

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC
CHARACTERISTICS AND YOUNG FEMALE EDUCATION PARTICIPATION AND
SUCCESS IN ZOMBA (MALAWI)**

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DECLARATION

I declare that

The relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Zomba (Malawi) is my own work and that all the resources used or quoted have been duly acknowledged by means of complete references and that I have not previously in its entirety, or in part, submitted it for obtaining any qualification at any university.

HANNAH MAYAMIKO DUNGA

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DEDICATION

This research output is dedicated to my husband Steve, daughter Samantha and son Adonai. I love you guys!

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at establishing the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Zomba (Malawi). The main objective of the study emanated from huge concern regarding obstacles being faced by young females in education in most developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, which continues to contribute to young female school drop outs.

The study had set empirical and theoretical objectives as guidance. The theoretical objectives were: to review the literature on the trends of young female education in sub-Saharan Africa and in Malawi; to review theoretically the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Malawi; to review the literature on cultural practices and gender biases that hinder young female education participation and success in sub-Saharan Africa and Malawi; to document the economic benefits of young female education; and to review gender disparities in education in Malawi.

The empirical objectives were set as follows: establish if there is a gender bias in the households perceptions in terms of education support; establish if there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of young female education across different categories of heads of households; establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household Socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation in Malawi; and establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl success for those in school.

The literature of the study was based on the theoretical objectives relating to what other studies have done on female education. A comparison across the world was conducted on factors hindering girls' education and some of the trends on girls' education in Malawi were reviewed from the past decade or so. It was observed that there is a gender bias in education, boys being given more precedence over girls, that from the factors that hinder children's ability to attend, school girls seemingly had more share of the problems.

The empirical portion of the study was based on data that were collected from random households in Zomba district. A total of 327 households with school aged children were interviewed. The study adopted a quantitative analysis where different quantitative methods were used such as descriptive analysis (cross tabulation, frequencies and means) and a logistic regression analysis was used to analyse the relationship between household characteristics and girls' education.

Overall, the descriptive and cross tabulations analysis showed that there is a gender bias in education with boys receiving more benefits compared to girls, and more girls than boys either repeat classes more or even drop out of school. Most girls dropped out of school because of pregnancy-related issues. It was also discovered that parental perceptions that were based on cultural norms hindered girls' education participation, where most parents, especially from the rural areas, do not regard female education as important, and where given a choice, they would rather have their girl child drop out of school and get married.

The regression analysis was based more on the relationship between household characteristics and girls' education. Two regressions were used, one having success and the other school participation as the dependent variables and household characteristics like income, distance to water point, distance to school, age of child, age of parents and location as the independent variables. Overall, it was observed that children that came from rural areas had a higher probability of dropping out of school, and if the household was located in areas far from the water point and school, their girl child had a higher probability of dropping or repeating a class. In addition, the age of child and parents played a role in girls' education.

The study recommends that the government, in collaboration with the non-governmental organisation that deal with girls' education in Malawi, should continue to explore other ways of dealing with the problems faced by girls in schools. There is need to educate parents, especially those in the rural areas, about the importance of girls' education and this could be done through village-by-village campaigns through the chiefs. Government should also look into some of the cultures practised in different communities and maybe set by-laws stopping girls from attending for

example initiation ceremonies during school days. Lastly, it should be every woman's duty who has benefited from education to give back to the community by helping young girls who are having difficulties in accessing quality education.

Keywords: poverty, young female education, participation, success, household

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRECCOM	Creative Centre for Community Mobilization
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
GER	Gross Enrolment Rates
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
ILO	International labour office
JCE	Junior Certificate Examination
MANEB	Malawi National Examination Board
MCDE	Malawi college of Distance Education Centres
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDHS	Malawi Demographics and Health Survey
MOESC	Ministry of Education Sciences and Technology
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate Examinations
NER	Net enrolment rates
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NRC-IOM	National Research Council and Institute of Medicine
NSO	National Statistics Office
PSLC	Primary school leaving Certificate
SPSS	Statistical package for Social Sciences
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa

