**REASONS FOR GIRLS DROP-OUT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: THE CASE OF MPANDA DISTRICT IN RUKWA REGION**

**MLOKA NESTORY ALBERT**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION, PLANNING AND POLICY STUDIES OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

**2014**

**CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned hereby certify that I have read and consequently recommend for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania, a dissertation, entitled: **Reasons for Girls Drop Out in Primary Schools in Tanzania: The Case of Mpanda District,** submitted by Mloka Nestory Albert in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Education Administration, Planning and Policy Studies of the Open University of Tanzania.

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**DECLARATION**

I, Mloka Nestory Albert, 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.

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# DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents namely my late father Mr. Albert Kinongile and my late mother, Tekla Dominic both of whom made me what I am now. May almighty God rest my parents’ souls in eternal peace.

# ABSTRACT

The study explored the reasons for higher rate of girls drop-out in Primary Schools in Tanzania with a focus on primary schools in Mpanda district. Its objectives included; determining reasons that contribute to girls drop-out in Mpanda district, investigating the effects of relationships that girls and boys engage in the district and how they correspond with the drop-out rate of girl students in Primary Schools in Mpanda district and to assess the role of economic activities in relation to school drop-out. Qualitative research design was the predominant paradigm employed in collecting and analyzing data. The population of the study involved samples of twenty three primary schools, twenty three drop-out girls, eleven parents, seventeen head teachers, one District Education Officer, one District Chief Inspector of schools and one District Education Academic Officer. Data were gathered through interviews, observation, focus group discussion, documentary review and questionnaires. Content analysis was used in interpreting data from the field of the study.

The findings revealed that home environment had a great role to play as an agent of girls drop-out in primary schools. Early marriage was also a realized factor to the girls drop-out in schools”. The research also revealed that there was high girls’ drop-out role because of late enrolment in standard one in all primary schools. Boys were preference of the parents for education, hence girls were discouraged.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the Village Executive Officers (VEOs) should be empowered to conduct endless public awareness campaign and establishment of effective enforcing law of allocating female teachers in rural schools and the use of Non-Governmental Organizations and Community. It is also recommended that another study should be done in other regions in Tanzania. Therefore the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should involve all ministerial officers to run such study so as to reduce the high drop-out of girls in primary schools.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CREATE Consortium for Research on Education Access, Transition and Equity

CBOs Community Based Organizations

DAS District Administrative Secretary

DEAO District Education Academic Officer

DCIS District Chief Inspector of Schools

DEO District Executive Officer

DIS District Inspector of Schools

EFA Education For All

ETP Education and Training Policy

FAWE Forum for African Women Education

FGD Focus Group Discussion

GMR Global Monitoring Report

HT Head Teacher

HIV/AIDS Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome

MOEC Ministry of Education and Culture

NGOs Non-Government Organizations

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

RAS Regional Administrative Secretary

REO Regional Education Officer

SLO Supplies and Logistics Officer

SSA Sub Saharan Africa

TADREG Tanzania Development Research Group

TSM Takwimu za Shule za Msingi

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF United Nations Children’s Fund

UTS Unified Teaching Service

VEO Village Executive Officer

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM**

**1.0 Introduction**

**1.1 Background to the Problem**

One of the biggest obstacles to education of the female students relates to their dropping out from school. This phenomenon is particularly notable in countries of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Termination of girls’ education in the early years of schooling no doubt results in inefficient utilization of both human and economic resources in the education system (Lockheed and Adrian, 1991). The interruption of schooling of female students is also costly in terms of the low quality of life for those who drop out of school as well as for the society as a whole.

There is global concern about possible discrimination against girls in terms of their access to schooling and high dropout rates. The drop-out of female learners from school denies them opportunities for employment, effective participation in other economic activities the development of this potential to participate in social and political activities. Furthermore non-completion of schooling by female students contributes to their reduced decision-making power in the household and the society over important issues concerning their lives. Given the economic and social benefits of female education, the drop-out of girl students from schooling represents a significant regression in the development of a nation.

For more than 50 years now, world governments have affirmed their commitment to universal right to basic education. However, King and Anne (1992) observe that more than 130 million children who should be attending primary school are not doing so even today, of these two thirds are girls Moreover the World Education Forum sees the problem of school girls’ drop out as a setback for development. Increased girls drop out from school reveals those girls in developing countries lag behind boys in attending school. Girls comprise a high percent of children that are not in primary school.

In order to address this problem, there is high global pressure on education for all. Tanzania has taken several measures to ensure effective implementation and achievement of children’s right to quality basic education. Despite the various measures, there have been many obstacles, education access by some of the targeted groups particularly girls. One of these serious obstacles is dropping out of school by girls.

Reversing this trend is vital for Africa’s development, as emphasized by Annan (2000) during the Dakar Summit on education for girls. Koffi Annan stressed that girls’ education is a long-term investment that yields an exceptionally high return since better educated girls and women contribute enormously to society’s nutrition, health, development and peace. During the Jomtien meeting in Thailand in 1990 “Education For All” emphasized that “the most urgent priority is to ensure access to, and improvement of the quality of education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers (girls) their participation (UNESCO, 1990). Article No.10 (f) of the Beijing Conference puts more emphasis on the reduction of female students’ drop-out rates and pushes for the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely. The importance of education for girls has also been declared in the Millennium Development Goals 2015 (UN-2000) as the second and third objectives.

In Tanzania, the Education and Training Policy of (1995), clearly observes that there is a big drop-out of girls from school compared to boys in primary schools (MoEC 1995: p 19). Literature indicates that Mpanda District in Rukwa Region is a leading district in terms of girls dropping out of primary school in Tanzania (Rukwa Regional Education Data, 2009).To enable female students to complete their education is to invest in future progress in all aspects of family and community lives. Elimination of wastage due to drop out from school requires a clear understanding of the extent, causes and consequences of the problem. Policy responses and calls for the problem especially for female drop-outs. This understanding will serve as a springboard for new action. This study is therefore a practical step intended to create such an understanding and to push for the promotion of girls’ education.

Primary education being the foundational education is still not provided at satisfactory levels especially for girls in developing countries. Records show that from the 1960s to 1990s there was a significant increase in girls enrolment in schools in developing nations. This is still quite low today and drop-out levels for girls remains high The barriers to satisfactory enrolment of girls in primary education in developing countries include lack of property against the cost of education, social and cultural practices which consider male children as more important and more valuable than female children(Bendera,J S.J. and Mboya, M.W. 1996) . These cultural orientations of some societies tend to lead to gender inequalities, early marriages and pregnancies. As a result some nations have come up with policies that encourage education of women (Kaheta, 2007).

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The drop-out of female students from schools is due to a complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic and structural factors. Whereas efforts in other parts of Tanzania are leading to improvement in enrolment and retention of girls in school to completion grades, in Mpanda District there is an increase in the dropout rate for girls. Notably, whereas for the rest of Tanzania there is increasing participation of women in public life including political positions, in Mpanda District there is a shortage of women for these positions for the majority lack education, having dropped out of school early.

Factors contributing to drop-out of girls in primary schools have been researched in some areas in developing countries, particularly in Tanzania. Mpanda district has a mixed population of Tanzanians and refugees altogether involved in different economic activities which include fishing, small scale mining, cattle keeping, bee keeping, cultivation and going to school. Although these economic activities are usually the pre-occupations of males, one would expect school drop-out rates to be higher for boys than girls in Mpanda but this is not the case. There must be unknown reasons that are unique to Mpanda district which contribute to higher school drop-out for girls. This situation has created the need for the researcher to find out reasons for girls high rate dropping-out of primary schools which are particular for Mpanda district. This study is intended to serve this purpose.

**1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and establish reasons that contribute to female drop out from primary schools specifically in Mpanda District.

**1.4 Objective of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Determine the factors which contribute to girls drop-out from school in Mpanda district,
2. Investigate the effects of relationships between girls and boys in the district which contribute towards girls drop out from primary schools in Mpanda district.
3. Assess the role and contribution of economic activities to girls drop-out from school.
4. Determine the school age at which school girls mostly drop out of school.

**1.5 Research tasks and questions**

This study was guided by the following tasks and questions:

**Research Task 1**

To determine the factors which contribute to girls drop-out in Mpanda district.

Research questions:

* What are the reasons behind girls drop-out in primary schools in Mpanda district?
* What are the community attitudes towards school girls drop-out in the area?
* How do those attitudes impact girls dropout rate in primary schools in Mpanda district?
* What cultural activities force girls to drop out of school?

**Research Task 2**

To investigate the effects of relationships between girls and boys in the district which contribute towards girls drop out from the primary schools in Mpanda district.

**Research questions**

* How do boys’ behaviours affect girls’ effective participation in education?
* What is the main school age of girls being affected by drop-out?
* Why don’t boys drop out of school as girls do?

**Research Task 3**

To assess the role and contribution of economic activities to girls drop-out from school.

**Research questions**

* In what economic activities are girls mostly involved at home forcing them to drop out of school
* In what economic activities are boys usually involved and which do not interfere with their going to school?

**Research Task 4**

To assess the school age at which girls are mostly drop out of school.

**Research question**

What is the common age at which most girls drop out of school?

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will serve the following purposes:

Inform the Rukwa Regional Authorities and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training about factors contributing towards rising rates of girls drop-out in Mpanda District in order to take appropriate actions to be taken. The findings will also serve as a basis for policy formulation on what should be done to reduce girls dropping out of school and increasing their school completion rates. The findings will stimulate further research on the problems of school dropout by girls at all levels of the education in Tanzania.

* 1. **Definitions of Key Terms**
     1. **Drop out** – According to Brimmer (1990), a school dropout is a pupil who leaves school before the end of the final year of the educational stage in which s/he is enrolled. For the purpose of this study a drop out is a primary school girl student who fails to complete her seven years of primary school education cycle.

**1.7.2 Girl students**- Under this study it stands for those school girls from standard I to VII in the primary school level.

* **Parents-** This represents; mothers, fathers and guardians of school girls dropping out of school before a primary cycle of seven years is completed.
* **Home**- Reflects the place where those school girls live.
* **Premature exit**- Under this study it means leaving school before completing the seven years of primary school level for any reasons.
* **Early marriage**- refers to school girls who get married before the completion of their school cycle of primary school.

**1.8 Delimitation of the Study**

The study dealt with the reasons which contribute to girls dropping out of school in Mpanda District. Thus, the results of the study will not be generalized in other districts in Tanzania because of the differences in the environment facing community members on girls’ education.

**1.9 Organization of the Study**

The study sought to and investigates the reasons for girls dropping-out of primary schools in Mpanda District. Chapter one presents the background to the study and statement of the problem as well as the purpose, objectives and significance of the study. The research tasks and key concepts and delimitations and limitation of the study are also dealt with in this chapter. Chapter Two provides review of related literature which focuses on importance of girls education, international thought, the rate of girls drop-out and the gap in the literature. Chapter Three discusses the research methodology which includes area of study, research design, the target population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability check of the data collection tools, as well as data analysis plan. Chapter Four presents and discusses the findings while Chapter Five gives a summary, conclusion and recommendation

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Introduction**

A review of literature is usually and primarily concerned with the research and issues connected with the subject matter of the research study (Oliver, 2004). Under this section the problem of girls drop-out from school would be looked at a wide perspective so as to get the significance of the problem worldwide. It is generally acknowledged that education is of great importance to any society. As Ishumi (1978:6) puts it:

Education as a means is an essential asset to any country or an individual that is aspiring to development. Education raises people’s aspirations, increases social, economic and cultural performance and individual’s level of awareness of the environment and equips them with the necessary skills and ideology for contending with the problems they encounter.

