SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GIRLS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NZEGA DISTRICT, TANZANIA

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2017

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that she has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation entitled: *"Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Girls in Public Secondary Schools in Nzega District, Tanzania"* in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies of the Open University of Tanzania.

.....

Prof. Cornelia K. Muganda (Supervisor)

.....

Date

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DECLARATION

I, **Joel Kategile Mgalula**, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other university for a similar or any other degree award.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved wife Caritas Mathew and my children Jackline, Emmanuel and Joseph for their support and spiritual prayers during my entire studies. Also, my dedication goes to all people close to me, to whom I owe my success so much.

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I take this opportunity to thank God for his guidance and protection in the course of carrying out my research. Through His grace, he sent people who have been instrumental in honouring my skills and keeping me inspired to complete this task.

My special gratitude goes to my supervisor Prof. Cornelia K. Muganda for her support; assistance and encouragement. I also express my appreciation to all staffs of Open University of Tanzania for their cooperation and assistance. Lastly but not least, I gratefully thank my wife Caritas Mathew for her support and encouragement throughout the time of conducting this research.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to establish socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district. The study employed descriptive survey where Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and students, and interview schedule was used as data collection instrument for heads of schools and parents who formed the sample group of the study. The schools were sampled by using simple random sampling while teachers and students were selected by using stratified sampling followed by simple random sampling. Parents were purposively included in the study. Data collected was analyzed by using SPSS. The findings indicated that the society agree that education is one of the fundamental human rights. Furthermore, too much work at homes, family preference to educate boys instead of girls, Female Genital Mutilation, the notion that females are less intelligent than males, early marriage, parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools as well as the notions that women's rightful place is in the kitchen, low parental interest to educate girls due to belief that their daughters will marry and go away and parental failure to buy basic needs to their daughters are socio-cultural factors which negatively affect girl' academic performance in public secondary schools. Challenges included corruption, political interference to some school disciplinary decisions, ignorance of some parents, poverty of some families and lack of cooperation from parents. Measures suggested included construction of dormitories in schools, educating parents on significance of education to girls, establishment of permanent places for pastoralist's families and establishment of strong laws for anyone who will destroy the future of girls academically.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DED	District Executive Director
DFID	Department For International Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study examined socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district. This chapter presents background to the study, statement of the problem and research objectives. It also presents the significance of the study, scope and delimitation of the study, operational definition of key terms and organization of the report.

1.2 Background to the Problem

It is stated in the United Republic of Tanzania (URT, 2000) that education serves as the main means of providing individuals with the opportunity to achieve their full potential in terms of acquiring the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for various social and economic roles, as well as for their all round personal development. As observed by Engin-Demir (cited in Dimbisso, 2009), education is not a charity rather a fundamental human right for all people irrespective of their sex, race, economic status which is the key to sustainable development, peace and stability among countries.

Tanzania has variety of tribes, each having its own values, beliefs and morals representing a sub culture, which has institutions and oral traditions for perpetuating its culture. A social group that believes in righteous acts and decent interactions will demand its individual members to teach the same to other people. Mbughuni (1974), the young were educated in the cultural values as well as the customs of their people.

Troike (1978) explained that learning of culture, like the learning of language, begins with a child's first experiences with the family into which he is born, the community to which he belongs, and the environment in which he lives. By the time children begin their formal education, they have already internalized many of the basic values and beliefs of their native culture.

In ensuring that men and women in our societies have equal opportunities to education, the government of Tanzania has emphasized equality and human rights in its constitution. Article XI of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania provides equality in education and technical training (Meena, 1996). Also, the government signed and ratified several national and international gender declarations and conventions aimed to eliminate all forms of discrimination and to promote gender equality particularly in education. Among of these conventions and declarations is the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) which gives women equal rights as men in the education field.

Despite the commitment of government to promote gender equality in education and struggle to remove all obstacles that prevent the access to education, performance rate of girls in secondary school is lower than that of boys for many years now. However, the greatest challenge still remains in bridging the gap between boys and girls in term of academic performance in their final examinations.

URT (2011) states that girls' poor academic performance is one of the major problems in Tanzania and the world in general. In many countries, concerns about gender disparities in education have focused on student performance, particularly in terms of under-achievement of girls (Davies as cited in Simwata, 2014). Mgossi (2011) emphasized that in secondary schools, girls enroll almost at par with boys but when you look at statistics of performance, girls generally perform worse than boys. Table 1.1 summarizes the percentage of students' performance in form four national examination from 2011 - 2015.

Table 1.1: Percentage of Form IV Students' Performance in National

DIVISION	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Boys	Girls								
I-III	12.24	7.11	6.60	2.95	13.37	7.72	19.07	11.65	29.99	19.6
IV-0	87.76	92.89	93.40	97.05	86.63	92.28	80.93	88.35	70.01	80.4

Examination from 2011-2015

Source: Various NECTA Announcements from 2011-2016

The data indicated in Table 1.1 shows that, the academic performance of boys is higher than that of girls in form four national examinations for the consecutive five years. Although there was a slight improvement of number of girls scoring division I-III in 2014 and 2015, but their performance generally was still lower than that of boys. Achoka, Nafula and Oyoo (2013) indicated that cultural challenges persist and act against academic excellence of girls particularly at the secondary school level in the developing nations including Tanzania

Furthermore, the girls in Nzega district have experienced a poor academic performance compared to boys in form four national examinations. The analysis of form four national examination results from 2011-2015 in Nzega district shows the dominance of boys. Table 1.2 summarizes the proportions of students' academic performance in form IV national examination in Nzega district from 2011 - 2015.

DIVISION	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	Boys	Girls								
I-III	14.24	05.11	04.31	01.95	07.29	03.41	14.07	05.65	19.18	09.10
IV-0	85.76	94.89	95.69	98.05	92.71	96.59	85.93	94.35	80.82	90.90

Table 1.2: Percentages o f Form IV Students' Performance in NationalExamination from 2011 – 2015 in Nzega District

Source: NECTA

As indicated in Table 1.2, the proportions of girls scored division I, II and III continued to decline yearly while those scoring division IV and zero was increasing. In comparison to boys, the girls were left far in term of performance.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the Tanzania government commitment to provide equal opportunity to education for both sexes, the review of form four academic performances in Nzega district has shown that the performance of girls is lower than that of boys for five consecutive years. The percentage of girls who scored division four and zero in form national examination in 2011 was 94.89%, 98.05% in 2012, 96.59% in 2013, 94.35% in 2014 and 90.90% in 2015 which is disastrous and strong measures are required to rescue this situation. To Engin-Demir as (cited in Dimbisso .2009), learning is not only an outcome of formal schooling but also families, communities and peers. Social and cultural forces affect learning and thus academic achievement.

Meaningful and sustainable development of any state depends on investment in education to its citizens. Investing education to women benefits them, their families and the society in which they are living. Without providing equal opportunity to both sexes and eliminate all obstacles which cause poor academic performance of girls compared to boys, diversified and semi-industrialized economy stipulated in 2025 development vision will not be achieved. Kiteto as cited by Kimondo (2013) noted that gender inequalities and bigotry in education play a significant role in the least developed nations.

Some studies have examined socio-cultural factors and academic performance of girls. Malmberg and Sumra (2014) investigated how Tanzanian primary school students' experience, varied according to school performance in subjects and several socio-cultural factors. The study of Duba (2014) investigated the influence of socio-cultural and economic factors on girls" access and participation in primary education while that of Katabaro and Mbelle (2003) examined education services delivery in Tanzania, with particular attention to enrolment, access and performance of girls. However, none of the reviewed studies was designed to establish socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools particularly in Nzega district. Therefore, this study intended to establish socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study is to establish socio - cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the research were

(i) To identify the views of people in Nzega district about education of girls

- (ii) To identify socio cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district
- (iii) To examine the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district.
- (iv) To determine the measures which could be taken to eliminate socio cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

1.5 Research Questions

- (i) What are the views of people towards girls' education in Nzega district?
- (ii) What are the socio-cultural factors affecting girls' academic performance in public secondary schools in Nzega district?
- (iii) What challenges do schools face in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in Nzega district?
- (iv) What measures should be taken to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be beneficial to school administrators and other policy makers to know the actual socio-cultural factors hindering the academic success of girls in public secondary schools present in Nzega district. This will help them to formulate policies, which will emphasize gender equality as the strategy to improve girls' performance and making them knowledgeable and skilful as boys in schools. The findings of the study will help parents, religious bodies, non-government organizations and gender activists to raise their voice strongly on socio-cultural factors, which affect education of girls negatively. This may help the government and other stakeholders to intervene quickly to stop the practice of those norms in the particular society.