TTC	Teachers Training College
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Educating young females is considered an important way of dealing with household poverty, especially in relation to the benefits that accrue later in life (Winthrop & McGivney, 2014:1). In most cases, poverty is rooted in circumstances where the female members of the households are not educated (Ibid). UNICEF (2010:1) points out that dealing with poverty would be more effective if women were educated. Although the education of young females remains a challenge in most developing countries, there have been efforts to deal with this issue for decades. In the 1948 universal declaration by all nations at a general meeting by the UN, it was agreed that boys and girls, poor or rich, have a right to get the best education (UN, 1948). Girl education is still recognised as a global priority and incorporated into development targets, which has rallied by governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), foundations and international organisations. The most influential being the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which reinforces parts of the education for all goals, focusing two of their eight goals on education, namely on achieving universal primary education and achieving gender parity in both primary and secondary schools (Winthrop & McGivney, 2014:2).

Studies on the benefits of education indicate that there are more benefits to women than to men (Schultz, 1989; Summers, 1992; Weale, 1992). These are mostly on the non-monetary side as opposed to the monetary side (UNICEF, 2010:2). Among the non-monetary benefits to education for women is that it deciphers into higher immunisation rates, better sustenance for her children, reduced fertility and reduced child mortality (UNFPA, 2005:1; World Bank, 2013:1). Therefore, a woman's education is considered economically and socially desirable.

Young female education or lack thereof in developing countries like Malawi has been well documented. There is enough evidence that shows the existence of a number of problems associated with why girls are not participating in school at the same rate as boys in Malawi, which has been heavily documented in literature. Studies have cited such conditions by grouping them in three categories, namely social economic,

social cultural and class-related issues (Kadzamira & Rose, 2003:512; Malua-Banda, 2004:77; Mzuza *et al.*, 2014:48). High levels of poverty have been found to have links to socio-economic constraints, which is one of the main problems almost all developing countries experience. This puts poverty as the main undermining factor in prospects for increasing educational opportunities to as many children as possible, especially in sub-Saharan African. Because of the existence of a strong association between poverty and gender inequalities in education, boys have precedence to education over girls. In so doing, either most girls are out of school or in cases where they are in school; they are either repeating classes or failing in their studies. Most of the girls at a disadvantage are those from poor households (Chimombo & Chonzi, 1999; Dunga 2013). In most circumstances, poor households have difficulties paying for the direct and indirect costs of schooling; they have limited employment opportunities, have no socio-economic status, have no parental/family investment behaviour and have very low levels of parental education (Odaga & Heneveld 1995). In such scenarios, parents find it difficult to send their children, especially girls, to school.

In relation with the socio-culture characteristics amongst girls, factors like negative parental attitudes towards girl education, early marriages, initiation practices, teen pregnancies, household chores, puberty-related issues, death in the family and caring for the sick are very common in most developing countries. These cultural issues are among some of the factors hindering most girls to participate in school and in cases where girls are in school these conditions contribute to the hindering of improvement in girls' success (Davison & Kanyuka, 1990:8). With regards to school-related factors, issues like distance to school, lack of female teachers to act as role models, academic performance, attitudes and perceptions of teachers, the way resources are allocated within schools, the time required to complete the curriculum and the quality of teaching time, have been highlighted as a hindrance to girl education (Davison & Kanyuka, 1990:8, Malua-Banda, 2004:77). As a result, and in order to help eradicate the problem of girl education, the UN placed equality in education as one of the millennium development goals (UNDP, 2012:1).

The government of Malawi acknowledges the importance of investing in education, specifically for both young females and young males, following a gender-based framework as being the single most powerful vehicle of self-advancement and fulfilment of developmental outcomes for present and future generations of children. Banda (2003:12) cites the following as some of the policies and programmes the government introduced to improve the education of both girls and boys:

- The introduction of free primary education in government schools for all children from 1994
- The revision of the curricula to make it more gender sensitive
- The re-admission policy allowing school-aged mothers to return to school after giving birth
- The establishment of a gender-appropriate curriculum unit at Malawi Institute of Education to offer training on gender sensitivity and ensure that curriculum textbooks have been engendered.