The argument above suggests that every individual in the society should be educated because skills and knowledge are needed by individuals to control their environment and improve their lives. Other studies have particularly specified the importance of education to women in relation to their responsibilities and the roles they play in the development of humankind. On the same line UNESCO (2003:8) suggests

The negative effects of not attending school are greater for girls than for boys – and their impact transfers to the next generation of both boys and girls. Whether educated or not, girls are more at risk than boys from HIV/AIDS, sexual exploitation and child trafficking. Without the knowledge and life skills that school can provide, these risks are multiplied. So it is that school allows girls and their families multiple protections and its absence means multiple exposures.

It appears from the quotation above that to educate a woman is more important and the impact of not doing so is more severe for girls than for boys. Girls’ education is associated with the development and welfare of the next generation and has multiplier effects in all aspects of human life that is, political, economic and social welfare. Socially, girls’ education may be helpful in lowering fertility rates and infant mortality rates, improved nutrition, increased life expectancy and better opportunities for the children of the next generation (Kane, 1995). The difficulties arise only when parents are doubtful about the benefits these girls will accrue to their own families and not to the parents who must incur substantial costs.

Research groups which presented their findings at the Millennium Conference in 2000 reported that 72% million children of primary school age were not in school in 2005 and 57 percent of them were girls (UNESCO, 1990). This reveals the fact that girls are lagging behind academically through a thousands of years back in history. International organizations are in the forefront in campaigning against girls’ ignorance. The World Bank for instance is committed to fighting poverty and helping developing countries to invest in their education systems. In the light of this situation, the World Bank has embraced the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals as its main priority and, particularly, “eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education” (UN Millennium Project, 2004). Thus, the World Bank has recognized that there is no investment more effective for achieving development goals than educating girls. This bank is one of many players in the international drive to improve gender equality and empowerment of girls and women.

Since the World conference of Education in Jomtien in 1990, the bank’s emphasis in the area of girls education has increased and gender equality has been integrated as an important component of the bank’s poverty reduction mission. Thirty years ago girls represented 38 percent of primary enrolments; the percentage of boys was 62. Today the gender gap has been narrowed with girls representing 48 percent and boys 52 percent of primary enrolments (UNESCO, 2006).

Between 1999 and 2006 worldwide, the number of children not in school declined rapidly from about 100 million to 75 million. However, girls still constituted 55% of all out of school children. Worldwide, for every 100 boys out of school children, there are 122 girls. (UNESCO, 2006) addresses poverty, adverse cultural practices, schooling quality and distance to school as a cause to gender differences in school attendance.

There are some other emerging challenges for girls’ participation that reduce girls’ enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education. There are: HIV/AIDS, orphan hood, family conflicts, emergencies and other fragile situations, gender based violence, and information technology gender gap (UNESCO, 2003). With these challenges, girls are the most effected in terms of the requirement for them to drop out of school in order to take care of their homes.

**2.2 Process of Girls dropout in School Education**

As with other educational indicators, regional and gender disparities are conspicuous educational enrolment and retention. Undoubtedly, due to special measures adopted by several state governments in the past decade, the rate of growth of enrolment of girls at national levels have been higher for girls than for boys, but disparities still persist in the regards to retention in school. The dropout rate at the primary and upper primary stages is higher for girls than for boys. As per the latest estimates available from the Human Resource Development Report, for girls enrolled in classes I-VII (elementary), over 26.75 percent dropped out in 2006-2007 against 52.9 percent in 2003-2004. Similarly, 61.5 percent of girls enrolled in classes I-X (secondary) dropped out in 2006-2007 against 64.9 percent in 2003-2004. At state level, the dropout rate has been quite high in Biher in India. The latest Educational Reports say that prevalence of this phenomenon is more intense in the rural areas of the educational backward states. Thus what makes it a cause of particular concern is that dropout rates have remained higher for the girls in rural areas compared to boys (Choudhary, 2006)

The reasons for high dropouts for girls are diverse ranging from high cost of education, inadequate educational facilities, poverty, familial dutiesand structural factors (Bhaqawati, 1973; Duraisy, 1992; Sengupta and Guha, 2002, Vaid, 2004.) However, dropout is not a distinct event, but a rather process of events, situations and context which worked together to produce dropouts. Thus, in order to unravel the factors and underlying processes of the phenomenon of dropout in relation risks the certain in-depth case studies of the dropouts and children at risk have been done.

Within the particular contexts of family backgrounds schooling experiences and social surroundings, there are certain patterns of similarities among the dropouts and among children at risk. In a few cases of the dropouts, it has been found that there are no literate parents in the households where children that study habits and the accomplishments of homework are adversely affected. Even in cases of families, where parents are to some extent educated, the lack of parental support in helping children to complete the home work or checking and monitoring the home tasks on a regular basis proved to be a major obstacle for success in school. In one of the case histories of dropout at Mamta Sigh in India, it is clearly revealed that the main reason for a girl to drop out of school was to take care of siblings.

Household chores and the lack of alternative parental or family support hinder parents to provide academic help to daughters at home. This trend is observed in many cases of children at risk. A growing body of research has shown that students undergo more psychological maturity and do better in school when they come from families in which parents monitor and regulate their children’s activities. In most of the case studies of dropouts and children at risk, it has been found that parents neither have ever participated in school meetings nor ever have visited the schools to monitor their children’s academic performance. Parents were either least concerned or gave less value of their children’s education, and were least concerned in their personal visits to schools to keep track of their children’s academic records and achievements. The degree of parental involvement varies with socio-economic structures families and may explain the differential achievement levels among such families.

**2.3 The Importance of Girls Education**

The human capital theory regards education as an investment to maximize lifetime wealth (Schultz; 1974). In addition to that, schooling generates benefits in terms of enhanced future earnings and entails direct costs and opportunity costs associated with delayed entry into the labour market. During intergovernmental meetings, including the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in September 1994, the World Summit for social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, investments in schooling has been considered and identified as a top priority for developing country governments as well as for international donor assistance in education. Particular emphasis has been placed at these international meetings on primary-level investment in countries where overall levels of schooling are low and investments in girls where gender gaps in education are larger. Attention has focused both on rates of school attendance among children and on efficient achievement of critical schooling levels of adequate quality to produce specific levels of knowledge and cognitive competencies.

**2.4 International Thought**

International conferences have addressed the importance of education for the female child such as Education For All (EFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. The aims of these conferences have been to bring the benefits of education to every citizen in every society. It has been perceived that it is a long way to achieve this goal if some other strategies are not going to be put in place. The problem of girls’ dropping-out of schools still exists while one of its goals is to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality. The realization of this goal is hampered by drop out of girls in primary schools.

Linkages between educational access and child labour are also gendered, and frequently is the girl child who is the most affected (Andviget *et al.,* 2002 and. Blunch and Verneo, 2000; Boylet et al., 2002; Canagarahaj and Coulombe, 1997; Colclough *et al.,* 2000; Ersado, 2005; Roseand Al Sammarai, 2001). In many contexts, girls take a heavier workload within domestic/household settings for example water and fuel collection, care for young siblings and general domestic tasks. Boys on the other hand are likely to be involved in agricultural duties (Canagarahaj and Coulombe, 1997). The types of activities carried out by girls have some implications for both initial and sustained access to schooling. In this case the rural girls are more likely to be affected than urban girls (Ersado, 2005).

**2.5 The Rate of Girls Drop-out**

The premature leaving of schooling is a worldwide problem. In Turkey for instance attainment of boys and girls are examined separately so as to shed light on causes for the significantly lower level of attainment for girls. According to Tansel (1998) “although high levels of enrolments have been achieved at the primary school level for both boys and girls in much of Turkey, substantial regional differences remain. In particular, in the Southern region, girls begin to drop-out of school around the third grade. Only half of the primary school graduates register at the middle level” (Tansel, 1998). The situation shows how big the problem of girls dropping out of school is.

Girls drop-out becomes bigger in Sub-Saharan Africa where girls who complete their education cycle especially in primary schools are lower compared to that of boys. In “The Effective of Primary School Quality on the Educational Participation and Attainment of Kenyan Girls and Boys”; Lloyd, Mensch and Clark (1998) giving the situation in Kenya indicate that girls are more likely than boys to drop-out of school prematurely and are less likely to do well on the primary school leaving exams during the end of cycle level (grade eight). This is an obvious fact that the gender gap can be noticeable in the transition rate from primary to secondary school. Statistics shows that, those who were enrolled in standard 1 in 1989, only 43.35 percent of girls and 45.15 percent of boys completed class seven in 1996 and the completion rates have remained very low (less than 50%) to 1997 (Odipo and Abagi, 1997). In Zambia the gender difference stems from a large number of girls dropping out between primary and secondary school since the school attendance rate dropped to 27 percent for girls and only 15 percent for boys.

Mozambique is one of those poor developing countries where gender disparities in primary education persist despite international or national stipulations (CIA, 2005). Most of the children who do not access primary school and drop out early are girls. At the upper levels of the education system, however, girls disappear altogether (UNICEF 2001). A turning point for girls’ attendance is the age of 14-15 where a sharp difference between girls’ and boys’ attendance rates can be observed (World Bank 2005). The attendance rate for girls drops sharply from the age of 14 in all provinces of Mozambique (Heltberg *et al.,* 2003).

In Tanzania, girls dropout rate is slightly different compared with that of boys. In the year (1996) for example data showed that only 27,262 (47%) girls left school prematurely while 30,625 (53%) were boys. In Rukwa during that particular year (1996) girls drop-out was at 45% and 55% for boys. Currently the problem of girls drop-out in Mpanda District becomes a regional challenge as the statistics for the past five years (2005-2009) in Table 1 indicate that 16,026 (53%) girls and only 14,198 (47%) boys left primary school prematurely. Based on the above information, the need of this study seems to be important as a basis for policy advice and action to address the problem.

# Table 2.1: Primary school dropout rate in Mpanda District 2005-2009



Source: Rukwa Regional Education Office, 2009.

# 2.6 Conceptual Framework

The adoption of multiple perspectives as implied in the review of literature requires investigating the economic, cultural, political and social factors that influence girls drop-out from school. Commonly, this approach is holistic since it attempts to capture interacting unique events using multiple methods. This interactivity means a two way influence among events and not a cause-effect relationship. According to Patton (1987) interactivity also implies revealing how all parts work together to form the whole and not attempting to predict the future. The main interest is to reveal these relationships as they happen in real life without any manipulation. Following Merriam (1998) such an approach can be considered as interpretative in its orientation, since the main concern here is to understand how drop-outs occur, what it means to fail completing schooling and why it takes place. The Figure 2.1 shows the main units of analysis and observation as it implicitly guided the study then refined for the actual study in the present investigation.

School factors

* Learning environment
* Distance from school
* Gender sensitive school facilities
* Sexual harassment

Status of Drop-outs

* Drop-out rates

Cultural factors

* Pregnancies
* Girls’ expectations
* Early marriage

Political and institutional factors

* Education for all
* Physical crises and inadequate public support
* Limited effect of women development
* Attitudes towards girls education
* Interventions
* Employment perspectives of girls

Economic factors

* Direct schooling costs
* Opportunity costs
* Prospects of low economic return
* Family background
* Parents investment behaviour

# Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

**Source:** Rukwa region education documents 2012

The above framework indicates that there is a two way interaction or mutual influence among economic, cultural, school or structural and institutional factors as well as school drop-outs. The fact that not one, but many, factors were investigated as reasons for girls dropping out of school indicates that this study is descriptive while the attempts to explain the reasons or background of school non-completion reveals its heuristic quality. Political and institutional factors relate to economic factors by directing school costs, opportunity costs, prospects of low economic return, family background and parents investment behaviour. They also direct learning environment, distance from school by the student, gender sensitive school facilities and the way to stop sexual harassment for girls.

**2.7 Literature gap**

Empirical studies done by TADREG (1994), Bunto (2002), Ndimba (1996) and Ssekamwa (1997) indicated the causes and effects of dropping out of primary schools. Unfortunately, the studies were done in other areas of Tanzania not in Mpanda District. As has already been indicated earlier, Mpanda District has various human activities and different ethnic and cultural norms. There is therefore the need for the researcher to conduct an in-depth study for the purpose of establishing the causes for the high rate of girls’ drop-out of school in Mpanda District.