The findings of the study will create interests among scholars in the field of education leading to more research on socio-cultural factors and academic performance of girls and other disadvantageous groups in schools. Therefore, it will be used as a databank for further researches.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

There are several factors that affect girls' academic performance in schools but this study focused only on socio – cultural factors. The study covered only public secondary schools because they tend to perform worse than private schools (Mkumbo, 2013).

The study was conducted in Nzega district only because it is one of the poorest areas, which is prone to severe droughts from 9 to 11 months of the year, with many parents faced with the decision of sending their child to get water to survive, or to school to get an education (AiDucatius Foundation, 2014). In this kind of environments, the girls/women are the ones who are forced into the former decision because fetching water is regarded as girls'/women's role in most of African societies.

The respondents of the study were heads of schools, teachers, students and parents only. These respondents were expected to furnish the genuine information on the socio-cultural factors affecting education of girls in schools.

1.8 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Ogula (2002) stated that a conceptual framework refers to relationships among various variables and is normally presented diagrammatically. It shows how the basic concepts and constructs in the study interact to provide expected meaning. This study adapted and modified the Input-Process-Output model presented in Nyalusi (2013) which connected all aspects of empirical inquiry linking to the problem definition, purpose, literature review, methodology, data collection and analysis in three aspects such as input, process and output.

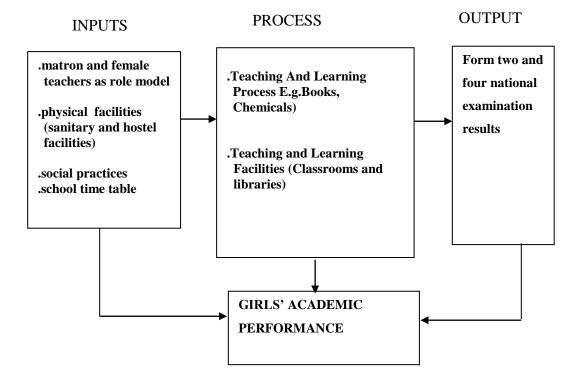


Figure 1. 1: Input-Process-Output Model (cited in Nyalusi, 2013)

The researcher of this study adapted and modified the Input-Process-Output model used in Nyalusi(2013) to fit to this study. Figure 1.2 shows the effect of socio-cultural factors as inputs on academic performance of girls in schools as output.

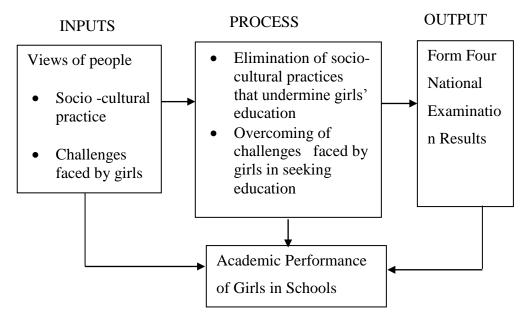


Figure 1.2: Adapted Input-Process-Output Model Showing the Effect of Socio –

Cultural Factors on Academic Performance of Girls in Schools

As indicated in Figure 1.1, the views of people on girls' education, socio-cultural practices and challenges faced by girls on their struggle to get education were used as inputs in this study. Nyalusi (2013) stated that if these factors (inputs) are improved, they are likely to improve girls' academic performance in secondary schools.

Elimination of all forms of socio-cultural practices and views of people which undermine girls in education will improve the scores of girls in form four national examinations (outputs). The initiatives also must be put in place to assist girls to overcome the challenges they are facing when they struggle to get education. Form four national examination results of girls in this study are used as outputs and they are used as indicators of academic performance. The quality of academic performance is a result of inputs and process. If one of the two or both will provide room for gender inequalities, the scores of girls will be less than that of boys.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

Socio-cultural factors: Refers to large scale forces and practices within the cultures and societies that offer more learning opportunities to boys than girl. They were determined on basis of scores of thoughts, feelings and attitudes of respondents.

Public secondary school: Refers to all government central and government community secondary schools which provide form one to form four secondary education.

Academic performance: Refers to scores girls obtained in form four national examination from 2011 -2015. Division I, II and III or Distinction, Merit and Credit were categorized as "pass" and division IV and Zero or Pass and Fail as "failure".

Girl: Refers to the female who is at school for learning and sits for form four national examinations administered by National Examination Council of Tanzania.

1.10 Organization of the study

This dissertation is organized and presented into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction which covers the background to the problem, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and delimitation of the study and operational definition of key terms. Chapter two presents detailed literature review relevant to the study and chapter three covers research methodology which include research design, area of the study, description of population and sample, data collection methods/techniques, validity, reliability, description of data analysis procedure and ethical consideration in research

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to give overview of socio - cultural factors in Tanzania and empirical studies relevant to the study are reviewed. Theoretical framework and conceptual framework are presented.

2.2 Overview of Socio-cultural Factors in Tanzania

Tanzania has an estimated population of 45 million inhabitants. The mainland is comprised of about 120 tribal groups. Most of these are small, and as a result, no tribe has succeeded to dominate politically or culturally (United Planet of Tanzania, 2016). The tribes are identified by common names and have different languages and more or less exclusive territories. There is a remarkable number of people of Asia origin dominating the trade sector. People in each tribe posses the heritage of a common culture such as historical traditions, laws, customs, values and beliefs but according to Morgan (2008) the official languages in Tanzania is Kiswahili and English.

Tanzania has variety of tribes, each having its own values, beliefs and morals representing a sub culture, which has institutions and oral traditions for perpetuating its culture. A social group that believes in righteous acts and decent interactions will hone its individuals to teach the same to other people. Mbughuni (1974), the young were educated in the cultural values as well as the customs of their people.

Troike (1978) explained that learning of culture, like the learning of language, begins with a child's first experiences with the family into which he is born, the community to which he belongs, and the environment in which he lives. By the time children begin their formal education, they have already internalized many of the basic values and beliefs of their native culture.

Furthermore, Suleiman (January 4, 2011), explained that among the factors which lead to girls' poor performance in secondary schools, socio-cultural and out of school factors play a big role in female education. Torto (2009) mentioned home and community based – cultural factors such as traditional beliefs of a woman as a wife and mother, early marriage among others that exist in Tanzania and affect girls' performance in secondary schools.

2.3 Empirical Studies

2.3.1 Academic Performance of Girls

Dimbisso (2009) conducted a study on understanding female students' academic performance in South Nations Nationalities and people's regional state – Ethiopia with focus on female students' academic achievement with reference to 10th grade public examination results from 2004 - 2008. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methodology.

Six regional education bureau officers, four Zonal Education Department programmers and four Woreda education experts out of fifty-three respondents were purposively selected as key informants. Also, two school directors and two deputydirectors were selected purposively. The research conclusion indicated that family characteristics such as socio-economic status of parents, level of education, occupation and income are among the factors, which highly influence female students' academic achievement.

Moreover, Kabote, Niboye and Nombo (2014) conducted a study on performance in Mathematics and Science Subjects with focus on gender perspective for selected primary schools in rural and urban Tanzania. The study was conducted in Meatu and Morogoro Urban District in Simiyu and Morogoro Regions and interview and Focus Group Discussions were adopted.

The results showed a lower girls' performance in both subjects than the boys. Also it revealed that the gender inequality was more prominent in rural relative to urban schools because of a number of overlapping factors including lack of female teachers role models and lack of an appropriate school environment for girls.

2.3.2 Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Girls

There are many scholars who have looked into the effect of socio-cultural factors on girls' academic performance. The empirical studies reviewed explained this.

Juma and Simatwa (2014) conducted a study on impact of cultural factors on girl students' academic performance secondary schools in Kisumu Kenya. Questionnaire, interview schedule and document analysis guide used to collect data from head teachers, class teachers in a correlation and descriptive survey designs. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 form four girls and saturated sampling technique was used to select 30 head teachers and 30 class teachers.

The study found that socio- cultural factors like early marriages, the notion that women's rightful place is in the kitchen, female genital mutilation, family preference to educate boys than girls and low parental interests to educate girls due to the belief that their daughters will be married and go away, in almost all circumstances depict girls as inferior to boys, a factor that demeans girls and indeed impedes girls' aspirations in life. They even fail to consider education as the best investment in good life free from poverty, slavery, ignorance and diseases. The consequence of which is laxity and negative attitude towards education. This lowers girls' morale and eventually low academic achievement.