These are some of the many initiatives taken by government or its agencies, and there are a number of other initiatives taken by other non-state actors in the education sector, all in the effort to improve girl education.

There have been results seen over the years following the changes in education policies, improvements in pupil enrolment and the realisation of participation, more especially soon after the abolishing of the school fees in primary school. The introduction of free primary education in Malawi was amongst one of the greatest achievements in education because of the after effects. Within the first year after the abolishment of fees, enrolment population for all children increased by over 50 percent from 1.9million children in 1993/4 to around 3.9million children in 1994/5. Gross enrolments increased from 67.9 percent in 1990/1 to 158.1 percent in 1999/2000 and girls contributed more to the increase in enrolments (Ridell, 2003:2).

However, irrespective of the introduction of free primary education, the participation and success of young female education remains a challenge in the country. In this case, success is measured by the ability of girls to be able to complete primary education at the required age, whereas participation is referred to school attendance

(whether if a girl child is in school or not). Kadzamira and Rose (2003:506) contend that, as many praised the abolishing of school fees, it should have meant parents being free from school expenditures and rather use the money for other expenditures; however, this was not the case. Parents still had to buy school uniforms and parents of girls had to provide the necessary provisions that growing girls require. However, since the majority of children that enrolled in schools after the change of policy were from poor households and most parents could not sustain such expenditures, the majority of children ended up having problems, which in some cases led to some pupils repeating classes several times and in most cases, some even dropped out before attaining basic literacy.

Sabates *et al.* (2011:1) also argues that, despite the vast increase in the enrolment rate, the success for girl education remains a big challenge in Malawi. He further narrates that the official grade one enrolment age is six years and primary completion age should be 13 years, since primary has eight classes. In most cases it has been reported that girls only participate in the lower grades, by the time they reach grade four, many are obstructed by many factors, which results in some eventually dropping out. Success is hampered by grade repetition, which is high in the country, leading to low levels of primary completion and later results in a very low graduate rate from primary to secondary schools. In this study, the term school dropout refers to those that have been enrolled in school but dropped out before completing the education cycle or the class they were enrolled in. This is in line with the definition by Loxley (1987), who defines school dropout as an incident, which occurs after children have enrolled and accessed schooling, and that failure and class repetition are the main cause of class dropout.

In their study on gender inequality in sub-Saharan countries, Ombati and Ombati (2012:132) found that the provision of education for girls and boys was unevenly distributed but also biased by location, gender, class and region, which result in high illiteracy rates amongst girls and women in the region. Ibid, concluded that issues like high levels of poverty and economic constraints, negative cultural values, female genital mutilation, early marriages, sexual harassment, teen pregnancies, political instability and violence are some of the leading contributing factors to gender

inequality in education. Other factors that exacerbate gender inequality are lack of gender responsiveness among the teachers, ineffective teaching, lack of learning materials, poor learning environment and the impact of HIV/AIDS.

The above-mentioned factors have been cited in most of the studies conducted in developing countries, in particular sub-Saharan Africa countries like Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia and Ghana. Several scholars (Davison & Kanyuka; 1990:8; Nekatibeb, 2002:5; Ombati & Ombati, 2012:116; Arku *et al.* 2014:5) have argued that, despite the economic constraints and school-related issues, the issue of negative parental perceptions on girl education is the most common phenomenon acting as a backbone in terms of girl school participation in most parts of this region. This is in line with the beliefs and cultures followed in most parts of these regions, especially in the rural setting, where parents perceive girls' education as unimportant because of their role in life. In such cultures, women are seen as mothers, child and home carers and not bread winners, therefore, getting them educated may not be lucrative. As a result, it was observed that early marriages amongst girls, teen pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, harmful traditional practices and malnutrition were among contributing factors for girls to drop out of school.