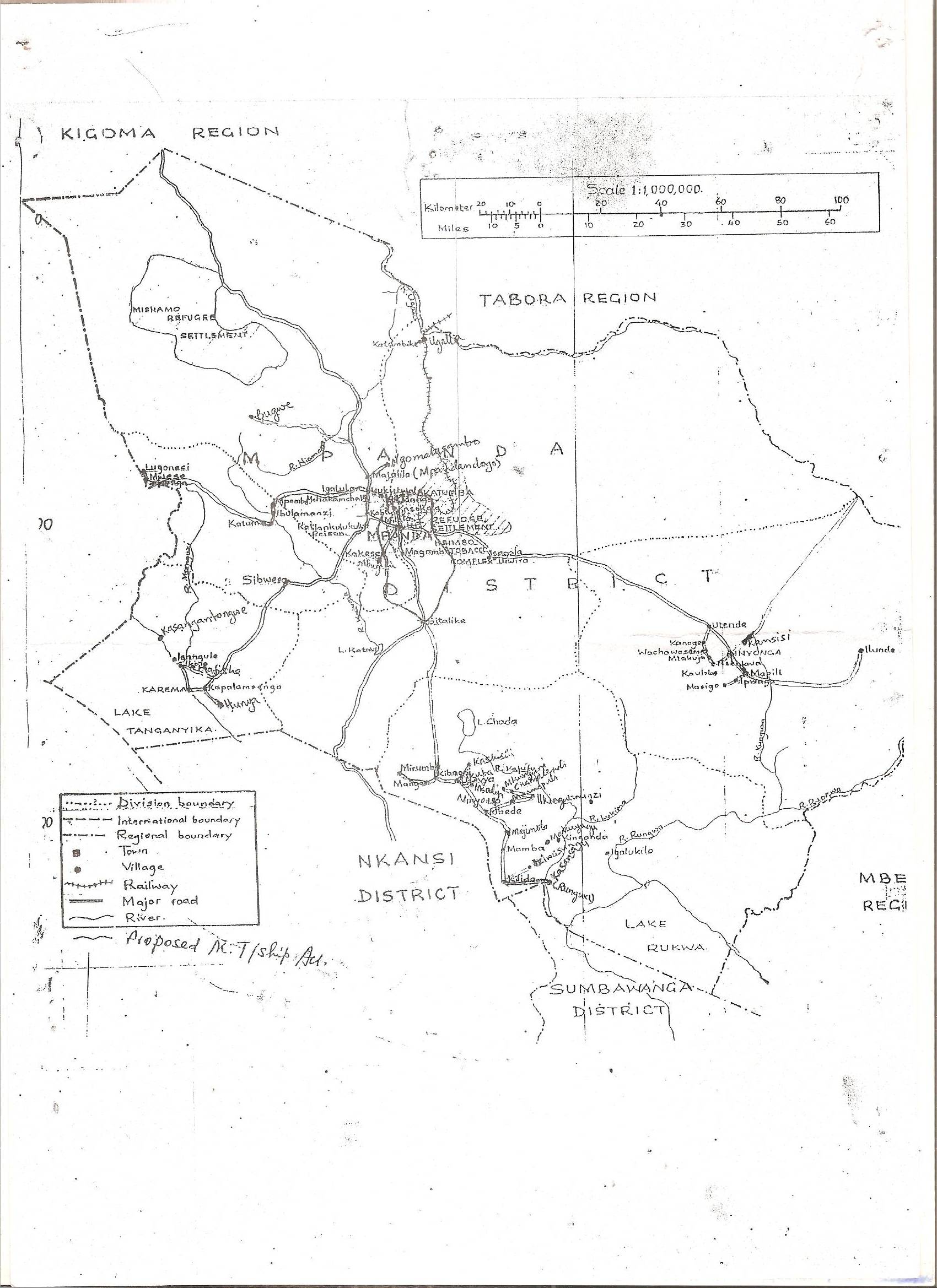
**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

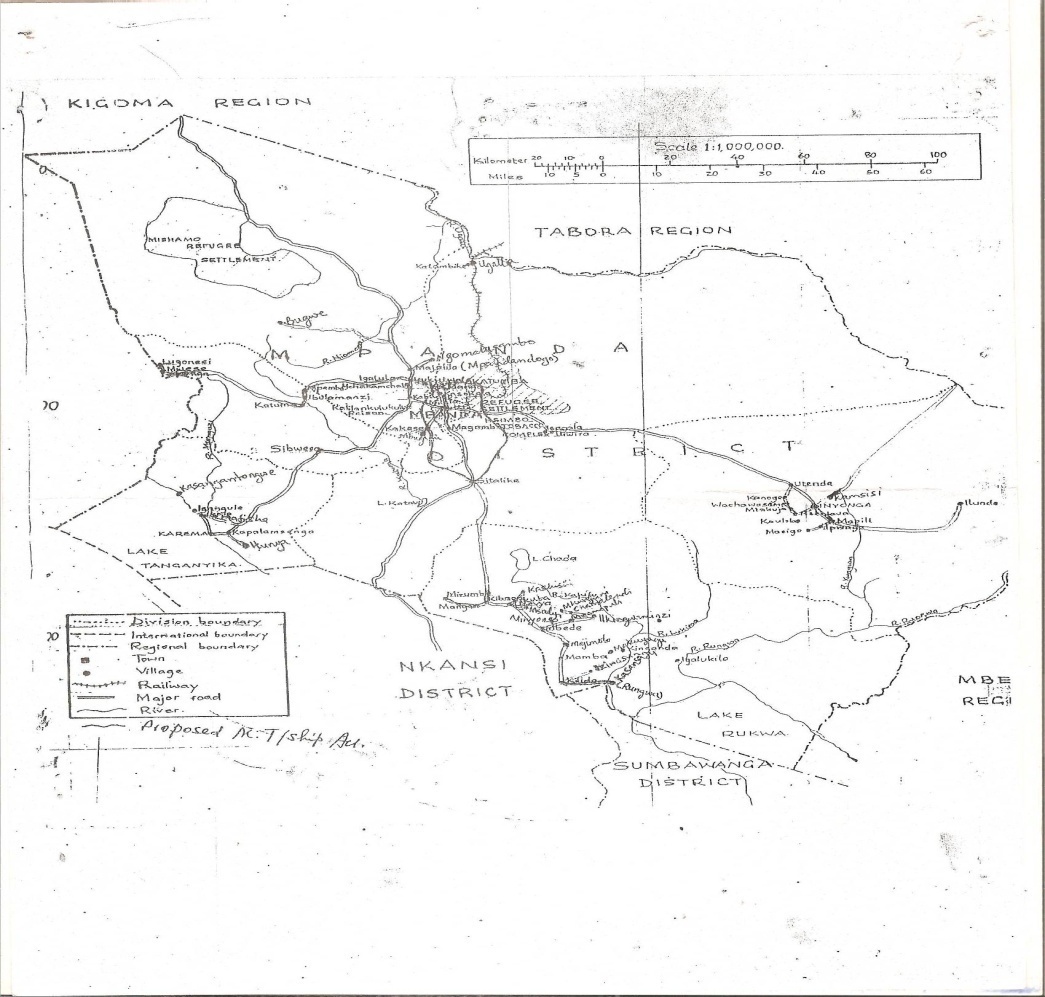
# 3.1 Introduction

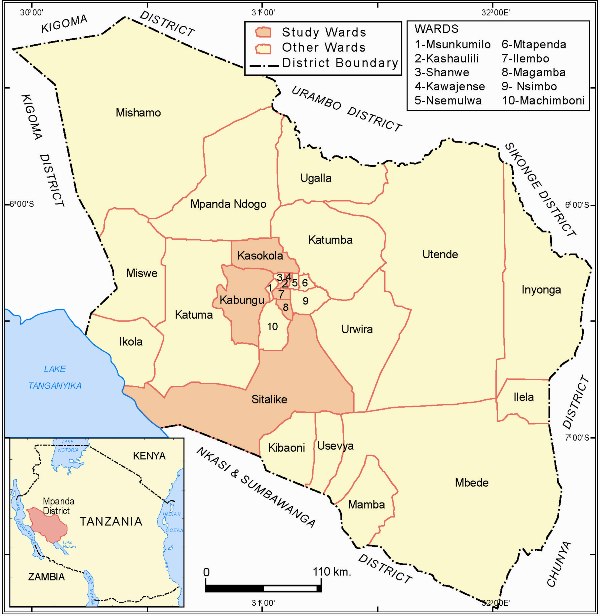
This chapter covers the methodology used in the study; it includes the area of the study, the research design, the target population, the sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, validity and reliability of instruments as well as data analysis plan and research ethical considerations.

**3.2 Area of the Study**

The study was an investigative case study focusing on the reasons that account for high rate of girls drop-out from schools in Mpanda. The study was confined to Mpanda District. The choice of this area of study was based on three reasons. Firstly, Mpanda was the work place of the researcher. Thus, it became less costly in carrying out the study reducing logistical problems. The second reason is that Mpanda District has high drop-out rate of girls compared to other districts in Rukwa Region. Third, it was easy and convenient for the researcher to collect data within scheduled time. The respondents were accessible and cooperative. The map of Mpanda District is shown in Figure 3.1.







**Figure 3.1: A Map of Mpanda district**

# 

# Figure 3.1 Areas of study which were visited by the researcher

**3.2.1 Research Design**

According to Kothari (1990) a research design is a systematic arrangement and strategy of investigation in order to gather requisite data. A design structure of the research, shows how all of the major parts of the project work together to address the central research question (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). In this respect, the study employed principally a qualitative approach, applying a case study design. The reason behind this choice is based in the nature of the study, which required an in-depth investigation into the social dynamics that could have involved in the process of change for faster development of Mpanda. Such an approach required and relied on naturalistic observations, an analysis of interactive community relations as well as an assessment of collective outcomes of cultural norms. The approach was also used to enable the researcher to obtain and

interpret informants’ meaningful experiences in their natural settings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The qualitative approach provided an opportunity for the researcher to make changes during the research. Cohen, Marion and Mours (2000) argue that qualitative research is reported in terms of verbal description rather than numerical form. Qualitative approach therefore, enabled the researcher to obtain participants’ views and opinions on the subject of the study.

Notwithstanding this stance, the study approach did not rule out elements of quantitative analysis as in the case of establishing the quantitative dimension of collective activities, participants, and number of drop-out, as well as reasons for observations made in primary schools.

**3.3 The Target Population**

Fraenkel (2000) defines population as an arrangement of people or things that a researcher has in mind from which to obtain information and draw conclusions. In this study, the population from which the researcher drew general conclusions focused on the people of Mpanda District which has a total primary schools population of 141. The coverage of the study was done in 23 schools (16%) that is one school in each ward was visited.

The target population from which the researcher captured information was the District Education Officer, District Education Academic Officer, School Inspector, Head teachers, selected parents and pupils.

**3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

* + 1. **Sample of the study**

Kothari (2004), Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) assert that a sample is a smaller group of subjects from whom the researcher intends to obtain information and draw conclusions. It involves a process whereby a researcher extracts from a population a number of individuals who represent adequately the large group. Miles and Huberman (1994) maintain that a small-sized sample characterizes studies in which the researcher selects a sample that is sufficient to provide maximum insights into and an understanding of the population under study. Categories of respondents who provided information were DEO, DEAO, DIS, HTs, Parents and Pupils. Table 3.2 indicates the number and composition of the sample.