Achoka, Nafula and Oyoo (2013) conducted a study on negative cultural influence on secondary school girl-students' academic achievement in Bungoma County, in Kenya by using descriptive survey research design. 8 Girls' Secondary Schools were randomly selected to provide a sample of 278 students, 8 head teachers and 8 heads of guidance and counselling department were purposively selected. Data were collected by using questionnaires and interview schedules.

It was concluded that the major cultural forces negatively influencing girls' academic achievement in Bungoma County include: early marriage, stereotypic gender role disposition and Female Genital Mutilation. These factors impact on girls' academic achievement through subjection of girls to a lot of pain, feelings of insecurity, a lot of work at home, lack of sanitary towels and high frequency of being send home for fees. The effect of cultural factors on academic performance was also examined by Kimondo (2013) in his study on factors influencing the academic performance of girls in secondary schools in Embakasi District, Nairobi County, Kenya. 15 schools from the 30 schools were selected by systematic sampling where the first school was randomly chosen and the others were chosen after every second school. To attain a sample of 331, 22 students were chosen from each of the 15 schools and 148 teachers were chosen from a population size of 2,400.

Questionnaires and interview schedules and documentary analysis were used to collect data in this descriptive survey. The results showed that unwillingness of parents to enrol girls in schools and the belief that educating a girl could lead to breaking of marriages or make a girl not find a spouse due to the much education acquired are among of the cultural factors affecting performance of girls in schools.

Okafor (2010) conducted a descriptive study on socio-cultural factors affecting girlchild education in Maiduguri, Borno state, Nigeria. Simple random sampling was used to select the three schools with three principals, 96 teachers, 210 SSI students out of 355 teachers and 4,256 SSI students and the data were collected by using questionnaire. The findings revealed among other things that culture, socio-economic factor, religion, ignorance, home background were impediment to Girl Child Education in Maiduguri, Borno State.

Malmberg and Sumra (2014) conducted a study Socio-cultural Factors and Tanzanian Primary School Students' Achievements and School Experience purposely to investigate how Tanzanian primary school students' school experience varied according to school performance in subjects such as mathematics and Kiswahili) and several socio-cultural factors like parental educational level, gender, age, religion, and home language. 545 students (254 boys and 291 girls) from Std 1II through VII responded to a questionnaire in Kiswahili.

The findings showed that high achieving students experienced the classroom atmosphere more positively and felt less social anxiety than low achievers. Use of Kiswahili at home was related with positive school experience in the urban sample and related with less use of native tongue in the rural group. Educational level of the parents was not correlated with their children's achievements.

2.4 Measures Taken to Eliminate Challenges to Girls Education

Different researchers, NGOs and other gender and educational stakeholders have suggested different measures to eliminate the challenges to girls' education. According to Meena(1996)' quota system, redressing gender stereotype, improving the quality of learning environment and the curriculum reform were the measures taken by the Ministry of Education and Culture at that time ,in collaboration with NGOs and other government agencies to address these challenges.

Introduction of strong measures in the society to eliminate challenges to girls is still a need in today's education. Meena (1996) insisted that the measures which have been undertaken to redress gender imbalances are mainly are cosmetic and none have attacked the power relationship between the two genders and particularly the subordinate position of women in the society.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the feminist theory. Trowler as cited in Nyoni (2004) explains that feminism is a combination of the view that women have been

systematically disadvantaged throughout history and across cultures and the commitment to act to rectify this situation. Roughly feminism can be divided into four perspectives; radical, Marxist, socialist, and liberal feminism.

Nyoni (2004) pointed out that radical feminism sees male control of women (patriarchy) as the main problem in the exploitation of women by men. Marxist feminism on the other hand sees capitalism rather than patriarchy as the source of women's oppression and capitalists as the beneficiaries. Socialist feminists argue that women's oppression is an aspect of both capitalism and patriarchal relations. Liberal feminism believes that unequal opportunities between males and females originate from socialization. Socialization on gender roles has the consequence of producing rigid and inflexible expectations of men and women. It blames no one for the existing gender inequalities and believes that nobody benefits from such a situation. Both men and women are harmed because the potential of females and males alike is suppressed by patriarchy and capitalism.

Both girls and boys are important in the societies and they must have equal opportunity in education because education is prime mover of any development process of the society. In bringing gender equality in academic performance, the government needs to identify a particular socio-cultural practice denying the right of one gender and take immediate action against it.

This study was grounded to this theory because it emphasizes equality of opportunities and equity to encounter the ideology of patriarchy and transformation of all structures and laws that undermine the position of women in order to create an enabling environment in which all women can participate fully and equally (Mosetse, 2006). Opportunities to education should be free from socio- cultural notions and practices that do not produce equal opportunities on merit basis to both girls and girls. The women have the right to enjoy the fruits of education as men after completion of their studies. This could be possible if the learning environments will be friendly to both sexes.

2.6 The Knowledge Gap which this Study Intended to Fill

The reviewed studies have shown the existence of some socio-cultural factors in communities, their effects on girls' academic performance and challenges facing them in their struggle to get education. However, none of the reviewed studies addressed the same issues in Tabora particularly in Nzega District whose socio-cultural context could be different from reviewed study. Therefore, from this point of view the study established socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega District

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design used in the study, area of the study, description of population and sample, method of data collection, validity, reliability, data analysis procedures and ethical issues.

3.2 Research Design

The study used descriptive survey design. Rodeo as cited in Kimondo (2013) described descriptive survey as a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. This design was appropriate to the study because it helped the researcher to gather information regarding people's behavior, feelings and opinion about educational issues (Kombo as cited in Duba, 2010). In this study, descriptive survey was used to collect views of teachers, students, heads of schools and parents on socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools by using interview schedules and questionnaires.

3.3 Area of Study

The study was conducted in Nzega district due to the fact that it is one of the districts in Tabora with poor academic performance of girls in form four national examinations for five consecutive years now. Also Nzega district is prone to dry season for 9 to 11 months, which creates a possibility of existence of socio-cultural factors in favour of one gender as a remedy to justify the decision of many parents of whom to send to school to get an education (AiDucatius Foundation, 2014).

3.4 Description of Population and Sample

3.4.1 Target Population

Population is the group of individuals or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Frainkel & Wallen, 2000). The population of this study comprised of all students, teachers and head teachers of public secondary schools in Nzega District; as well as parents of girls in those schools. It included four hundred and forty-four (444) teachers because they were expected to have information of socio-cultural factors affecting their students specifically girls. Five thousand, four hundred and forty (5440) students were included in study because they are the ones affected by socio-cultural practices going on in the communities. Thirty-one (31) heads of schools also were involved due to their managerial positions, which require them to ensure equal opportunities in education to both boys and girls.

3.4.2 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Kothari (2000) explains a sample as a group of respondents or elements drawn from a population with individuals who have one thing in common that provides representative characteristics of the entire population from which a researcher is interested to gather information and draw conclusions. The sample for this study included two hundred and forty (240) students, one hundred (100) teachers, ten (10) heads of schools from ten (10) public secondary schools and twenty (20) parents with girls studying in secondary schools included in the sample.

Ten public secondary schools were selected by using simple random sampling techniques. The researcher wrote the name of each public secondary school present in Nzega during the study on a separate piece of paper, fold and then they were placed in a small container. The papers were mixed and one piece was drawn from a container blindly at a time with constant replacing the picked one before the next drawing. Blind drawing continued until ten public secondary schools are obtained

In each public secondary school, teachers and students were selected by using stratified sampling followed by simple random sampling. In each school, the researcher established four strata of male teachers, female teachers, girls and boys' students. In each stratum, the researcher wrote the name of each member present at school on a separate piece of paper, fold and then placed in four small containers labelled male teachers, female teachers, girls and boys. The papers in each container were mixed and one piece was drawn blindly at a time with constant replacing the picked one before the next drawing. Blind drawing continued until the required number of teachers in each stratum was obtained. In each sample school, the head of school and two parents who purposively selected. The parents were selected based on the views from the sample school on whom can be a key source of socio-cultural information practiced in particular area.

Population % Sample Size **Participants** Sample **Sampling Technique** Size Size Heads of Schools 31 10 32.3 Purposive Teachers 444 100 22.5 Stratified and random Students 5440 240 44 Stratified and random 4926 20 0.4 Parents Purposive

Table 3.1: Summary of Participants Included in the Study

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, two instruments namely questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect data from respondents. Questionnaires were used for teachers and students while interview schedule was for heads of schools and parents

3.5.1 Questionnaire

A self-administered questionnaire was the main research instrument for this study. Questionnaires have often been used to gather data from large populations in educational research (Cohen & Manion, 2000). In this study, it was used to collect data from teachers and students in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

Questionnaires for teachers and students comprised section A, B and C. Section A was for demographic information while section B was for general view of people on education of girls. Section C contained items asking socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in schools. Section D contained open ended questions for the challenges that schools face in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls and the possible solutions.