In Malawi, over and above the many factors mentioned, Chalasani *et al.* (2013:4) and Kadzamira and Rose (2001:5) stipulate that, when it comes to matters of eliminating inequalities in basic education, boy favouritism is a common issue in most districts in the country, which acts as a hindering factor for most girls on their journey of schooling. For example, the beliefs and cultures of initiation ceremonies, puberty-related issues, girl child labour in terms of helping out with home chores, and taking care of the sick, result in most girls repeating classes and in the end dropping out of school. They further contend that most girls that end up dropping out of school eventually end up getting married early, increasing the rate of girls' early marriages in the country.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl participation in education and also the success for those that are in school. The intention is to investigate the household socio-

economic characteristics that are statistically significant in determining girls' ability to attend or not attend school and for those that attend, to establish household factors that determine their success. The hypothesis is that girls from poor households find it difficult to attend or complete their studies. Therefore, the study will seek to document evidence of the problem if found, and where possible, propose mitigating ways to help solve the problem.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the introduction of free primary education in Malawi, young female education participation and success continues as one of the challenges the country is facing. According to World Bank (2012:1), almost 84 percent of the population in Malawi live in the rural areas where poverty levels are extremely high meaning that the majority of school-aged girls in Malawi come from poor rural areas. With the existence of so much poverty in Malawi, which was estimated at 52 percent in 2012 (NSO, 2012), girls from rural and poor households face great barriers to attend school, and for those in school, to remain there. Most of the girls either repeat classes, get pregnant and in worse cases, drop out before completing primary education (Kadzamira & Rose 2003; Mzuza *et al.*, 2014:4).

According to the Malawi Ministry of Education (2012:1), the enrolment rate for both girls and boys was almost on par in the first grade, but the primary enrolment rate dropped drastically as they moved up the grades. In 2012, for example, the girls' primary completion rate was only 31 percent as compared to 49 percent for boys. The figures for girls drop to 15 percent as opposed to 7 percent of boys for upper secondary completion rate.

The fact that girls are dropping out of school because of household socio-economic challenges, for instance high poverty, is still mainly media-based; there is little empirical data that has been collected to substantiate the media reports. This study, therefore, seeks to look at the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and the young female school participation. The study will go further and look at the household socio-economic characteristics that affect the success for

those in school. The focus will be on upper-primary and secondary levels, as most teenage girls should be at this level.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were formulated for the study:

1.3.1 Primary objectives

The primary objective of this study was to examine the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation (vis-a-vis drop out) and success.

1.3.2 Theoretical objectives

In order to achieve the primary objective, the following theoretical objectives were formulated for the study:

- Review the literature on the trends of young female education around the World in particular Sub Saharan Africa and Malawi.
- Document the economic benefits of young female education
- Review theoretically the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Malawi
- Review the literature on cultural practices and gender biases that hinder young female education participation and success in sub-Saharan Africa and Malawi
- Review gender disparities in education in Malawi

1.3.3 Empirical objectives

In relation to the primary objectives, the following empirical objectives were also formulated for the study:

- Establish if there is a gender bias in the household's perceptions in terms of education support
- Establish if there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of young female education across different categories of heads of households

- Establish if there is a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation(drop out) in Malawi
- Establish if there is a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl success for those in school (success is measured in terms of the relationship between age and grade).

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study comprised of a literature review and an empirical study. Quantitative research using a survey method was used for the empirical portion of the study. Data were collected using a stratified random sampling method from households that had children of a school-going age. The households that were interviewed were preselected from a map. A survey questionnaire was used to collect information based on the empirical objectives. The collected data were coded and captured in Excel and later imported to SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics and correlations were used in the preliminary phase of the analysis to identify relationships and a regression model was used to estimate effects and identify household the socio-economic factors that are important in explaining the ability or failure of girl child participation in education.

1.4.1 Literature review

The study conducted a literature review from journal papers, research papers, conference papers, government reports and documents, relevant textbooks, and newspaper articles. Information on Malawi was sourced from local NGO reports and international policy documents such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, United Nations, Creative Centre for Community Mobilization and Child Rights and the documentation centre in Malawi, amongst others.

1.4.2 Empirical study

The empirical portion of this study comprised the following methodology dimensions:

1.4.2.1 Target population

Both poor and non-poor households were selected from a map to be able to isolate the difference between the population of girls from the poor and non-poor households that were not in school or repeated classes. Only households with children of school going age were involved, as those without children did not fit in the objectives of the study.