# Table 3.1: Composition of the sample

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No.** | **Category** | **Projected Respondents** | **Actual Respondent** | **%** |
| 1 | District Education Officer (DEO) | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| 2 | District Education Academic Officer (DEAO) | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| 3 | District Inspector of Schools (DIS) | 1 | 1 | 100 |
| 4 | Head teachers (HT) | 23 | 17 | 73.91 |
| 5 | Parents | 12 | 11 | 91.66 |
| 6 | Pupils who have dropped out of school | 46 | 23 | 50 |
| **TOTAL** | | **84** | **54** | **64.28** |

Source: Field Data; 2011

Data in Table 3.1 is well depicted in Figure 3.2

**Figure 3.1 is well depicted in Figure 3.2**

**3.4.2 Sampling techniques**

The sampling techniques employed in this study to select participants were a combination of purposive sampling and simple random sampling. Sampling is used to select some elements of the population in such a way that it represents the actual characteristics of the total population (Cohen *et al.,* 2000).

Out of three districts of Rukwa Region, Mpanda District was selected using the simple random sampling method. Thereafter, twenty three (23) from one hundred and sixty one (161) schools were randomly selected from urban and rural areas.

Those in urban areas were Kashato and Msakila while those in rural areas were Milala, Magamba, Uruwira, Sitalike, Sungamila, Mirumba, Mtakumbuka, Matandarani, Mtapenda, Kapalala, Katisunga, Kasokola, Kakuni, Ikondamoyo, Mtisi, Kashishi and Msadya. In each primary school selected, the parents, head teachers and girls that had dropped out of school, participated in the investigation.

**3.5 Data Collection Methods**

In this study, the researcher employed multiple methods in data collection. The researcher has used interviews, observation, focus group discussion, documentary review and questionnaires.

**3.5.1 Interview**

An interview is a scheduled set of questions administered through verbal communication in relationship between a researcher and the respondent (Kothari, 1990). The technique entails a set of structured, semi-structured or unstructured questions.

According to Cohen *et al.,* (2000) an interview allows respondents to provide their interpretation of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard the situation from their own point of view. However, the technique, if not well handled is prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer.

In this particular study, the researcher used structured interviews to gather data from the District Education Academic Officer (DEAO) who is responsible for academic matters in the district. In carrying out his/her responsibilities, DEAO works in collaboration with School Inspectors and teachers. This respondent was chosen so that the researcher would get first-hand information on girls dropout rates. It allowed flexibility as there was an opportunity to restructure questions as well as to provide an opportunity for the participant to expand his/her thoughts and introduce new ideas that would not necessarily be taken by the researcher. The method was developed using interview guides which were used to collect data from DEAO and parents/guardians. The interview guides for parents/guardians and the DEAO and are found in Appendices found 3 and 4 respectively.

**3.5.2 Observation**

Observation is a fundamental and critical method in a qualitative inquiry for it is used to discover complex interactions on natural social settings (Marshal and Rossman, 1995). It gives a researcher an opportunity to look at what is taking place in the situation rather than relying on second hand information (Patton, 1990). In this study, an observation was carried out to observe the situation of the homes where drop-out school girls came from in order to reveal the ways in which parents take care of them. This observation took place also at schools where girls were enrolled to note the kind of environment in which the girls obtained education.

**3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion**

Patton (1987) points out that Focus Group Discussion is an interaction with a small group of people on a specific topic. Normally six to twelve people are brought together and are encouraged to talk about the topic of interest. It promotes interaction among participants that stimulates them to air their feelings, perceptions and beliefs that they could be exposed if interviewed individually. The Focus group Discussion Guide for pupils who have dropped out of school is found in Appendix 5.

In this study, eight (8) participants were selected to form the focus group due to their common characteristics relating to the topic under discussion namely “girls drop-out in primary schools in Tanzania, particularly in Mpanda district”. Basic questions under the study guided the group discussions. The questions included in the focus discussion guide related to the importance of education to girls, reasons that account for girls not to be given chances to continue well in their studies at school; the main reasons that account for girls to drop out of school and suggestions on how best to improve girls’ attendance at school.

**3.5.4 Documentary review**

Documents are any written or recorded materials which are not prepared at the request of the inquiry or for the purpose of evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1985). Sources of information from documents are of two major types namely primary and secondary sources of information. This study used both sources of information that involved admission registers, attendance registers and reports such as pupils reports to their parents. Other sources used included logbooks and minutes of meetings of school committees and staff meetings especially those called to discuss indiscipline and drop-out cases. The rationale for using documentary review is that documents are stable in that they can be reviewed repeatedly to provide the same information. The needed documents were obtained from head teachers’ offices and DEOs offices. The information that was gathered through this instrument was about gender (female) drop-out and the age and causes of drop-out. The documentary checklist is found in Appendix 6.

**3.5.5 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are data-gathering instruments by which a subject responds to questions or statements that generally require information (Best and Kahn, 1996). This technique was used to collect data which was given off-hand during the administering of the questionnaires. This method was used because it was easier to administer questions prepared on paper. It also gave the respondents more time to think and consult documents. Questionnaires were used for head teachers, District Education Officer and school inspectors on factors contributing to the drop-out of girls in primary schools. The questionnaire for girls who have dropped out of school is found in Appendix 1. The for head teachers is found in Appendix 2.

**3.6 Instruments’ Validity and Reliability**

No single instrument is adequate by itself and reliable for data collection. Therefore, the researcher used multiple techniques in which data collection instruments complemented each other. In addition, prior to going to the field, the instruments were reviewed by the researcher’s supervisor and fellow students. As a result of the review the data collection tools were to ensure that they were valid and reliable in terms of relevance, coverage and consistence. All useful comments were incorporated and inconsistencies and areas of ambiguity were spotted and refined

**3.6.1 Limitations of the Study**

* The researcher faced financial problems, time inadequacy, poor infrastructure and transport limitations hindering his timely and smooth access to needed data. In some areas, the researcher had to walk long distances to schools for lack of public transport.
* Investigation of socio-cultural values involved sensitive and at times confidential individual or family issues. Such issues included family lifestyles and issues related to sex, which might at times have resulted into biased responses. This is because individuals did not want to disclose “secrets” concerning their cultural values. For most people love and sex information is confidential. To solve this problem, the researcher had to convince and assure the informants on confidentiality and importance of the revealed information.
* Some targeted respondents (parents and dropout girls) were at times not easy to access for interviews as most of the girls who had dropped-out of school had already been married and moved to new places of residence. The researcher got most information about girls who dropped out of school from school records or administrative offices like ward office, village office and school offices.

**3.7 Research Ethical Issues**

After completing the research proposal session, the researcher was allowed to collect data after getting the research clearance letter from the Open University of Tanzania. This research clearance letter addressed to the Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) was used to get permission to collect data from schools afters making consultations with the Mpanda District Administrative Secretary (DAS).

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the research participants. The researcher clarified to the participants on the research problem, purpose of the study, the short term and long term benefits of the study. The researcher obtained consent from the participants. The researcher informed the participants that their participation was free and that they had the right to withdraw at any time with no repercussions. The participants were assured that all the responses that they provided would confidentially be kept.

**3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

Data analysis can be defined as a systematic process which involves working with data, organising and breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be leant as well as to decide to tell others (Bogdan and Bicklen, 1992). Data analysis was done in accordance with the research objectives and accompanying questions of the study. Although the study was predominantly qualitative, analysis of data was done both qualitatively and quantitatively. Content analysis was employed in interpreting qualitative data drawn from interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, documentary review and observation. All relevant information and data addressing a particular research question were pulled together, subdivided into coherent categories in search of the main reasons for girls drop-out in primary schools.

**CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

**4.0 Introduction**

This chapter analyses and discusses the findings from the study in Mpanda district using informants, interviewees, and questionnaire respondents, members of focus group discussion, documentary review and observation. The findings are presented in accordance with the research objectives and corresponding questions which informed the data collection process. The analysis and discussion cover issues with regard to reasons of girls drop-out in primary schools in Mpanda district.

**4.1 Factors which contribute to Girls Drop-out from schools in Mpanda District**

The first research objective of the study sought to identify the factors for girls drop-out in primary schools in Mpanda district. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussion which were administered to parents of girls dropped out, District Education Officer, District Education Academic Officer and District Chief Inspector of Schools. Table 4.1 summarises the information on factors contributing to girls’ dropout from schools as it was collected through questionnaires.

# Table 4.1: Factors for girls dropout in Primary Schools

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/No.** | **Item** | **Respondents’ Categories** | | | | | | | |
| **Pupils** | | | | **Head teachers** | | | |
| **Yes** | **No.** | Undecided | Total | Yes | No. | Undecided | **Total** |
| 1. | Unfriendly home environment | 15(68%) | 6(27%) | 1(5% | 22 (100%) | 1 4 (82%) | 3(18%) | - | 17(100%) |
| 2. | Having time for girls learning at home | 7 (32%) | 15 (68%) | - | 22 (100%) | 1(6%) | 15(88%) | 1(6%) | 17(100%) |
| 3. | The girls early marriages | 20 (90%) | - | 2 (10%) | 22 (100%) | 13(76%) | 2(12%) | 2(12%) | 17(100%) |
| 4. | Parents interest on girls education | 18 (82%) | 3 (14%) | 1 (4%) | 22 (100%) | 5(29%) | 8(47%) | 4(24%) | 17(100%) |

Source: Field Data 2011 in Mpanda District

**4.1.1 Unfriendly home environment**

The data summarised in the table 4.1 above indicates that most of the school girl respondents (68%) highlighted that unfriendly home environment contribute to the primary schools girls pupils’ dropout. The few remains girl respondents did not agree with the unfriendly home environment as the contributing factor to the girls school dropout while only one pupil respondent was found undecided. Therefore, from the data as it is summarised in the table above it is obvious that an unfriendly home environment contributed to girls primary school dropout among other factors.

The findings in Table 4.1 reveal the reasons for girls drop-out in Mpanda District as revealed by the drop-out girls and Head Teachers in the sampled schools. Data collected shows that the main reason for girls dropout is unfriendly home environment to girls as it is at 68%. They are also involved in many activities such as taking care of their young sisters and brothers, being forced to have sex with elderly men.

# The girl respondents expressed their feelings that when they are at home after school they do not have time to make revision on what they learnt at school. They are mostly engaged in domestic activities. Figure 4.1 shows girls discussing reasons that prevent them to participate fully in their studies at Kashato primary school, Makanyagio ward in Mpanda district



**Figure 4.1 Girls discussing reasons that prevent them to participate in their studies**

Source: Field Data 2011 in Mpanda District.

During the discussion in FGD all girls (100%) posited that they had a lot of activities to do at home as soon as they arrive back from school. This caused them to become tired and fail to go to school on the following day. This kept on being so and caused them to stop going to school which ended them in drop-out situation. One girl respondent at Kashato primary school explained:

My mother is a widow; she always asks me to assist her to take care of my sisters and brothers when she is away from home to search food for us. This

makes me not to attend school for learning. When I try to go to school I find my fellow pupils have already been taught some topics. I always fail to cope with them in the learning process. To some extent this disappoints me.

As it is shown in Table 4.1, the drop-out girls who supported the argument on time for girls learning at home present 68.19% that means they have very minimal time of studying after school even if they are interested in education(81%). This correlates with what was found by Odaga and Ward (1995) that when it comes to child care and household chores or domestic works, girls are more involved than boys, who are more expected in farms or work places. They went much further by saying that because boys schooling is regarded by many parents as more profitable in instrument in the long-run where girls (house hold tasks of looking after younger siblings, working in the fields) is immediately useful in the context of family economy (King , 1993; Herz, 1991). From this point of view, girls’ education is more likely to be adversely affected. This leads to the high ratet of girls dropping out of school. The study found out that girls’ drop out of school is the outcome of negligence on the part of the society.

With these views, drop-out could argue that parents have negative attitudes towards girls’ education; hence the girls’ drop-out rate becomes high in Mpanda District. Most parents believe that to invest education on girls is a waste of their money and other resources. This situation relates to what has been said by Smock (1981) and Colclough (2000) that girls motivation and likeliness to remain in school may largely be influenced by their parents’ attitude and values assigned to the formal education for girls and women. In the settings of most developing countries, parents tend to lack interest in educating their daughters, perceiving that formal education is irrelevant to girls’ future role as mothers and housewives. Parents are less willing to invest in girls’ education than boys because they view the investment in their daughters’ education as a sunk cost especially in cultures where girls marry and expectations of them relying on their sons in old age (Kingl,1993;Herz et al.1991). As the result of this, the schooling of girls is affected by neglecting their school needs. Concerning with school needs, one parent said;

I do not have to provide any school requirements, her personal needs and anything concerning her living. She is grown up now. Her breasts are indicating adult level. She can therefore look after her own needs in any way (Ilalangulu village).