3.5.2 Interview Schedule

Interview schedule was used to collect data from head of schools and parents with girls studying in public secondary schools and it contained two parts. The first part was used to collect data for interviewee background information. The second part included questions asking socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls, challenges schools face in attempts to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls and the possible solution

3.6 Validity

To ensure content validity of questionnaire and interview schedule, the researcher consulted the supervisor and other two experts from Open University of Tanzania to assess the research instruments. The experts independently assessed the adequacy of content coverage in relation to the purpose of the study and clarity of the language used. Their views on the content and language were incorporated in the final draft of the instruments before administration to the targeted respondents.

3.7 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of test scores. If a test or assessment procedure provides reliable scores, the scores will be similar on every occasion (Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

A pilot study was conducted in one of the public secondary schools in Nzega district selected by using convenience sampling but was not among of the schools selected for study. Head of school, six teachers and ten students who were present at school during the pilot testing participated in the study. The data collected by using questionnaire were used to determine reliability coefficients by using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha was used in this study because it is useful in determining consistency of results obtained from open and close ended questions present in the questionnaire.

The value of Cronbach's alpha collected during the pilot testing was 0.732 for teachers' questionnaire and 0.713 for students' questionnaires. These values are acceptable because according to Johnson and Christenesn (2014), the value of Cronbach's alpha should generally be greater than or equal to 0.70 for research purpose. The obtained Cronbach's alpha allowed the researcher to produce final questionnaires for the study.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

After collection of data from the school, the researcher checked the completeness of the structured questionnaires. The collected quantitative data were coded, entered into the computer and then analyzed into percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to describe the characteristics of participants' responses concerning socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls. Qualitative data from interview schedule and open-ended responses in questionnaire were analyzed through identification of the themes emerged from the raw data. The researcher identified words or phrases that were similar and group them into the same category. Each category was coded, entered into the computer and then analyzed into percentages and frequencies.

3.9 Ethical Consideration in Research

This study observed all necessary research rules, regulation and responsibilities during the preparation and conduction of research in the field. The researcher satisfied these by requesting research clearance letter from Open University authority before commencement of data collection. Also, he requested permission from District Executive Director to conduct a study in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

During the study, the respondents were assured of confidentiality of information, anonymity, honesty and they were told that they are free to withdraw at any time. After data collection, the researcher reported according to respondents' responses.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains research findings and discussion on socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary school in Nzega district. The data were collected and presented in line with the research objectives that guided the study. These are: First, to identify the views of people in Nzega district about education of girls. Second, to identify socio – cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. Third, to examine the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio – cultural factors that negatively affects academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. Lastly, to determine the measures which to be taken to eliminate socio – cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. In order to provide a clear picture of the respondents of the study, background data are presented first.

4.2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This part presents demographic information of teachers, heads of schools, students and parents. Each category is explained in its separate subsection

4.2.1 Demographic Profile of Teachers

This section presents information on gender, teaching experience and level of education of teachers who participated in the study. Out of 100 teachers who were sampled three did not participate in the study. The data collected are summarized in Table 4.1.

Demographic Information	F	%
Gender		
Male	49	50.5
Female	48	49.5
Teaching Experience		
Under 4	40	41.2
4-8	35	36.1
8-12	22	22.7
Level of Education		
Diploma	25	25.8
First degree	72	74.2

Table 4.1: Demographic Profile of Teachers

The findings in Table 4.1 show that, there were no large disparities in terms of teachers' gender although male teachers (50.5%) were slightly more than female teachers (49.5%). In this case there was equal gender representation. This became possible through selection of equal number of male and female teachers from each sampled school. The equality in participation in the study indicates that the findings of the study are rich in ideas from both male and female teachers and students because both sexes have an equal chance to give views on education matters.

As indicated in Table 4.1, the teaching experience of 41.2% of teachers participated in the study was under 4 years while 36.1% of teachers had 4- 8 years and only 22.7% had 8-12 years. This information indicates that the study has captured the ideas regarding socio-cultural factors from less to most experienced teachers.

Furthermore, Table 4.1 shows that 74.2% of teachers participated in the study had first degree and 25.8% had diploma. The results indicate that the schools have qualified teachers as the lowest education level needed for secondary school teachers

is diploma. As explained by Nemes (2013), this educational level helps teachers to cope with the changes and demands of education sector.

4.2.2 Demographic Profile of Heads of Schools

The study also gathered background information on gender, age, work experience and level of education of heads of schools from the schools that participated in the study. Table 4.2 summarizes the data collected.

Table 4.2: Demographic Profile of Heads	s of Schools	
Demographic Profile	\mathbf{F}	º⁄₀
Gender		
Male	07	70
Female	03	30
Experience as Head of School		
Below 4 years	02	20
4-8	05	50
Above 8	03	30
Level of Education		
Diploma	02	20
First degree	08	80

The findings in Table 4.2 shows that the number of headmasters counterweighed that of headmistresses in the study because 70% of heads of schools participated in the study were males and only 30% were females. Shortage of female teachers in top school management probably is a result of existence of socio-cultural factors which in one way or another negatively affect their struggle to get education like their male counterparts.

The findings in Table 4.2 show that the large number of heads of schools (50%) interviewed had experience of 4-8 years and those with experience below 4 years and above 8 years were only 20% and 30% respectively. This information indicates that a considerable number of heads of schools in Nzega district had enough experience which could help them to provide enough information on socio-cultural factors affecting girls' education required by this study.

Furthermore, 80% of heads of schools participated in the study as indicated in Table 4.2 had first degree and only 20% were having diploma. The first degree possessed by 80% of interviewed heads of school enriched the study with enough information on socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls. Educational degree of teachers gives them a confidence to express their views and opinions regarding education of girls in their settings. It also increases their knowledge and skills to assess how children learn and obstacles they face in their root to acquire formal education from the schools.

4.2.3 Demographic Profile of Students

Students participated in the study were asked to identify their gender in order to know the number of girls and boys participated in the study. Figure 4.1 summarises the information.

The findings in Figure 4.1 show slight gender inequality in participation in the study as 50.2% of students were boys and 49.8 were girls. Although stratified sampling technique was employed in the study to provide equal opportunity to both boys and girls but there was a slight difference in percentage. Since both boys and girls come from the same environment, it was a hope of the researcher that both would provide information on socio-cultural factors practiced in their areas.

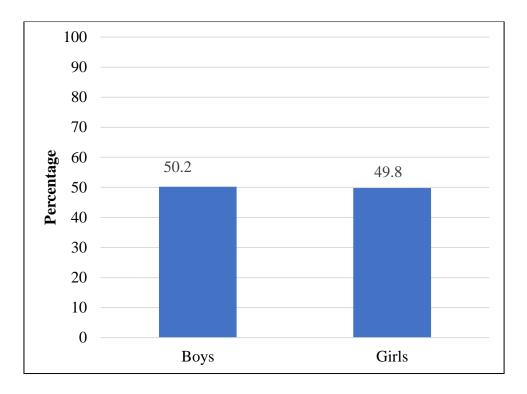


Figure 4.1: Gender of Students Participated in the Study

4.2.4 Demographic Profile of Parents

During the interview with parents, researcher collected data on gender, age, highest level of education and occupation as summarized in Table 4.3.

The data in Table 4.3 show that majority of parents (75%) were males while females were only 25%. This probably indicates that in most of the families in Nzega women have less voice or opportunity to explain something on behalf of the family. This was witnessed by researcher to some families during the collection of data from parents, women were not ready to be interviewed instead they told the researcher to wait for the father in the family.

Demographic Profile	F	%
Gender		
Male	15	75
Female	05	25
Highest Level of Education		
No Formal Education	07	35
Standard Seven	08	40
Form IV	02	10
Others	03	15
Occupation		
Livestock Keepers	09	45
Small Scale Farmers	06	30
Security Guides	02	10
Others	03	15

 Table 4.3: Demographic Profile of Parents

As revealed in Table 4.3, 45% of interviewed parents had primary education, 35% have never gone to school at all and only 10% had secondary education. According to Duba (2010) parents who attained education at primary level sent their children to school while those who never went to school did not send their children to school and if indeed they do so they do not complete the full cycle of education.

