere near the area. Because of the distance, it made the girls to resort to early marriage or become pregnant as they faced a lot of challenges.

The findings mentioned above conform with the conclusion that, lack of schools in some areas may lead to child marriages because the girls are never exposed to education (Institute National ICF International: 2013). In the same vein, Mutombo (2010: 6) argued that, location-long walking distances that tire girls expose them to sexual abuse. In short, distance or lack of schools nearby makes the girl-child to be exposed to a number of dangers such as sexual abuses, rape or early marriage.

With regard to marrying themselves, the girls envy their age mates of school going age who are married and view them as being comfortable. This could be due to the way of life where they are exposed to poverty or abuses. The findings cited above are consistent with the view that, in some contexts girls themselves may see marriage as a way of finding some freedom where families place strong restrictions on their sexuality, or where they come from violent homes (Conversations with Girls Not Brides partners working on child marriage in the region; reported by regional experts in Melania Trejo, Report produced for Girls Not Brides: Exploratory research: child marriage in Latin America: 2015)

Effects or Consequences of early girl-child marriage

Regarding the effects or the consequences of early girl-child marriage from the data generated from the findings it depicted serious effects on the girl-child as she gets married prematurely. The following findings from the participants on the consequences of early girl-child marriages emerged.

Illiteracy

When the girl-child was married off at an early age instead of being in school, then it meant the nation suffering by having a cluster of female illiterates leading to low literacy levels in the country. Besides, the nation will become poor because of the caliber of the females who will remain uneducated and leading to the underdevelopment of the nation.

The revelations above are in agreement with findings by Barret (2010) who noted that, when parents fail to educate the girl-child no one else will educate her and it means her future life is doomed as she will remain illiterate so will her children be.

Complications in giving birth

The generated data clearly indicated that the girl child had problems in giving birth which led to maternal and infant deaths. The findings cited above are consistent with the view that, the bodies of young girls are physically unprepared for sexual activity and childbirth, greatly increasing the risks of physical harm such as tissue damage, disease, and infection, and complications in pregnancy and delivery, including obstetric fistula, hemorrhage, and obstructed labour (On Health Rights International Women's Health Coalition: 2008).

In the same vein, Unbren (2012) has recorded that, early marriage often leads to early child bearing which in turn increases the risk of pregnancy complications and premature child birth and even maternal and infant death. It shows that, this kind of marriage poses a danger to the girl's health which may result into maternal and infant deaths.

Furthermore, it was pointed out that, in reality, child marriage subjects a young girl to sexual activities at the tender age on the consequences or effects of marriage in which they are not physically mature, also young mothers face higher risks during pregnancies including complications such as heavy bleeding, fistula infection, anemia and eclampsia, which contribute to higher mortality rate of both mother and a child (Children Dignity Forum, 2010).

Orphanhood

Early girl-child marriages leads into some orphaned children being kept by guardians who mistreat them to run away from home and end up getting married at an early age. This is in agreement with the findings mentioned above, orphaned children may be particularly susceptible to early marriage in poverty-stricken areas, as struggling caregivers may view marriage to a financially established older man as an opportunity to better provide for their wards, or at least to relieve their costly caretaking obligations at a profit (Early Marriage: Whose Right to Choose, Forum on Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls: 2000).

3.Solutions provided by school managers

The research aimed at finding solutions on how early girl-child marriage was handled according to the findings provided by the school managers at the selected schools. The findings from the respondents, included the involvement of the traditional leaders, community women and parents, the Community Action Group (CAG) partnered with Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS)

to help in sensitising the girl-child together with their parents and the community, more schools to be built within a radius of five kilometers. Some young girls who have completed school from their area or other places are invited to talk to the school going girls as role models on the benefits of girl-child education. Those who get pregnant should go back to school through the re-entry policy so long they are sensitised on this policy and parents are advised to involve the Victim Support Unit (VSU) to intervene.

Moreover, the Guidance and Counselling office is found in almost all the schools and its role is to counsel pupils. The office should sensitise the girl-child about the disadvantage of early marriage.

The revelation cited above is in agreement with the measures the government has put in place, due to the high number of early pregnancies and marriages especially in rural areas where the Zambian government has necessitated putting in place the structures and systems offering counselling, guidance and other forms of support (*Zambia Daily Mail*, Wednesday, July 19, 2017).

During Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meetings parents were sensitised by interpreting government policies on education with the focus on the fight against early girl-child marriages. These findings are consistent with, the eradication of early marriages done by providing opportunities for services; reforming, enforcing or interpreting laws and policies pertaining to early marriage; supporting girls and developing their skills; and using advocacy as an intervention strategy to prevent early marriage. (Early Marriage and Poverty: 2003). It means that, early marriages can be lessened by supporting the girls through developing their skill and interpreting the policies.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at summary, conclusion and makes recommendations based on its findings.

6.1 Summary

The study revealed that early girl-child marriage is a problem in Kapiri Mposhi District. Early girl-child marriage is an issue that requires immediate attention not only in the selected primary schools but all schools in the district and the country at large. The prevalence rate is so high in most schools. The research found that, early girl-child marriages are still practised in Zambia. One of the major reasons given is poverty which makes parents or guardians to marry off their girls while they are still young in order to gain bride price as a source of income to alleviate family poverty. The other reasons included long distance in that the girl-child moved from a distant place to access education as they there were no schools within or anywhere near the area, lack of role models in their areas or schools, ignorance, vulnerability, parents and community's negative attitude towards girl-child education because of their traditional practices. Therefore, it is significant to sensitise the parents and the community on early girl-child marriages. They should be informed about the benefits of a girl-child's education as she contributes to the development of the nation.

6.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that school managers had basic knowledge on early girl-child marriages and that their role in the detection was not fully defined in the selected schools. It is evident from the study that, most of the young girls of school going age faced challenges of early girl-child marriages as they were not allowed to give their own opinion on the issue. Amongst the causes of early girl-child marriages, poverty was viewed to be the prominent one as it had a greater influence on the girl-child's education. The issue of early girl-child marriage was prevalent where poverty levels were high, girls dropped out of school to be married off, parents' negative attitude and distance to school which led to early girl-child marriages. Despite the measures the country is trying to put in, the problem of early girl-child marriage is still being experienced. Therefore, the interest of the researcher is to find alternatives or solutions proposed by school managers in this study to mitigate problems of early girl-child marriages.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the main findings and the conclusion above, the study ends with the following recommendation:

- Guidance and Counselling teachers should ensure that they continue guiding the girls on the benefits of being educated.
- School administrators should work with the community by putting in measures in addressing the problem of early girl-child marriages.
- Government should build more schools within the radius of five kilometers in order to encourage the accessibility of school places by the school girl-child.
- Schools should devise clear parental involvement in order to curb early girl-child marriages.

- The DEBS office should involve schools and come up with policies which would help to reduce early girl-child marriages.

Area of future research

A research involving more schools in the district to draw factors influencing early girl-child marriages would be more ideal. To undertake such a research would be more comprehensive because it would capture a wider area and would involve a control in terms of early girl-child marriage influences, economic, social and cultural factors which would greatly validate the findings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LETTER

RUTH MBEBETA

UNZA/ ZOU

P.O BOX

LUSAKA.

Dear sir/ madam,

RE: RESEARCH ON EARLY MARRIAGE AMONG SCHOOL GOING GIRLS: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAPIRI MPOSHI DISTRICT.

Iam a postgraduate student at UNZA/ZOU pursuing a Master of education in Educational Management. Iam conducting a study on the above subject in selected primary schools in Kapiri Mposhi district.

Iam humbly requesting you to create time out of your busy schedule to respond to the interview guide and set aside time to fill.

The responses will be treated with confidentiality.

Yours Sincerely,

RUTH MBEBETA

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

SCHOOL MANAGER'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear sir/ madam,

The purpose of approaching you is to seek your input in this research on “EARLY MARRIAGE AMONG SCHOOL GOING GIRLS: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAPIRI MPOSHI DISTRICT”. This exercise is purely for academic purposes and the information you will provide is not transferrable to other purposes or people. Please answer all questions as freely as possible because your input will make a contribution to how best the school managers can address this problem.

RUTH MBEBETA (STUDENT-RESEARCHER)

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA.

(A) PROVINCE: Central

(B) DISTRICT: Kapiri Mposhi

(C) SCHOOL:

(D) GENDER: 1. Male () 2. Female ()

(E) DATE:

PART B: BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

Q1. What do you understand by early girl-child marriages?

Q2. For how long has this problem been going on at this school?

Q3. What is the prevalence of early girl-child marriages in this school?

Q4. What do you think are the contributing factors of early girl-child marriage?

PART C: GUIDING QUESTIONS

Q5. What do you think are the consequences or effects of early girl-child marriages?

Q6. How prevalent are the cases of early girl-child marriages at your school?

Q7. How have you handled such cases of early girl-child marriages?

Any other comments

Thank you very much for taking part in this research and answering the questions.