Through this study the researcher learned that the society still undermines the role of women in development of the society and that is why they do not give girls enough time for learning especially when they are at home. They do not provide them with school materials and make follow up on their academic progress. Table 4:2 summarizes this.

# 

# Table 4.2: Community attitudes on girls` education

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Responses** | | | | |
| **Respondents** | **Yes** | **No** | **not sure** | **%** |
| The Importance of girls Education | Parents | 8 | 2 | 1 | 73 |
| Pupils (girls) | 17 | 5 | 1 | 74 |
| Head teachers | 10 | 4 | 3 | 59 |
| Community awareness on the importance of girls education in primary schools. | Parents | 6 | 2 | 3 | 55 |
| Pupils (girls) | 10 | 12 | 1 | 43.4 |
| Head Teachers | 10 | 4 | 3 | 59 |
| Parents follow up on girls education. | Parents | 4 | 7 | 0 | 36.3 |
| Pupils (girls) | 5 | 18 | 0 | 22 |
| Head Teachers | 3 | 14 | 0 | 18 |

Source: Field Data 2011 in Mpanda District

The data depicted in Table 4.2 show that there were 17 pupils, 10 Head teachers and 5 parents who agreed the importance of education to girls. Only 5 pupils, 4 Head teachers and 4 parents indicated that there was there was no importance of education for girls. Only 3 head teachers were not sure whether or not there is a need for girls’ education.

Table 4.1 shows that 68.19 % of the drop-out girls support the argument that girls do not have enough time for learning at home. (81%) of the respondents indicated that girls had very minimal time of studying after school even if they were interested in education. The findings further showed that negative attitudes over girls education by parents is one of the causes of girls dropping out of school.

The study findings indicated that parents of the drop-outs girls appeared to have a pervasive tendency to neglect the education of their girls education. As shown in Table 4.2 that 7 out of 11 parents, 18 out of 22 dropout girls and 14 out of 17 head teachers agreed that parents did not care for their children’s education, let alone to check their children’s work books or supervise their homework and this ended in girls dropping out of school. The negative attitude shown by community members on girls schooling enhanced bad feeling among girls towards attending schools. As far as girls are dropping out of school, parents were trying to discuss matters that are mostly causing this situation and what was to be done as it is shown in Figure 4.2.



# Figure 4.2 Parents discussing matters concerning girls drop-out at Mirumba primary school, Kibaoni ward in Mpanda district

Source: Field Data 2011 in Mpanda District.

The parents of drop-out girls supported (100%) the question of the unfriendly environment at home that it forced the girls to drop out from school. One of these parents said;

When we go for economic activities, say going to harvest tobacco, she has to remain at home so that she takes care of her brothers and sisters. Not only that but also when we are back from agricultural field, we must find everything at home in good order. Boys cannot do the best at domestic activities. Due to this fact we ask girls to stop from going to school. This as time goes on stops girls from going to school completely.

Administrators on their side; DEO, DCIS and DEAO both agreed that the unfriendly home environment was the main factor for girls to drop out from school. One of the administrators said; “We experienced a parent asking his daughter who is a school girl to go and find her own source of money to meet her school needs. This does not allow the girls attendance at school and formally ended them as drop-outs”.

It was also learned from the study that parents were aware of the importance of education for girls (75%) but became contradictory on the implementation since they were the ones who did not provide their daughters with school needs and asked them not to go to school so that they could take care of their sisters and brothers instead.

This agrees with the findings by Odaga (1995) that when it comes to child care and household chores or domestic work, girls are more involved than boys who are expected to be involved in farming activities. DEO, DCIS and DEAO went far by saying that because boys schooling is regarded by many parents as more profitable in investment in the long run where girls (household tasks, looking after younger siblings, working in fields is immediately useful in the context of family economy (King 1993 and Herz, 1991). Girls’ education is more likely to be adversely affected as most girls end up in dropping out of school.

**4.1.2 Community Attitudes towards School girls dropout in Primary Schools**

The second objective of this study sought to investigate the community attitude towards school girls drop-out in primary schools. Questionnaires and interviews guides were administered in the collection of information. Not only that but also Focus Group Discussion were employed so as to gather information from pupils themselves. District Education Officials and Head teachers were involved.

Data gathered through the questionnaire indicated that 66.6% of the parents of drop-out girls saw importance of girls’ education. The interview with the District Education Officer revealed that the community doesn’t realize yet whether or not girls drop out is a problem. The DEO pointed out that;

The community does not yet recognize that girls drop-out is a problem. I am commenting so because when it happens that a school girl becomes pregnant, parents do collude with the man who impregnated the girl not to pursue the case leaving the girls out of school forever.

It was also learned that some parents forced their daughters to be married before completing primary education cycle. One Head teacher said;

Some parents are asking bride price while their daughters are still at school. Worse enough the school girl knows what is happening and therefore she decides not to come to school because of being already a wife of somebody. She loses schooling interest.

From the study, it is indicative that community members still have negative attitudes on educating girls. The community believed that to educate girls is a waste of the little money they have. At a certain place the researcher came across with a parent who said;

I think it is very important to educate daughters because they are very kind sympathetic. When I become old it will be easier for me to go and live with her than sons. My daughter left school on her own problem. She can neither write nor read even a single sentence. Her sisters had graduated and they are employed.

This statement gives us an idea on what is happening in many communities. Some parents are aware of the importance of education of girls. However, most of girls seem not ready to continue schooling because they do not know how to read and write.

From the parent’s view, it shows that there is a great need of female teachers in village schools. Currently, most of the village schools are staffed with male teachers. Female teachers are mostly located in urban schools. Not only that but also most heads of schools are male. Most of the girls do not have any role models compared with boys. Female teachers could be a model for girls. For example, in Mpanda district, among 151 primary school heads only 9 are females and among the 47 ward education coordinators only 5 are female.

**4.1.3 Girls` Sexual Harassment and the Issue of Early Marriages**

The findings showed that in some areas in the district girls’ dropout was associated with fear of risks on their way to and from school

******Figure 4.3 Girls exchanging ideas on factors that cause them to drop out of school at** **Msakila primary school, Kawajense ward in Mpanda district**

Source: Field Data 2011 in Mpanda District.

It was revealed that girls were being harassed by boys when on the way to and from school in the streets. Boys make traps to trap girls in many ways. They even rape them and this leads girls into fear of going to school.

On the other hand, during Focus Group Discussion, one of the respondents was able to explain the way their parents force them to get married when they are at school. One girl had this to say; “Our parents force us to get married with the expectation of getting rich. In fact, we are not ready and we wouldn’t agree if we were consulted. This still exists and it shows how our community cannot fight against”

The above statement shows that girls` sexual harassment and early marriages are some of factors that force girls to drop out of school in Mpanda district. Table 4.3 presents the factors that lead girls to drop out of school.

# Table 4.3: External forces for girls drop-out in Primary Schools

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **External forces** | **Categories of Respondents** | | | | | | | |
| **Pupils** | | | | **Head Teachers** | | | |
| **Yes** | **No** | **UD** | **%** | **Yes** | **No** | **Do not known** | **%** |
| Parental factors | 4 | 1 | 1 | 66.6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 75 |
| School factors | 3 | 2 | 1 | 50 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 50 |
| Economic factors | 2 | 2 | 2 | 33.3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 25 |
| Family/ parent | 3 | 4 | 2 | 33.3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 60 |
| **Total** | **12** | **9** | **6** | **44.4** | **9** | **5** | **3** | **52.9** |

Source: Field Data, 2011

Table 4.1.2 shows that parents migration in Mpanda district takes a large part in contributing to girls dropping out of school as it ranked sixty six and point six percentages (66.6%) for the answers provided by girls themselves and seventy five percentages that were given by teachers. Distance from school was the second factor in ranging of the external factors that lead to girls dropout.

The first factor of parents’ migration causes girls to have freedom of engaging in bad behaviour such as doing prostitution with boys and men. In Mpanda district, during the rain season parents do shift from their permanent homes to the others temporally formulated homes due to agriculture activities leaving their children without proper care and in some cases they miss food and decide to bag to from other community members. This also leads to their dropout from school.

**4.1.4 The effects of attitudes on girls dropout rate in primary school**

For poor families, children had to supplement family incomes. It is common in both rural and urban areas to see children of school age who dropped out of school or even still at school selling commodities in the streets. Through observation schools along roads and village centres are found dealing with this kind of activities in Mpanda District. When a parent was asked by the researcher concerning this, she responded that;

We have very little money at home. I can provide to my children to make us live. In order to get more money I usually ask my daughter not to go to school so that she can sell these pieces of sugar cane when I am doing other activities to get money.

The views above suggest that parents pay much more attention to their economic activities rather than educating their children particularly girls who are not given sufficient time to go to school. These activities are carried out during the day and night time, even if the children need to do homework or sleep early to prepare for school in the next day it becomes difficult as one girl who had dropped out of school pointed out that:

When my brother is doing his homework, my mother asks me to be here selling buns and I am doing this every day except Sundays. When I go to school the next day the teacher punishes me for not doing my homework, I do not see the reason of going to school any more as I am discouraged.

Although girls are more exposed to sexual harassment, especially at night, they also have to work to supplement their parent’s income. This indicates that girls labour more than boys. They are overburdened with family and household chores while boys enjoy plenty of time to study and freedom to choose what to engage in. This means that a girl’s labour could be needed more than that of boys so that she is kept at home. These findings are in line with those of Cynthia and Ann (1996) on their study on Children’s Schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa: The role of fathers, mothers, and others who are found in Guinea and Ethiopia revealed that it is common in the villages and towns to see young girls carrying large trays of groundnuts, fruits or other food items for sale. They also help their parents in food stalls in the market place.

The discussion with those who had dropped out of school revealed that, they found difficulty to combine both income-earning activities and schooling. Some of those interviewed had decided not to go back to school because their current activities were more profitable in the short term and they could support their family.

Through the interview, the head teachers indicated parents were increasingly becoming reluctant to send their children to school given the low expected returns coupled with the cost of schooling and being employed. At this juncture boys are the preference. As said earlier by one of the interviewed parent that; “I cannot educate a girl because when she gets pregnant she is dismissed from school and if she manages to complete her studies, she gets married and I will have nothing more from her”.

Parents do not invest in girls because they do not expect any returns from them. These findings are similar to those of Malekela, (1994) and UNICEF, 2005). Some parents are reluctant to invest in their daughters’ education. The study findings revealed that in some African traditional settings parents lose control over their daughters after marriage (Malekela, 1994). In Mali, girls’ education is considered a lost investment simply because, after marriage, parents are not expected to benefit from their daughters. Thus educating female children is not different from somebody who is “watering a neighbour’s tree”. It is suggested that parents do not expect economic returns from their daughters, who are under the control of their husbands’ families.

**4.2 The effects on the Relationship between Girls and Boys towards the Drop-out of Girls in Primary Schools**

This part discusses the school age group being affected by drop-out, causes of girls drop-out in Mpanda District and finally reasons for boys not dropping out compared with girls.

**4.2.1 The effects of boys on girls Education**

The study showed that girls become uninterested in schooling due to the parents’ negligence over them in comparison to boys. During the Focus Group Discussion, it was revealed by the girls that they are discouraged by seeing their fellow brothers who were provided more support with school needed materials compared to the girls. One drop out student was quoted saying;

We vividly see our parents give high support to our brothers when they ask for school needs such as uniforms, exercise books, and pens but when it comes to us to ask for the same and sometimes less support we do not get them. I think my parents do not think that I also need education.