From the data presented in Table 4.3, most of the interviewed parents (45%) were livestock keepers while 30% were small scale farmers. Only 10% were security guards of the village market and shops of businessmen. It is significant to note that in patriarchal societies, girls have little chance to be taken to schools instead they are prepared for marriage and that they cannot go any further in terms of personal development (Burnham, 2012).

4.3 The Views on Girls' Education in Nzega District

Research question one sought to find views of teachers, heads of schools, students and parents in Nzega district about education of girls. The views of teachers and students are presented and discussed in separate subsections.

4.3.1 Views of Teachers on Girls' Education

Data on teachers' views on girls' education are summarised in Table 4.4.

Table 4. 4: Views of Teachers towards Girls' Education

SA=Strongly Agree, A=	Agree. UN=Undecided	. D=Disagree. SD	= Strongly Disagree

	SA		Α		UI	N	DS		SD			
Statements	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	Standard deviation
i. Girls and boys should be given equal education level	65	67	31	32	-	-	1	1	-	-	4.6	0.5
ii. Educated females are respectful	58	59.8	36	37.1	3	3.1	-	-	-	-	4.6	0.5
iii. Women education is a source of manpower for the nation	35	36.1	57	58.8	2	2.1	2	2.1	1	1	4.3	0.7
iv. Educated women have better opportunities to be among of the leaders in the society	35	39.8	37	42	2	2.3	12	13.6	2	2.3	4.0	1.1
v. Female children should be allowed to finish their education before marriage	75	77.3	22	22.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.8	0.4
vi. Educated women are more useful to their husbands.	20	20.6	50	51.5	4	4.1	20	20.6	3	3.1	3.7	1.1
vii. Western education promotes immorality among female.	3	3.1	42	43.3	10	10.3	42	43.3	-	-	3.1	1.0
viii. Female child need to be educated up to university	22	22.7	45	46.4	4	4.1	3	3.1	23	23.7	3.4	1.5
ix. Both girls and boys should participate equally in domestic duties	21	24.7	54	63.5	3	3.5	3	3.5	4	4.7	4.0	0.9
x. Highly educated female has better opportunity to find a	3	3.	48	49.5	1	13.4	33	34	-	-	3.2	1.0
husband than less educated one		1			3							
Mean											3.8 ().9

The findings in Table 4.4 show that 67% of teachers strongly agreed that girls and boys should attain equal education level. The teachers as one of the educated strata in our societies recognize the value of education and they are aware that equal educational opportunities for girls and boys are a fundamental human right.

Table 4.4 shows that 59.8% of teachers who participated in the study strongly agreed that educated females are respected. The contribution of educated women to their families, societies and the nation make them highly valuable and respected by everyone. Therefore, investment in girls' education, is not only on the benefit of herself but for the family, society and nation

As indicated in Table 4.4, 77.3% of teachers strongly agreed that female children should be allowed to finish their education before marriage. According to Save the Children Fund (2014), child marriage is a barrier to education as girls are expected to leave school in order to care for their husbands and home, or to begin childbearing and childcare.

Further-more; Table 4.4 indicates that 51.5% of teachers agreed that educated women are more useful to their husbands. This is in line with observation of the Department for International Development (DFID) (2005) that, women are at the heart of most societies. Regardless of whether they are working or not, mothers are very influential people in children's lives. Educating girls is one of the most important investments that any country can make in its own future. Educated women help to make families including husbands healthier, safer and can also help to reduce

child deaths and tackle household problems which could wait the husbands in the families with uneducated mothers.

As indicated in Table 4.4, 63.5% of teachers agreed that both girls and boys should participate equally in domestic duties. Traditionally, most of societies have given preference to boys over girls when it comes to educational opportunity but not on domestic duties. Lack of equality in domestic duties has contributed to the existence of a gap in academic performance between the two sexes in schools in favour of boys. In finding ways to help girls to catch up with boys in education matters, equality in domestic duties also should be emphasized, otherwise the boys will continue to enjoy significant advantages in education matters. Due to heavy domestic duties, girls do not have enough time for self-studies and doing assignments like their male counterparts.

4.3.2 Views of Students' on Girls' Education

The study also used students to gather views on girls' education. Findings in Table 4.5 show that 70.3% of students who participated agreed that girls and boys should be given equal education.

These findings concurred with that of teachers in Table 4.4 and 80% of responses of heads of schools who insisted that equal educational opportunities for girls and boys are a fundamental human right and the basis of equal opportunities later in life. Both girls and boys must be considered equally in education matters because education is the key of life to everyone.

Table 4.5: Views of Students' towards Girls' Education

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, UN=Undecided, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

		S	SA		Α		U	N	D	5	SD		
	Statements	f	%	f	%	f	%	ó f	%	f	%	Mea	Standard Deviation
i.	Girls and boys should be given equal education level	156	70.3	66	29.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	4. 7	0.5
ii.	Educated females are respectful	86	39.3	116	53.0	-	-	10	4.6	7	3.2	4. 2	0.9
iii.	Women education is a source of manpower for the nation	122	54.5	95	42.4	-	-	7	3.1	-	-	4. 5	0.7
iv.	Educated women have better opportunities to be among of the leaders in the society	104	44.1	110	46.6	22	9.3	-	-	-	-	4. 3	0.6
v.	Female children should be allowed to finish their education before marriage	127	56.7	80	35.7	-	-	-	-	17	7.6	4. 3	1.1
vi.	Educated women are more useful to their husbands.	113	47.9	78	33.1	15	6.4	21	8.9	9	3.8	4. 1	1.1
vii.	Western education promotes immorality among female.	10	4.6	26	11.9	22	10.1	49	22.5	111	50.9	2. 0	1.2
viii	. Female child need to be educated up to university	102	43.2	99	41.9	-	-	35	14.8	-	-	4. 1	1.0
ix.	Both girls and boys should participate equally in domestic duties	76	32.9	50	21.6	20	8.7	63	27.3	22	9.5	3. 4	1.4
x.	Highly educated female has better opportunity to find a husband than less educated one	127	53.8	93	39.4	11	4.7	-	-	5	2.1	4. 4	0.8
Me												4.0	0.9

Table 4.5 shows that 70.3% of students participated strongly agreed that girls and boys should be given equal education level. These findings concur with that of teachers in Table 4.5 and 80% of responses of heads of schools who insisted that equal educational opportunities for girls and boys are a fundamental human right and the basis of equal opportunities later in life. Both girls and boys must be considered equally in education matters because education is the key of life to everyone.

According to Table 4.5, 46.6% of students agreed that educated women have better opportunities to be among of the leaders in the society because leaders are made

through training and experience. These findings are contrary to that of 60% of parents who viewed that men are born with leadership traits women as helpers of men. The large number of men in top leadership positions in various sectors, societies and families probably could be the reason for the parents interviewed to believe that men are gifted leadership skills.

The results in Table 4.5 indicate that 50.9% of students strongly disagreed that western education promotes immorality among female. The value of western education depends on how the individual whether male or female uses it in daily life. King and Hill as cited in Duba (2014) affirmed that female literacy leads to better health, reduced infant mortality, higher earnings, reduced fertility rates and improved quality of life for all nations.

As indicated in Table 4.5, 53.8% of students believed that a highly educated female has better opportunity to find a husband than less educated one probably because well educated women will contribute their employment earnings to the family care and reduce burden to their husbands. These results were contrary to that of 70% of parents who viewed that less educated women are married because in a relationship a man mostly wants to play the dominating roles while the woman tends to be the inferior one. It is easy to dominate over a person who is less educated

4.4 Socio – Cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Girls

The teachers, students, heads of schools and parents were asked to identify sociocultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.6 and 4.7.

Table 4.6: Teachers' Responses on Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Girls in Public Secondary Schools

Statements		SA		A	1	UN]	D	S	D		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	Standard Deviation
i. Too much works at homes	52	53.6	33	34	4	4.1	5	5.2	3	3.1	4.3	1.0
ii. Family preference to educate boys instead of girls	67	69.1	15	15.5	6	6.2	5	5.2	4	4.1	4.4	1.1
iii. Religious belief hinder female education	9	9.3	45	46.4	3	3.1	18	18.6	22	22.7	3.0	1.4
iv. Female Genital Mutilation	31	32	44	45.4	3	3.1	16	16.5	3	3.1	3.7	1.1
v. The notion than women are less intelligent than men	28	28.9	57	58.8	3	3.1	6	6.2	3	3.1	4.0	0.9
vi. Early marriage	79	81.4	15	15.5	3	3.1	-	-	-	-	4.8	0.5
vii. Parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools	40	41.2	48	49.5	3	3.1	5	5.2	1	1.0	4.2	0.8
viii. The notion that women's rightful place is in the kitchen.	55	56.7	35	36.1	3	3.1	2	2.1	2	2.1	4.4	0.8
ix. Low parental interest to educate girls due to belief that their daughters will marry and go away	47	48.5	39	40.2	4	4.1	3	3.1	3	3.1	4.3	1.0
x. Parents' failure to buy basic needs such as sanitary towels for their daughters	32	33	38	39.2	4	4.1	19	19.6	4	4.1	3.8	1.2
Mean											4.1	0.9

Table 4.6 indicates that 53.6% of teachers strongly agreed that too much work at home affects academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. The findings concur with World Bank as cited in Kemunto (2013) which reported that the girls are demanded by customs to help in caring for the young, finding firewood, collecting water, cooking food and cleaning the house while less demand are placed on boys.