With no doubt one can notice that boys are treated more favourably than the girls. As a result of such biased treatment girls decide to drop out from schooling because of having no support. Girls are forced by their parents to get married earlier which causes them to get pregnant when they are still young as a group said that; “We are forced to get married, and we are assigned for petty business especially during the evenings with so many risks especially from men”.One argued that with more favour given to boys creates a situation which discourages girls, hence forcing some of them to drop out of school. In another focus group discussion, the discussants claimed that they were discouraged by their parents leading them to drop out of school. Some girls were involved in prostitution so as to get money to meet their needs. Somehow this explains why pregnancy case is one of the common problems which force many girls to drop out of school in SSA (FAWE, 1994).

**4.2. 2 The School age group being affected by dropout**

Objective five in the study investigated the age group most affected by dropout. To answer this, data were collected from school girls who had dropped out of school and teachers. Instruments used to collect this data were, interviews and Focus Group Discussion, The findings on this is shown in Table 4.4

# Table 4.4: The School age of girls being affected by dropout as responded by dropouts of school girls and Head teachers

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **Category of Responses** | | | | |
|  | **Agree** | **%** | **Not Agree** | **%** |
| The dropout occur between the age of 10-12 | Head Teachers | 4 | 23.5 | 11 | 64 |
| Drop Out pupils | 1 | 9 | 10 | 90 |
| Dropout occur between the age of 11-13 | Head Teachers | 9 | 52 | 5 | 29.4 |
| Drop Out pupils | 3 | 27 | 6 | 54.5 |
| Dropout occur between the age of 12-15 | Head Teachers | 16 | 94 | 1 | 5.88 |
| Drop Out pupils | 9 | 81 | 2 | 18.1 |
| Dropout occur at the age of 15+ | Head Teachers | 1 | 5 | 16 | 94 |
| Drop Out pupils | 2 | 18 | 9 | 81.8 |

Source: Field Data (2011)

Findings data in Table 4.4 show that there were, 4 drop outs and 16 Head teachers agreed on the fact that most of girls who drop out of school occur between the age of 12-15. This argument gave the picture that girls drop out takes place when they are in standard IV-VI. Very few dropped out when in standard VII as it is agreed by some of the respondents.

The above data are supported by a respondent who said that one of the reasons for girls dropping out is the age of enrolment. Children are expected to start school at the age of seven years, but 71 percent started later. The average age at first enrolment for girls is about nine years, as it is revealed by school records, 52.94 percent of the Head teachers agreed that they enrol pupils in grade one at the time when they are above the normal age of seven. On the one hand, because of over- crowding, school authorities often tend first to admit the oldest children who have not yet been enrolled. On the other hand, parent often keeps their younger children out of school to help the parents with household tasks of which one parent said;

From home to school is very far, I cannot send my young daughter to school at early years. She must at least be at the age of eight. She has to help me with some activities at home when I am doing agricultural activities.

The quality of schooling and education infrastructure is another issue that results into girls drop out. The situation was noticed through observation in some schools where the researcher observed a school with only a single classroom to accommodate standard I-VII with a total of 120 pupils. One girl said:

We sit on the floor while for boys it is easy but for us is difficult because our dresses are quite different from those of boys. That is why some times we decide not to come to school and eventually to drop out of school.

These views imply that there is a need of building enough classrooms and other school infrastructure which can meet both sexes so as to keep girls attending school regularly. One may argue that some girls dropped out of school for lack of conducive learning environment. The findings showed that in schools where there is reasonable number of classrooms and desks girls dropout is minimal in connection to this idea. Table 4.5 shows how much some community activities caused girls drop out.

# Table 4.5: Factors relating to school age of girls drop out in Mpanda District

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ITEM** | **YES** | **NO** | **DON’T KNOW** | **%** |
| Parents’ irregular migration | 9 | 5 | 3 | 52.94 |
| Dependences life | 7 | 4 | 6 | 41.11 |
| Polygamous and divorce | 8 | 4 | 5 | 47.05 |
| Freedom of girls to live in their own ghettos | 8 | 6 | 3 | 47.05 |
| Distance from school | 7 | 6 | 4 | 41.11 |
| Enrolment above the age of seven | 9 | 3 | 5 | 52.94 |
| Agricultural activities | 3 | 9 | 5 | 17.64 |
| Mining activities | 2 | 10 | 5 | 11.76 |
| Cattle keeping activities | 2 | 8 | 7 | 11.76 |

Source: Field Data: 2011

Findings in Table 4.5 show that parents’ frequent migration and enrolling girls above the age of seven into school are some of the contributing factors for girls to drop out of school. It shows 52.94 percent of the Head teachers agree that girls drop out is caused by parents migration from one place to another looking either for pasture or agricultural activities. The question of enrolling girls into school when they are above seven years has also an effect on girls’ education participation. The findings from the table revealed that Head teachers enrol pupils who are above the educational regulations age which is seven years. Girls late age enrolment was found to be one of factors related to parental ignorance and parents’ low value of education, which make parents take long before they eventually send their girls to school.

Children who begin schooling beyond the official age of 7 years are more likely to drop out than those who start at the official age; and less likely to complete a full cycle of education (Colclough *et al.,* 2000; Croft, 2002 and UNICEF, 2005). The late entry along with early withdraw further limit the number of years children can stay in school. As children get older, there is increase on pressure for them to work. The UIS/UNICEF study (2005:36) states: The age of a child is one of the most important variables to be considered when analysing patterns of school attendance. It matters whether children start school at the prescribed entry age and, thereafter, whether they are in the appropriate grade for their age. When children start late or repeat grades, it increases the likelihood that they will drop out of school before completion.

The available data showed that in three years (2007 - 2009) Mpanda district has enrolled 10,838 girls who were above the age of seven while 13,836 girls were enrolled at the right age. The findings also revealed that, fathers were sometimes biased towards the woman they loved most among their wives. Thus, the one who was most loved definitely had her children more loved and favoured. In the Focus Group discussion one pupil was quoted saying;

…..where a father has two or more wives he will also have many children. The experience shows that the two mothers they are always live as an enemy to each other, if a father is biased to one side the other side will automatically suffer because the children of the neglected mother will depend on their mother, when it comes to schooling girls willget no assistance from the father. They will be forced to find economic activities to support her mother. This problem forced our fellow pupils to drop out of school….

From what the pupil said, one would argue that polygamous marriages create the basis for the father to favour some members of his own family which leads some of children in the relevant families to drop out of school. This argument complies with Shuma (1980; 146) that polygamous fathers take little interest in the welfare of their children.

**4.2.3 Reasons accounting for more girls than boys dropping out of school**

In order to obtain information concerning reasons for boys not dropping out of school as compared to the girls; an interview, and focus group discussion instruments were employed so as to get the data as depicted in Table 4.6.

# Table 4.6: Home environment as a factor for girls drop out

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Item** | **Category of Response from the focus group discussion** | |
| **Boys participation** | **Girls participation** |
| **%** | **%** |
| 1 | Family involvement in activities | 37 | 63 |
| 2 | Petty Business involvement | 53 | 47 |
| 3 | Time of learning at home | 69 | 31 |
| 4 | Parents’ support on education to their children | 83 | 17 |

Source: Field Data; 2011

Through Table 4.6, it is an obvious fact that many boys do not drop out of school because they are most being supported far better in being provided with school material compared to girls. While girls are required to find school materials on their own, boys are supplied the school materials by parents especially the father. During a focus group discussion one pupil responded:

When I ask my parents for school materials I am told that now you’re a grown up you can go and find such needs on your own. So when I have no uniform and other school materials I decide to stay at home till I get them. If I get late when I go to school I am punished I lastly decided to drop when I was in standard six …..

The views show that parents exercise partiality in favour of boys and neglect the girls. With these observations, it appeared that parents still held the traditional views about the roles of females and males and want to perpetuate them. They believe that sons have the responsibility to take care and welfare of a wife and children in the family. This suggests that daughters do not need education because their future husbands will look after them. When a family faces economic setback, girls education is neglected. According to UNESCO (2003), gender inequality in education in such societies is a systematic discrimination against women and girls.

The study findings also indicated that most pupils stay a long distance from the school. Parents believe that boys can manage to walk such long distances while girls cannot particularly when they are young. Such long distances between home and school are not safer for girls. One of the pupils who had dropped out of school claimed that girls faced the risk of being harassed and even raped by boys and men on their way back from school. On this she said;

Several times I was harassed by boys and I remember one day a grown up man wanted to make love with me when I refused he threatened me with a knife, I thanked God, a group of my fellow pupils arrived at the scene.

Reducing the distance where children must travel to school is important because it both cuts down on the time they must spend away from home and alleviates parental concerns for the safety of their children, especially their girls, as they walk to and from school.

Living far from school causes dropout especially to girls who are mostly faced by sexual harassment and the like. This is in line with Sifuna (1999) who also pointed out that the issue of sexual violence and abuse in some schools adversely affected girls. The latter were more vulnerable. The main offenders included teachers and community members. The type of violence and abuse ranged from verbal harassment to physical abuse. The harassment and abuse can lead to withdrawal from school, unwanted pregnancies and deaths of girls through contaminating with HIV/AIDS and sexual transmitted diseases.

Girls have greater responsibility for preparing food after school. The greater workload of girls within the family at home makes them to become more tired than boys who are always spared from domestic activities. This is due to poor division of labour in the homes. On the other hand, mothers tend to rely upon the support of girls, for labour input to complement their own workload as well as part of the socialisation process. During the rainy period in particular, women’s demand for labour for income generation activities increases. This is a factor which forces girls to drop-out from school. The distance between school and home frightens girls to go to school fearing of what can happen when travelling to and back from school.

While boys are prepared to become heads of the families, the situation for girls is quite different especially when it is compounded with their docile acceptance of what the society expects of them. This agrees with the findings of Bendera (1998) whose findings indicated that as girls go to school they are at the same time gradually internalise and practise what they are expected of when they become married to these boys who do not drop out of school because their expectations are to become fathers and start a family.

**4.3 The Role of Economic Activities in Relation to School girls’ drop out and the way forward**

This subsection discusses the grounds of girls’ drop-out, the rate of involvement of girls and boys in economic activities and suggestions for improvement of girls’ attendance in schools.

**4.3.1 The Grounds for Girls drop out**

Task one intended to find out when does drop out occur most. In order to gather this information, interview and school records were used. Through the school records it was learned that drop out starts with irregular absenteeism especially during cultivation and harvesting seasons. At the mining areas absenteeism becomes higher during the rain season. This builds a habit which eventually leads to girl’s drop-out of school. In one of the sampled schools a Head teacher confidently had this to say;

The main tribe of this area is Sukuma whose people do practise both cultivation and livestock activities. Girl students are mostly absent during cultivation period when they stay at home and during harvesting when they go to participate in local dance common known as “Chagulaga” and if they happen to be chosen that would be the end of their schooling.

The findings also showed that dropout in the mining area occurs during the rainy seasons as it is commonly believed that during this season the minerals surface up and it becomes easier to dig the minerals. A Head teacher of Katisunga Primary School commented;

My students both boys and girls especially the grown up normally go for mining activities during the rainy season. At this time absenteeism is almost the same among boys and girls. When the rain stops few girls never come back because a number of the get married while some others fall pregnant.

The situation is different in Mpanda town where drop-out is an on-going process throughout the year as it is revealed from the research responses.

Low economic status of the family negatively influences girls’ opportunity to education. Other factors are family background, location and economic activities as well. The findings comply with Smock (1981) who observed that the general situation in developing countries is that female students who remained in schools were normally from higher socio-economic stratum than their male counterparts. A similar situation was witnessed in the case of female pupils in the Middle East and North Africa where girls and women from higher socio-economic stratum are more likely than girls from lower class to enter and progress through school (El-Sunabary, 1989).