The results in Table 4.6 show that 69.1% of teachers strongly agreed that family preference to educate boys instead of girls affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. This probably is due to the socio norms that daughters are non-permanent family member of the family as they move away from their parents upon marriage while sons are considered as the asset of the family (Sultana &

Zulkefli, 2012). These findings concur with that of 70% of heads of schools and 65% of parents who pointed that the parents think that after marriage of their daughters, they will then reside with her husband's family and she will has little or no scope to provide support to her natal family because the bride's family has paired a dowry.

Table 4.6 shows that 58.8% of teachers agreed the notion that women are less intelligent than men in one way or another affect girls' academic performance. The findings concur with that of 60% of heads of schools who commented that the existence of this notion in the society causes many parents to provide more support to their male children and seek advice from teachers on what should be done to their boys when it happens that their boys' students have academically performed poorly.

According to Martin (2013), although it is true that men have brains about 10 percent bigger than those of women, there is no overall difference in intelligence between men and women. As indicated in Table 4.6, early marriage has been strongly pointed out by 81.4% of teachers as one of socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls.

The same results were collected from 55% of parents who pointed out that Some of the girls have been affected psychologically that even if they struggle academically, they will not complete the schools due marriages which sometimes are against their wish, when they refuse, they are threatened with death. This factor also was pointed out by 60% of heads of schools on ground that the girls are given for marriage at a tender age in quest for dowry from the husbands.

	5	SA		A		UN		D	5	SD	Mean	Standard
Statements	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	f	%		Deviation
i. Too much work at homes	108	47.6	89	39.2	22	9.7	5	2.2	3	1.3	4.3	0.8
ii. Family preference to educate boys instead of girls	150	63	69	29	1	0.4	8	3.4	10	4.2	4.4	1.0
iii Religious belief hinder female education	26	10.9	34	14.3	18	7.6	48	20.2	112	47.1	2.2	1.4
iv. Female Genital Mutilation	65	27.1	49	20.4	50	20.8	56	23.3	20	8.3	3.3	1.3
v. The notion than women are less intelligent than men	89	37.1	71	29.6	32	13.3	14	5.8	34	14.2	3.7	1.4
vi. Early marriage	172	71.7	45	18.8	13	5.4	3	1.3	7	2.9	4.6	0.9
vii. Parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools	130	55.8	62	26.6	24	10.3	2	0.9	15	6.4	4.2	1.1
viii. The notion that women's rightful place is in the kitchen.	155	64.6	43	17.9	18	7.5	8	3.3	16	6.7	4.3	1.2
ix. Low parental interest to educate girls due to belief that their daughters will marry and go away	148	63.8	70	30.2	2	0.9	2	0.9	10	4.3	4.5	0.9
x. Parents' failure to buy basic needs such as sanitary towels for their daughters	87	36.3	138	57.5	4	1.7	3	1.3	8	3.3	4.2	0.8
Mean											4.0	1.0

Table 4.7: Students' Responses on Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of Girls in Public Secondary Schools

The findings in Table 4.7 show that 63% of students strongly agreed that family preference to educate boys instead of girls is one of socio-cultural factor affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. According to Kimondo (2013), some fathers, particularly in rural areas and slums, do not attach much value to education. They regard schooling for girls as necessary and a waste of money because girls would in any case stay at home after marriage to attend to their children and household.

Table 4.7 shows that 55.8% of students strongly agreed that parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools affect girls' academic performance in public secondary schools. Parents invest in education economically with expectation on positive return on investment they have made and if they are not sure on return, they don't invest. In Patriarchal societies like that found in Nzega are affected by patriarchal systems, which give preferences for investment in schooling to boys who are believed to continue with their studies because they are biologically not easily identified on pregnancies cases. The presence of large number of girls' students who have failed to continue with their studies because of early pregnancies possibly demoralize parents and justify their decision to deny right of education to their daughters in order to prevent them from bringing shame to the family through early pregnancy (Kimondo, 2013)

According to the data indicated in Table 4.7, 64.6% of students strongly agreed that the notion that women's rightful place is in the kitchen have negative effect to girls' education. Most of the children especially in African societies have grown with notion that most of kitchen activities like cooking are special for women. This deny the right of girls to get time for studying or going to tuition like their counter parts, boys because of burden of kitchen activities.

The findings in Table 4.7 show that 57.5% of students agreed that parents' failure to buy basic needs such as sanitary towels for their daughters affect academic performance of girls in schools. The findings concur with that of Achoka, Nafula and Oyoo (2013) that lack of sanitary towels is a critical issue. Such girls could miss classes for about 5 days in a month and/or 3 months a year for fear of being embarrassed and ridiculed at school/in class by their colleagues when they have leakage during their monthly period. Other girls could miss classes due to abdominal pains experienced but have no money to buy drugs.

4.5 Challenges that Schools Face in their Struggle to Eliminate Socio-cultural

Factors that Negatively Affect Academic Performance of Girls

In the struggle of schools to eliminate socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls, there are challenges, which face these schools. Teachers, students, heads of schools and parents were asked to identify these challenges and the results are summarised in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Challenges that Schools face in their Struggle to Eliminate Sociocultural Factors that Negatively affect Academic Performance of Girls

	Teachers		Students		Heads of Schools		Pare	ents
Challenges	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Corruption	47	48.5	56	24.3	9	90	-	-
Political interference	32	33	-	-	7	70	-	-
Ignorance among some parents	54	55.7	197	85.7	10	100	15	75
Poverty	81	83.5	163	70.9	10	100	17	85
Lack of cooperation from parents	66	68	74	32.2	8	80	-	-

The results in Table 4.8 shows that 48.5% of teachers, 90% of heads of schools and 24.3% of students have mention corruption as one of the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls. One of the parents interviewed said;

"The school administrations do not make follow up on girls drop outs, absenteeism and early marriage because they are given money to silence the case"

According to Haki Elimu (2010), many events related to pregnacies and early marriages have been reported to legal organs but little action has been taken against

those who impregnate girls. Corruption has contributed towards undermining girls' education because those who put school girls in family way or rape girls are sometimes acquitted because of corruption

As indicated in Table 4.8, 33% of teachers and 70% heads of schools have mentioned the political interference on disciplinary issues of students as a challenge to eliminate socio-cultural factors negatively affect education of girls. Each school has disciplinary committee purposely to maintain discipline of students but sometimes their decisions have been interfered by politicians who focus mainly on staying in power as long as possible. And one way of achieving this is to dilute school disciplinary decisions to please their voters.

Ignorance among some parents have been mention by 55.7% of teaches, 85.7% of students, 100% of heads of schools and 75% of parents as a challenge facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors denying the right of education to girls. One of the head of the schools pointed out that;

"I have been calling the parent meeting to discuss the progress of school including attendance and academic performance of girls but the turn up is very poor and those who attend do not implement what we agree"

The parents who have not benefited from education, instead they have seen their daughters returning home pregnant or with changed behaviours, think that if a girl goes to school she may end up getting problems. Thus, girls who come from less educated parents are likely to face many challenges including drop out (Haki Elimu, 2010).

Results in Table 4.8 show that 83.5% of teachers, 70.9% of students, 100% of heads of schools and 85% of parents pointed poverty of the family as a challenge to the struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors negatively affecting academic performance of girls. Failure of some families to supply some basic needs like foods, uniforms and other educational materials causes some of the girls to stay at homes or to opt a marriage as the alternative to reduce the impacts of economic difficulties they face.

Lack of cooperation from parents is one of the challenges indicated in Table 4.8, which face schools in the struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls.

One of the interviewed heads of schools said that:

"It is difficult to catch the suspects because the parents and suspects corporate to hide the truth and sometimes they hide the impregnated girls or coach their daughters to mention someone else whose important information cannot be obtained easily".