**4.3.2 The Rate of Involvement between Girls and Boys in Economic Activities**

According to this study, the majority of parents in Mpanda district earn their income from farming activities and cattle rearing. These are the two most important productive activities. A reference was done from the study whether the involvement in economic activities had an effect to girls or not. The findings show that girls actively contribute their labour to households either directly, by engaging in a household’s economic production, or indirectly, by taking over household chores to ensure that adult labour is spared for economic production. Undeniably, there was a demand for the labour contribution of girls in all households. The parents and their attitudes toward educating their girls, which determine their choice of task assigned to their girls at the expense of their education.

Economic activities are essential for family sustainability. Not only that but also it also enhances the capability of the family to meet their needs including materials for the school going children. Economic activities were highly influenced by the parents’ preference. Interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions were conducted in order to get information. The findings are presented in Table 4.7.

# Table 4.7: Economic Activities participation causing girls drop out

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Economic Activity** | **Category of participants in FGD** | |
| **Boy** | **Girls** |
| Selling buns |  | √ |
| Mining activities | √ | √ |
| Agriculture activities (Tobacco) | √ | √ |
| Home responsibility |  | √ |
| Casual Labour | √ | √ |
| Cattle grazing | √ | √ |

Source: Field Data; (2011)

The findings in Table 4.7 indicate that girls are mostly involved in the economic activities. Economic activities include home responsibility after school, taking care of the family and going out for petty business. The findings show that 100% agree on girls involvement in economic activities. Responding to a question from the researcher, the Head teacher at Uruwira primary school clarified as follows:-

In this village boys are only for cattle keeping by taking them to grazing. Girls are also involved in cattle grazing. Actually you would not expect girls to go for cattle grazing but they do. Worse enough they sometimes leave school in the afternoon without any notice to their teachers.

In many areas of Mpanda district, particularly in rural areas, girls are engaged in selling buns, doing mining activities, agricultural activities and domestic responsibilities. This led them into dropping out of school. These findings relate to those of Canagalahaj and Coulombe (1997) who found out in their study that in many contexts girls undertake a heavier workload within domestic in the home, for example, collecting water and fuel, caring for young sibling and agricultural activities to promote the income and wellbeing of their siblings and their families as a whole.

Generally, the findings suggest that there was a tendency of involving girls in every economic activity than boys.

**4.3.3 Strategies to minimize girls drop-out**

The researcher further investigated the ways by which girls’ attendance in schools could be improved. Interviews, questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion were conducted to collect data. The researcher first gave questionnaire to pupils and Head teachers and analysed the responses. The results are presented in Table 4.8.

# Table 4.8: Factors to minimize girls drop-out in schools

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ITEM** | **Respondents** | | | | | |
| **Pupils** | | | **Head teachers** | | |
| **Agree** | **Not Agree** | **%** | **Agree** | **Not Agree** | **%** |
| Introduction of peer groups | 21 | 24 | 46.66 | 3 | 14 | 17.64 |
| Sensitization the community on the importance of education for girls | 28 | 17 | 62.22 | 15 | 2 | 88.23 |
| Motivation for dull girls | 26 | 19 | 57.77 | 13 | 4 | 76.47 |
| Special rooms for girls affairs at school | 31 | 14 | 68.88 | 9 | 8 | 52.94 |
| The importance of the presence of female teachers at school | 26 | 19 | 57.78 | 11 | 6 | 64.70 |

Source: Field Data; 2011

The findings in Table 4.8 indicate that parents generally agree with the idea of putting more effort on sensitizing the society. As it has been revealed pupils comprising 62.22% agreed on the sensitization of the community while the Head teachers comprising 88.23 percentages agreed on the same idea. Through the study it was determined that in order to minimize girls dropping out from school the first thing to do was to sensitise the community. It was learned earlier that parents know the importance of education but they do not put emphasis on girls’ education. Parents should be sensitized to play a great role to their daughters and be closer to them so as to safeguard their success. This is in agreement with the findings by Bendera, Mboya and Maro (1996) that parents/guardians of some pupils spend very little time with their children. Due to this social distance, children lack both parental love and motivation for schooling. It was stated by pupils that;

1. My parents especially my father is not interested in my education, only my mother supports my studies. Father has a negative attitude towards me thinking about losing his money to support my studies. Parents need to be educated and realize that we girls also need education.
2. Both of my parents have not gone to school. It is difficult to support my education because they know very little. They seldom attend school meetings when asked to do so. There is a need of educating such kind of people, what they just mind is for me to be married…

With such kind of statements from the school girls one could establish the need of society’s sensitization as one of the factors which can be used to minimize girls drop-out of school.

The researcher found out that some girls dropped out from school because there is lack of special wash rooms to cater for girls needs in most schools. Through the observations made by the researcher on records available at schools especially the attendance registers, there were certain periods during the month on which girls were marked absent and the frequencies repeated on the same dates. This was interpreted that when they are on menstruation period they tended to stay at home. Furthermore it was determined that toilet situation in schools were not friendly to girls; most of school latrines have no shutters. There was no water and there was no privacy. To this a female teacher in one of the schools said;

The grown up girls do not come to school during menstruation period. The problem is that they don’t report until they finish their menstruation period. We are not informed, so we mark her as an absent while she was sick. Due to lack of privacy frequent absenteeism result in the long run girls dropping out of school.

The study findings showed that very few schools had enough toilets. In some schools there were more than 100 children for each latrine hole, which means that many children spend all their break time queuing for the toilet because of the big number of children using them. This implies that the toilets could not be kept clean. Girls are more affected by this situation hence they start skipping attending school which ultimately leads them to drop out completely. Such findings relate to the study by Hunt (2008), who established a link between age and drop out for girls. For example when girls start to menstruate or reach maturity/puberty; they might withdraw from schools. In other cases girls who withdraw from school at this time decide to get married.

A parent getting divorced is another factor that leads to girls dropout. It was learned that broken homes and homes where parents were separated increased the rate of girls dropout. Commenting on divorce the District Education Officer had this to say;

When divorce occurred, male parents migrated to new areas looking for another woman to marry while the children remain with their mothers who also after some time move to other places leaving the children with their grandmothers. Girls are the ones to be affected because they tend to be heads of the family, taking care of her brothers and sisters. Religious institutions have to play their role to rescue the situation. If we succeed to minimize divorce and have strong family, then girls will have time to attend school

Parents have to change their attitudes towards girls education and give sufficient time for girls to study at home in other words boys have to be assigned with home activities as well.

Mpanda district has different geographical environments. The Mpimbwe division is the area where by Sukuma migrants are found in large numbers. They engage in both agriculture and livestock keeping. Normally they are in need of cattle so whenever a man comes to marry a daughter the parents stops her from attending school. In this area, grazing cattle was found to be the most school-interfering task performed by dropout girls. The effect of this work was also found to be intense to mothers of dropout girls. The girls who had to carry out this task would have to travel with their cattle far away from home and school. Due to the increased fear cattle theft, girls had to stay guarding their cattle till late afternoon. When carrying out the task of minding cattle, it was likely that their absenteeism from school was inevitable, putting them in the brink of dropping out of schools. It was noted that girls’ involvement in cattle keeping activities robbed them of their time to attend school.

It was learned during the study that motivation should not come only from parents to discourage girls from dropping from school but also the respective authorities have to motivate girls who do well in their examinations at school level. To this one Head teacher commented that “School authorities should build a good habit of asking parents during the parents’ day. At school we should together motivate girls who did well in their terminal examinations. This will encourage them and their parents”.

The suggestion came after realizing that high authorities took measures to motivate those who did well in Form IV or Form VI final examinations. The District level is congratulated Form IV and VI but did not do the same to standard VII leavers who passed their final examinations and selected to join secondary education.

In one of the sampled schools it was found that there was an acute shortage of infrastructure especially classrooms, pit latrines and desks. Such an environment becomes the reason for girls dropping-out of school. The environment is not friendly for female pupils. This occurred as Bendera and Mboya (1996) who commented that girls’ specific problems include those of sitting in cramped classrooms or on the floor, lack of privacy due to poor conditions of latrines, lack of necessary facilities for girls menstruation and lack of guidance from teachers during puberty. Here is where the role of women teachers comes up because in reality most of rural primary schools are staffed with male teachers only. Commenting on single or two classrooms schools the District Education Officer said:

In rural areas there is a big problem as far as classrooms are concerned. There are schools with one classroom, with two classrooms and there those with six class rooms but is just a name they are not conducive for proper teaching and learning process. There is no school with enough pit latrines to accommodate pupils’ needs.

The study suggests that parents need to be sensitized sufficiently and made responsible for contributing in securing school infrastructure because poor quality of learning environment leads to poor quality of education which eventually leads to dropout of girls.

**CHAPTER FIVE** **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents a summary of the study, which reviews the purpose of the study, conceptual framework, the literature review and the methodology. It further provides a summary of the study and makes a conclusion and recommendations.

**5.1 Summary of the Study**

The study attempted to investigate reasons that contribute to girls drop-out in primary schools in Mpanda district. It assessed various reasons which contributed to girls` drop-out in the district, the effects on the relationship between girls and boys in the district on the drop-out of girls students in primary schools in the district, the role of economic activities in relation to school drop-out and the way forward, the cultural factors that contribute to girls dropping out of school and the school age of girls being affected by drop-out of school.

The conceptual framework which guided the study was derived from the literature review in which economic factors, school environment factors, cultural factors, attitudes towards girls’ education were shown as indicators for dropping out of girls in primary schools.

The literature review indicated that girls school dropout was due to low level of awareness of community members to girls education. It clarified the importance of girls education by exposing various views of parents and gender gaps in education. The rate of girls` drop out and factors for girls drop-out of school were explained in different countries all over the world.

The study was conducted in Mpanda district. It was mainly qualitative, utilizing case study design although some elements of quantitative research were employed. The study design was both exploratory and descriptive in the sense that it attempted to clarify various factors for girls drop-out of school and then the way forward.

Different categories of respondents were involved in the study in order to provide complementary information about girls drop-out in primary schools. In total fifty five respondents were involved in the study including, one District Education Officer, one District Education Academic Officer and one District Inspector of Schools. Information was obtained through interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions, documentary review and observation. Content analysis as well as item analysis was used to analyse the data.

**5.2 Summary of the Study Findings**

The study came up with the following findings in accordance with the research objectives:

* School dropout of girl pupils was associated early marriage and parents’ attitudes on educating girls. The study findings indicated that most girls who dropped out of schools were those whose parents had no interest to support them in education.
* The findings revealed that home environment influenced school dropout of girl pupils as girls are not given enough time to study and do their homework as boys do. This was because the division of labour in the house assigned to girls and boys was not just as girls did more household chores more than boys.
* Girls’ high dropout rate was influenced by distance from home to the school. Girls were not enrolled earlier according to the education act for fear of being harassed by boys. As a result when they were grown up they faced risks of sexual harassment when they were on the way to or from school.
* Immigration of parents, especially those from pastoralist groups who tended to go out looking for land, mining and bee keeping increased chances for girls dropping out of school because it forced girls to stay at home and being engaged in pastoral activities, mining and beekeeping activities instead of going to school.
* Parents do not make follow up on their children’s school progress academically, particularly girls. This suggests that community awareness on girls’ education is low.

**5.3 Conclusion**

Referring to the current study on the reasons for girls dropout, the following issues emerged;

* + 1. Parents have negative attitudes in the question of investing in the education of their daughters. They still have traditional thinking that when girls are educated there will be no positive return for them, their families and communities as well.
    2. The society is still having stereotype mind set on girls’ role in the society. Parents believe that they will get returns from boys than girls because when girls get married, they have no benefit to their parents’ families.
    3. Polygamous marriages and divorces are also a barrier to investing in girls education in Mpanda district. The effects of this were found more on girls than boys.
    4. Distance to and back from school is another challenge, and this is mainly caused by the migration of parents.
    5. Homes environments are a barrier for girls education because parents do not support their daughters the same way as they do for boys.

**5.4 Recommendations**

In the light of the research findings, the following recommendations are made for immediate action administratively and for further research.

**5.4.1 Recommendations for Administrative Action**

As long as a good number of girls drop out from school because of early marriage, it is recommended that, the government should amend the marriage law to make it stronger as far as the Education Act No. 25 of 1978 and its 1995 amendments are concerned through the empowerment of the Village Executive Officer.

* **Carrying out Public Awareness Campaigns**

The study showed that parents had negative attitudes towards investing in education for girl children. Recommendation is made to the central and local government to organize campaigns to raise public awareness about the importance of investing in girls’ education because parents’ awareness can influence girls’ education.

* **The Role of Non-Government Organizations and Community Based rganizations**

The study found that there is a need to make sure that NGOs and CBOs providing education to the society especially to women/children come down to rural areas. It was observed that most of these groups are found in towns where in most cases people already are aware of education for girls.

* **Allocating Female Teachers to Rural Schools as Role Models**

Girls dropping out of school could be contributed by girls lower ambitions and hence reduce enthusiasm to go to school. This situation makes many of them think of marriage as an alternative to schooling. The presence of role models is frequently seen as important in inspiring girls and providing them with a sense of direction and encouraging their attendance at school. Most teachers in rural schools are males. Most of girls do not have many role model compared with boys.

* **Measures to be taken for those who cause girl’s drop-out**

There should be no excuse for anyone who participates in anyhow to ruin the future of girl pupils. Those who make girls leave school due to pregnancies or early marriages should face stern measures. If parents are found to be involved in marrying out school girls for the purpose of getting money, they should be prosecuted.

At schools there should be good, clean toilet facilities and cubicles for girls only to provide privacy and safety. Without the availability of these essential facilities at schools, it is difficult to end school girls drop-out.

**5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Research**

Taking into account of the limitations of this study, further research studies are recommended.

1. This study was conducted in only 23 primary schools in Rukwa region. It is recommended that another study should be conducted in some other regions in Tanzania to find out the reasons for girls dropout in primary schools in their specific context.
2. This study confined itself to public primary schools. It would be worthwhile to conduct a similar study in private primary schools to see if there are any significant differences regarding girls dropout.

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**APPENDICES**

# APPENDEX 1

**MASWALI DODOSO KWA WASICHANA WALIO ACHA SHULE**

Ndugu mhusika.

Mimi **Mloka Nestory Albert** ni mwanachuo wa Chuo Kikuu Huria cha Tanzania katika Kitivo cha Elimu. Ninafanya utafiti ili kufahamu sababu za wanafunzi wengi wa kike kuacha shule katika shule za msingi wilayani Mpanda.

Nakuomba ushiriki kutoa maoni yako kwa kujibu maswali haya yote kwa kadri ya ufahamu wako. Nakuhakikishia kuwa majibu utakayotoa yatahifadhiwa kwa siri kubwa na yatatumika kwa lengo la kufanya utafiti tu na si vinginevyo.

Asante kwa ushirikiano wako.

..........................................

**Mloka Nestory, A.**

**SEHEMU A: TAARIFA ZA AWALI**

1. Jina la shule uliyokuwa unasoma……………………….ii) Kabila lako…………

iii). Umri wako miaka……………iv). Uhusiano wako na mzazi /mlezi wako ……

v). Dini yako …………………………vi).Uliacha shule darasa la ………………

* **SEHEMU B:** (Weka Alama ya tiki (V) panapostahili)

**I;** Unadhani elimu ina faida yoyote kwako au kwa jamii yako?

Ndio/Hapana……………..Kama jibu ndio taja faida hizo. …………………

1. Je wewe unapenda elimu/kusoma?

Ndio/Hapana…

1. Unadhani kuacha shule kuna faida na hasara gani kwa watoto wa kike? Zitaje
2. Ni mazingira gani ya nyumbani yanaweza kusababisha wanafunzi

wa kike kuacha chule?……

**3(a):** Unadhani wazazi wako/ jamii yako inapendelea kuwaozesha watoto wao wa

kike kabla hata ya kuhitimu masomo yao? Ndio/Hapana………

Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako

**(b)**: Je kuna athari gani kuwaozesha wanafunzi wa kike kabla ya kuhitimu

masomo yao?

4 (a)**:** Unadhani jamii yenu ina mwamko wa elimu?

Ndio/Hapana…..

Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako

**(b):** Je wazazi wako walikuwa wanafuatilia maendeleo yako ya taaluma?

Ndio/Hapana…………………..

Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako ………

**(c):** Je wewe unapata muda wa kujifunza ukiwa nyumbani? Ndio/Hapana……….

Imekuathiri kwa namna gani? (Toa maelezo)

**5(a);** Unadhani kwenye familia yenu kuna upendeleo wowote wa kuwasomesha

watoto wa jinsia fulani zaidi? Ndio/Hapana…………Jinsia gani zaidi......…

Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako

**(b);** Unadhani upendeleo huo unachangia wanafunzi wa kike kuacha shule?

Toa maelezo

**6**. Eleza kwa kifupi jinsi mila zenu zinavyochangia wasichana washindwe kusoma.

**7.** Una maoni gani juu ya mila na desturi za jamii yako kwa maendeleo ya elimu

kwa watoto wa kike?

**Asante kwa ushiriki wako**

**APPENDIX 2:**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEAD TEACHERS**

**SECTION 1: RESPONDENTS’ GENERAL INFORMATION**

* + 1. Respondent No……………………
    2. Date……..………..........................
    3. District……………………………..
    4. Ward……………………………….. Division…………

**SECTION 2: RESPONDENTS’ CATCHMENTS AREA INFORMATION**

* + 1. What is an average distance from here to the location of the school?

**(Tick one answer)**

1. Between 1 and 2 kilometres ( )
2. 3 kilometres ( )
3. 4 kilometres ( )
4. 5 kilometres ( )
   * 1. Do the pupils pass their standard seven examinations to join in the ward secondary school?
5. YES ( )
6. NO ( )
   * + 1. If the answer in question 6 above is “NO” why? (Please explain)

…………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………..…………………………………..

**SECTION 3: RESPONDENTS’ SCHOOL INFORMATION**

8. Does the school have enough teachers? (Yes or No)

9. How many teachers are at school? (Yes or No)

10. Does the school have female teachers? (Yes or No)

11. Do male teachers practice sex with school girls? (Yes or No)

**SECTION 4: RESPONDENTS’ ACCESSIBILITY TO SCHOOL INFORMATION**

12. Do you know any students conceived when at school? (Yes or No)

13. Are those students admitted to school at the right age?

14. Do you have parents meetings at school? (Yes or No)

**SECTION 5:**

**RESPONDENTS’ COMMUNITY ATTITUDES ON EDUCATION FOR GIRLS**

Please pick a number from the scale to show how you agree or disagree with each of the statements.1 = strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 =Undecided, 4 Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **ITEM** | **HA** | **A** | **UD** | **D** | **HD** |
| 14 | There is high demand for education in the surrounding area due to the established ward secondary school |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | Few girls are interested in education |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 | Few girls are interested for secondary education hence the need for primary education completion |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17 | Some parents are not interested for their daughters to go to school |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18 | Girls are not completing their studies because of lack of school needs |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19 | Some parents want their daughters to be married |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 | Tradition culture and values hinders girls to attend and complete their studies |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21 | Some girls are dropping from school because of sexual harassment |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22 | Girls are not completing their studies because of being pregnant |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23 | Some girls are not completing their studies because of punishment at school |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION 6: RESPONDENTS ON EFFECTS OF GIRLS EDUCATION**

24. What are the benefits of girls education in the surrounding area?

………………………………………………………………..

**SECTION 7: RESPONCES ON IMPROVEMENT OF GIRLS**

**EDUCATION**

25. What are major problems experienced by people in the surrounding which hinders the girls to attend and complete their studies?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….................................................................................................

.26. What can the society do to improve girls’ attendance and complete their studies?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..................................................................................................

……………………………………………………….............................................................

**“Thank you for your cooperation”**

# APPENDIX 3:

# MASWALI YA USAILI KWA WAZAZI/WALEZI WA WANAFUNZI WALIO ACHA SHULE (INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS OF THE FEMALE DROP-OUTS)

**SEHEMU A: TAARIFA ZA AWALI**

(i). Kabila lako……………….(ii). Dini yako……… (iii) Kazi unayofanya………..

(iv).Idadi ya watoto ulionao…………………(vi) Idadi ya wake ulionao………

**SEHEMU B**

**1;** Unadhani elimu ina manufaa gani kwa mwanao/jamii yako?

**2;** Unadhani kuna umuhimu wowote wa kuwasomesha watoto wa kike kwa usawa

na wale wa kiume katika familia yako?Ndio/Hapana…………(Toa maelezo)

**3;** Upendeleo kama upo una athari gani kwa wanafunzi

wa kike katika shule za msingi? Ndio/Hapana……………… (Toa maelezo)

**4;(a)**Uliwahi kumshawishi mwanao (taja jina lake) kuacha shule?

(Ndio/Hapana)……………… Kwa nini?( Toa maelezo)

**(b)** Unadhani elimu ina faida/hasara gani kwa wanafunzi wa kike? Taja na

ufafanue faida na hasara ya elimu kwa watoto wa kike.

**(c).**Unadhani kazi nyingi za nyumbani zimesababisha kuacha shule kwa mwanao?

(Ndio/Hapana)………………Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako

**5. (a):** Je Familia yako inashugulika na shughuli gani?.................................................

**(b);** Unadhani familia shughuli hizo zimesababisha kwa namna yoyote kwa

mwanao kuacha shule?Ndio/Hapana………… Toa maelezo

**6;** **(a);** Je mwanao aliacha shule kwa nia ya kuolewa? Ndio/Hapana…

**(b**); Unadhani kuwaoza wanafunzi wa kike kuna faida yoyote?

Ndio/Hapana……………………….. (Toa maelezo kwa jibu lako)

7; (a) Unaishi na mkeo/mmeo? Ndiyo/Hapana ……………………………….…

Kama jibu ni hapana toa maelezo ……………………..…………………

**APPENDIX 4:**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE DISTRICT EDUCATION ACADEMIC OFFICER IN MPANDA DISTRICT**

* 1. Have you ever visited parents of the dropping out of school girls? If so what do you think could be the main reasons for them to drop out of school?
  2. It is stated that in many societies, divorce is common to men and when engaged in marriages. How does this enhance drop out of girls at school? Explain in short.
  3. What are measures taken to minimize the dropping out of school for girls? Give your opinion in short.
  4. Do the religious institutions participate in minimizing divorce among parents of the drop-out of school girls?
  5. Do you always motivate girls who do well in final examinations? For example in Primary School Leaving Examination.

# APPENDIX 5:

# FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINE FOR GIRLS DROP-OUT IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN MPANDA DISTRICT

1. What is the importance of education to girls?
2. Why are girls not given an opportunity to continue well in their studies in schools?
3. Explain the main reasons for girls dropping out of school.
4. How can we improve girls attendance at school?
5. What are the problems facing girls whose parents have been divorced?

# APPENDIX 6:

# DOCUMENTARY REVIEW GUIDE FOR CHECKLIST

District …………………………. Ward ……………………… Date ………………

Sex: Male ……………………… Female ………...……….. (tick where appropriate)

A. The table showing information on girls drop-out in primary schools

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **Item** | **Nunber of girls registered** | **Rate of girls dropping out** | **Assumed causes of drop-outs** | | | |
| Death | Truancy | Pregnancy | Lack of money |
| 1. | Admision registers |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | Attendance registers |  |  |  |  |  |  |

B. The table showing information on girls drop-out from the meetings in primary schools.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Date** | **Event/ Agenda** | **R e c o r d s** | | | |
| Death | Truancy | Pregnancy | Lack of money |
| Meetings held |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

C. The issue of reports on girls drop-out

1. Kinds of reports……………………………………………………………

2. Recipients of the reports …………………………………………………….

3. Times of reports sent (Schedule) ………………………………………….