4.9 Measures that Could be Taken to Overcome the Challenges Facing Schools in Struggle to Eliminate Socio-cultural Factors that Negatively

Affect Academic Performance of Girls

The research question four sought to determine the measures which could be taken to overcome challenges facing the schools in their struggle to eliminate social-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. The results as suggested by teachers, students, heads of schools and parents are shown in Table 4.9.

	Teachers		Stu	idents		ads of hools	Parents	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Construction of dormitories	47	48.5	97	44.5	7	70	20	100
Educating parents on	56	57.7	19	83.5	8	80	14	70
significance of girls' education			2					
Establishing permanent places	29	19.6	-	-	5	50	-	-
for pastoralists								
Establishing strong laws	53	54.6	53	23	4	40	18	90

Table 4.9: Teachers and Students' Suggestion on Socio-cultural RemediesTeachers and Students' Suggestion on Socio-cultural Remedies

The results in Table 4.9 show that 48.5% of teachers, 44% of students, 70% of heads of schools and 100% of parents suggested that the construction of dormitories for girls' students can improve the academic performance of girls in public secondary schools because most of the secondary schools are day schools. One parent said

"The battle against early pregnancies, heavy domestic duties to girls and sexual harassment when on their way to and from schools will not come to the end if our school will not construct dormitories for our girls".

These suggestions are in line with suggestion of Haki Elimu(2010) that girls who commute to school do so poorly compared to boarders because their homes do not provide conducive environments for studying for girls. Once a girl returns home from school, she is expected to take care of her younger siblings and help out with household chores.

As indicated in Table 4.9, educating parents on significance of education to girls has been suggested by 57.7% of teachers, 83.5% of students, 80% of heads of schools and 70% of parents as one of the measure to overcome challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. When parents understand the value of education to their daughters, it is more likely for them to invest in education of the girls through allocating small resources they have and reducing the domestic responsibilities.

As suggested by 19.6% of teachers and 50% of heads of schools in Table 4.9, establishment of permanent places for livestock keepers can help girls to access education easily and improve their academic performance. The risk of girls on sexual or physical violence increases due to the fact that the girls walk ours to and from homes and it is difficult to construct school close to them because they have tendency to shift from one area to another for searching grazing. One of heads of schools said,

"The establishment of permanent areas for livestock keepers will help different educational stakeholders to plan for their education and other social services".

The results in Table 4.9 also indicates that 54.6% of teachers supported by 23% of students, 40% of heads of schools and 90% of parents insist on establishment of strong laws against those who take part in destroying the future of girls. One parent said that:

"We always negotiate in terms of number of cows which should be paid by a man who have impregnated your girl"

Strong laws with effective action from legal organs should be put in place against the men who destroy the future of girls and parents who collaborate with men and marry off their girls who are still students for the sake of getting dowry.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study examined socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary school in Nzega district-Tanzania. This chapter presents conclusion and recommendations which will assist educational stakeholders to plan and implement different strategies to rescue the education of girls especially in rural areas.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district. The study sought to answer the following research questions:First; what are the views of people towards girls' education in Nzega district?, Second; what are the socio-cultural factors affecting girls' academic performance in public secondary schools in Nzega district?, Third; what challenges do schools face in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in Nzega district?. Lastly, what measures could be taken to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in Nzega district?

This study was grounded to feminist theory because it emphasizes equality of opportunities and equity to encounter the ideology of patriarchy and transformation of all structures and laws that undermine the position of women in order to create an enabling environment in which all women can participate fully and equally. It emphasizes equal opportunities to both sexes so that the women can enjoy the fruits of education as men after completion of their studies

The study used descriptive survey and the data from teachers and students were collected by using questionnaires. The interview schedules were used to collect data from parents and heads of schools. The data collected during the pilot study were used to determine reliability of questionnaire' results.

The data collected by questionnaires and interview schedules were coded, entered into the computer and then analyzed into percentages and frequencies by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to describe the characteristics of participants' responses concerning socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls.

5.3 Summary of the Main Findings

(i) The findings of the study generally revealed that the society agree on the need of education for girls as one of their fundamental human rights. According to the views of respondents, investing in girls' education is not wastage of money instead is prestige to her, her family, society and nation. According to these results the notions and other beliefs existing in the society which deny the right of education to girls can not be used to justify the decisions of some parents to practice them for the sake of favouring boys.

- (ii) The study also revealed that too much work at homes, family preference to educate boys instead of girls, the notion that females are less intelligent than males, early marriage, parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools are socio-cultural factors which affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools. Other socio-cultural factors which negatively affect girl' academic performance include the notions that women's rightful place is in the kitchen, low parental interest to educate girls due to belief that their daughters will marry and go away and parental failure to buy basic needs to their daughters.
- (iii) The study identified a list of challenges which face schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors which negatively affect academic performance of girls in Nzega district. These include corruption, political interference to some school disciplinary decisions, ignorance of some parents, poverty of some families and lack of cooperation from parents. These challenges pull back the efforts of school to provide friendly learning environments to both girls and boys.
- (iv) There are several measures proposed by this study for overcoming the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in schools. These measures include construction of dormitories as most of schools in Nzega are day schools, educating parents on significance of education to girls, establishment of permanent places for pastoralist's families and establishment of strong laws for any one who will destroy the future of girls academically.

5.4 Conclusion

The result of the study shows that there are some socio-cultural factors affecting girls academic performance in Nzega district. These factors include too much work at homes, early marriages, family preference to educate boys instead of girls and the bad notions on women in the society. Elimination of these factors in our society, will promote girls academic performance.

5.5 Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations for action and for future research based on the conclusions reached.

5.5.1 Recommendation for Action

(i) In 2015, the government of Tanzania launched 2014 education policy which emphasizes the provision of fee free secondary education up to form four and it is compulsory for all school age children. This will ensure that the school age girls are attending the school and they are not withdrawn from schools for failure of their parents to pay school fees.

(ii) There is a need to establish more boarding schools and expand the existing ones to accommodate girls in order to rescue them from a burden of domestic duties in their homes and other practices which deny their right to education.

(iii) Furthermore, the government through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with President's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government is advised to enrol back girls who dropped out of schools due to pregnancy. This will help to increase the number of educated mothers who are expected to be the agents of change in their families.

5.5.2 Recommendation for Further Research

(i) A similar research on socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in secondary schools should be carried out in other districts within the country so as to generalize the findings.

(ii) Another study should be carried out to determine other factors apart from sociocultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district.

(iii) The current study focused only on socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls. Therefore, the studies that focus on the solutions of the problem of poor academic performance of girls in public secondary schools should be carried out.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

This questionnaire is part of my academic work for requirements of Master of Education Degree in Education Planning and Administration at the Open University of Tanzania.

The concern of this research is socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district. I am kindly requesting you to fill this questionnaire so that I get the required data. Feel comfortable when you are giving your opinion since the information you are providing will be confidential.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Please put a tick ($\sqrt{}$) for appropriate option in the space provided

1.Gender: Male

Female

2. Teaching experience

Inder 4 years	4-8 years	-12Years	Above 12 years

3.Highest level of education

Diploma	First	Post	graduate	Master degree	Other (Please
	degree	diploma			specify)

SECTION B: Views of people on education of girls

4. The items below are thought to be general views of the respondents towards girls' education. Put a tick to one option that best represent how you agree or disagree the following statements.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (DS), 3=Undecided (UN), 4=Agree

SA Α UN DS SD **Statements** xi. Girls and boys should be given equal level of education xii. Educated females are respectful xiii. Women education is a source of manpower for the nation xiv. Educated women have better opportunities to be among of the leaders in the society xy. Female children should be allowed to finish their education before marriage xvi. Educated women are more useful to their husbands. xvii. Western education promotes immorality among female. Female child need to xviii. be educated up to university and should xix. Both girls boys participate equally in domestic duties xx. Highly educated female has better opportunity to find a husband than less educated one

(AG), 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

SECTION C: Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of girls in Nzega district

5. The items below are thought to be socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in schools. Put a tick to one option that best represent how you agree or disagree the following statements.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree(DS), 3=Undecided(UN),

Statements	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
i. Too much works at homes					
ii. Family preference to educate boys instead of girls					
iii. Religious belief hinder female Education					
iv. Female Genital Mutilation					
v. The notion than women are less intelligent than men					
vi. Early marriage					
vii. Parental demoralization due to girls' pregnancies before completion of schools					
viii. The notion that women's rightful place is in the kitchen.					
ix. Low parental interest to educate girls due to belief that their daughters will marry and go away					
x. Parents' failure to buy basic needs such as sanitary towels for their daughters					

4=Agree(AG), 5=Strongly Agree(SA)

SECTION D

6. What challenges do schools face in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in Nzega district?

.....

7. What strategies should be used to overcome the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors which affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district?

Appendix 2: Students' Questionnaire

Dear participant,

This questionnaire is part of my academic work for requirements of Master of Education Degree in Education Planning and Administration at the Open University of Tanzania.

The concern of this research is socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district. I am kindly requesting you to fill this questionnaire so that I get the required data. Feel comfortable when you are giving your opinion since the information you are providing will be confidential.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Please put a tick ($\sqrt{}$) for appropriate option in the space provided

1.Gender: Male Female

SECTION B: Views of People on Education of Girls

5. The items below are thought to be general views of the respondents towards girls' education. Put a tick to one option that best represent how you agree or disagree the following statements.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (DS), 3=Undecided (UN), 4=Agree

Statements	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
i. Girls and boys should be given equal level of					
education					
ii. Educated females are respectful					
iii. Women education is a source of manpower					
for the nation					
iv. Educated women have better opportunities to					
be among of the leaders in the society					
v. Female children should be allowed to finish					
their education before marriage					
vi. Educated women are more useful to their					
husbands.					
vii. Western education promotes immorality					
among female.					
viii. Female child need to be educated up to					
university					
ix. Both girls and boys should participate					
equally in domestic duties					

(A), 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

SECTION C: Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance of girls in Nzega district

6.The items below are thought to be socio-cultural factors affecting academic performance of girls in schools. Put a tick to one option that best represent how you agree or disagree the following statements.

1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree(DS), 3=Undecided(UN), 4=Agree(A),

i.	Statements	SA	Α	UN	DS	SD
ii.	Too much works at homes					
iii.	Family preference to educate boys instead					
	of girls					
iv.	Religious belief hinder female					
v.	Education					
vi.	Female Genital Mutilation					
vii.	The notion than women are less intelligent					
	than men					
viii.	Early marriage					
ix.	Parental demoralization due to girls'					
	pregnancies before completion of schools					
х.	The notion that women's rightful place is					
	in the kitchen.					
xi.	Low parental interest to educate girls due					
	to belief that their daughters will marry and					
	go away					
xii.	Parents' failure to buy basic needs such as					
	sanitary towels for their daughters					

5=Strongly Agree(SA)

SECTION D

- 8. What challenges do schools face in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in Nzega district?
- 9. What strategies should be used to overcome the challenges facing schools in their struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors that negatively affect academic performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district?

••••••	 	

Appendix 3: Interview Schedule for Heads of Schools

My name is Joel Kategile Mgalula, a student from Open University of Tanzania conducting a research entitled "Socio-cultural factors affecting performance of girls in public secondary schools in Nzega district" Your school is one of the selected schools for data collection purpose and you are among those chosen to participate in the study as a primary source of data. Thus you are kindly requested to be considerate in answering the questions and our interview will take approximately 20 minutes.

Section A: Interviewee Background Information

- 1. Sex_____
- 2. Age_____
- 3. Number of years as head of school _____
- 4. Highest level of education_____
- 5. Gender; male () female ()

Section B: Socio-cultural Factors

- 1. Based on academic performance in your school, which group between girls and boys perform better in their examinations?
- 2. What are the reasons for answer in question 3?
- 3. What are the problems affecting academic performance of girls in your school?
- 4. Based on your school practical situation, what kind of socio-cultural factors affecting performance of girls in school?

- 5. On your opinion, what should be done to eliminate socio-cultural factors which negatively affect academic performance of girls in school?
- 6. As a school, what measures could be taken to eliminate socio-cultural factors which negatively affect academic performance of girls?
- 7. What challenges you encounter in your struggle to eliminate socio-cultural factors which negatively affect academic performance of girls?

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule for Parents/ Dodoso kwa Wazazi

Mimi naitwa Joel Kategile Mgalula, mwanafunzi wa Chuo Kikuu Huria cha Tanzania. Nafanya utafiti wenye lengo la kuzitambua mila na desturi zinazosababisha ufaulu duni wa wanafunzi hasa wa kike kwenye shule zetu za sekondari hapa Nzega. Wewe ni miongoni mwa wazazi wenye watoto wa kike shuleni uliyechaguliwa kushiriki kwenye utafiti huu. Napenda kukuuliza maswali machache na majibu yako ni muhimu sana kufanikisha utafiti huu.Tutatumia kama dakika 20 kumaliza mahojiano yetu .

Sehemu ya Kwanza: Taarifa Binafsi

1.	Jina la	l	
	Kijiji/	mtaa	
2.	Jinsia		
3.	Umri.		
4.	Kiwar	igo cha juu cha	
	elimu.		
			Sehemu ya Pili: Mila na Desturi
1.	Una w	atoto wangapi?	
	(a)	wa	
	kiume		
	(b)	Wa	
	kike		

2.]	Ni wa ngapi kati ya hawa wamemaliza/walipaswa kuwa wamemaliza darasa la
	saba?
	(a) Wa
	kiume
	(b) Wa
	kike
3.]	Ni wa ngapi kati ya hawa wanasoma sekondari/ wamemaliza elimu ya sekondari ?
(c)	Wa kiume
(d)	Wa kike
4.	Ni yupi kati ya msichana na mvulani anayepaswa kupewa kipaumbele cha
	kwanza kwenda sekondari? kwa nini?
5.	Kama mkazi wa eneo hili, unafikiri ni matatizo gani ambayo yanasababisha
	watoto wengi wa kike washindwe kufanya vizuri kwenye masomo yao?
6.	Ni mila na desturi zipi katika eneo hili zinawafanya watoto wengi wa kike
	wasisome vizuri masomo yao ya shuleni?
7.	Kama mila na desturi zinginezinazoathiri ufaulu wa wanafunzi wa kike zipo,
	naomba uzitaje
8.	Kwa maoni yako , desturi na tamaduni hizi je, zinapaswa kudumishwa?
9.	Wewe kama mzazi ni kwa namna gani unashiriki katika kuziondoa mila na
	desturi ambazo zinawanyima fursa ya masomo watoto wa kike?

- 10. Je, Ni vikwazo vipi unafikiri vinakwamisha juhudi za wazazi na wadau mbalimbali katika kuondoa mila, desturi na tamaduni hizi?
- 11. Kwa maoni , kipi kifanye ili kuondoa mila, desturi na tamaduni hizi ambazo zinawanyima fursa watoto wa kike kufanya vizuri kwenye masomo yao shuleni?

Nashukuru kwa maoni yako. Mungu akubariki

Appendix 5: Research Cleaance

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Kawawa Road, Kinondoni Municipality, P.O. Box 23409 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania http://www.out.ac.tz



Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 Ext.2101 Fax: 255-22-2668759, E-mail:drps@out.ac.tz

Date: August 26th,2016.

District Executive Director Nzega District P.O.Box Tabora

RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No. 55 in the official Gazette. The act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the later, the Open University mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research. To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you Mr.MGALULA, JOEL HD/E/1046/T.13, pursuing Master of Education in Adminstration, Planning and Policy Studies. We hereby grant this clearance to conduct a research titled "Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting Academic Performance Of Girls In Public Secondary Schools In Nzega District, Tanzania". He will conduct his research at Nzega District in Tabora Region from August 29th, to October 29th, 2016.

Incase you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O. Box 23409, Dar es Salaam. Tel: 022-2-2668820. We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.

Yours sincerely,

a ser

Prof Hossea Rwegoshora For: VICE CHANCELLOR THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

Appendix 6: Introductory Letter from Nzega District Director

 HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA YA NZEGA

 Barua ziandikwe kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji)

 Telegram: Halmashauri

 Simu: 026 269 2301

 Simu: 026 269 2349

 Fax : 026 269 2349

 E-Mail Address

 nzegadc@yahoo.com

 Unapojibu nakuu

Kumb. Na. NDC/E1/57/VOL.IV/26

Walimu Wakuu, Shule za Sekondari za Mwangoye, Nata, Itobo, Kasela, Hamza Aziz, Isanzu, Mwanhala, Nkiniziwa na Puge NZEGA.

YAH: UTAMBULISHO WA NDUGU MGALULA JOEL

Mtajwa hapo juu ni mwanafunzi anayesoma The Open University of Tanzania anakuja kufanya tafiti.

Kwa barua hii namtambulisha kwenu ili aweze kupatiwa msaada anaouhitaji.

Nawatakia kazi njema.

T. Mmari Kny: MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI WILAYA NZEGA

15 September 2016