1.4.2.2 Sample size and data collection

A total of 327 households were interviewed in Zomba which is in the South Eastern Region of Malawi. A sample of 167 was from selected villages in the rural areas and the other 160 from selected townships in the urban area. A questionnaire method of data collection was adopted, four skilled research numerators were employed to help in data collection.

1.4.2.3 Statistical analysis

The captured data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The study used descriptive statistics including frequencies, pie charts and econometric methods of analysis on the empirical data sets. Two regressions were used with young female participation, the first was to address reasons why girls do not participate in school (for those not in schools). And the other regression was used to address the issue of success for those that are in school. Which are well explained in detail in Chapter three of this study.

1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since primary data were sourced, ethical consideration was hence acquired. Each participating member was asked whether they wanted to participate in the study or not. No participant was forced to participate. The questionnaire was administered to parents or heads of households, not the school-going children. The ethics committee of the Faculty of Economic sciences and IT at the North West University Vaal Triangle Campus approved the questionnaire.

1.6 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

This study comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 1 - Introduction and background to the study. This chapter presents the background of the study, the problem statement, the research objectives and research questions and a brief overview of the methodology to be used in the study.

Chapter 2 - Theoretical literature review. This chapter reviewed the literature on the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl education, and reviewed other links to girl education like, parents level of education, cultural practices and other relevant household characteristics.

Chapter 3 – This section presents a brief profile of the study country (Malawi), focusing on the education system of Malawi, status of girl education from a national overview, empirical studies on young female education in Malawi, gender and education in Malawi

Chapter 4 - Research design and methodology. This chapter presents the methodology used in the study. The data used and the model design employed is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 - Results and findings. This chapter presents the results and discussions of the results with reference to the models specified in Chapter 3.

Chapter 6 - Conclusions and recommendations. This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations arrived at from the results of the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Young female education remains one of the big challenges in developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2012). Studies show an improving trend in the participation rates, however, a lot still needs to be done (Johannes, 2010:68; UNESCO, 2012:1; Winthrop & McGivney, 2014:2). Most countries that have lower levels of girl education participation also grapple with other macro-economic issues such as high poverty rates, lower literacy rates, high unemployment rates and high debts, among other things. The importance of education is reflected at household level, where households that have lower levels of education tend to have poor socio-economic standing. Be it on the parents or the children in the household (Epstein & Conoley, 1987; Colclough, 2000:7). Malawi is one of the countries that have seen a tremendous increase in enrolment rates for both boys and girls at primary level (Scharff, 2007:3). There are a number of reasons that can be attributed to this positive change, the most important one being the introduction of free primary education in 1994.

However, there are reports that indicate an existing wastage of the gains made in the lower classes, as most of those enrolled in the lower classes drop out of school before completing their studies (UNICEF, 2012:1; Mzuza *et al.*, 2014:52). At household level, the most important determinant of whether a child attends school or not, is poverty. Most poor households find it difficult to send their children to school, in most cases they would rather have them help with fending for the household. However, there are also poor households that are able to send their children to school amidst the economic challenges. Therefore, other household characteristics besides the poverty status determine whether a girl attends school or not and whether, whilst in school the girls are encouraged to perform well or not. Some of the household characteristics that have been pointed out in the literature as important determinants of girls education participation include the education level of the parent(s), the marital status of the head of household, religious beliefs of the household, cultural beliefs, and number of children.

The study has the following theoretical objectives, which will be discussed in this chapter:

- Review the literature on the trends of young female education around the World in particular Sub Saharan Africa and Malawi.
- Document the economic benefits of young female education
- Review theoretically the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Malawi
- Review the literature on cultural practices and gender biases that hinder young female education participation and success in sub-Saharan Africa and Malawi
- Review gender disparities in education in Malawi.

an attempt to address the mentioned objectives, this chapter first reviews the literature on the global prospective of young female education, which will further narrow down to sub-Saharan countries, focusing on the trends in girl education, highlighting Malawi as the main focal point of the study. The chapter further reviews some of the factors hindering girl child education participation and success in sub-Saharan countries by addressing other household characteristics, focusing on those that are associated with socio economic, socio-culture and school related factors. Later, the chapter documents some of the economic benefits that accrue from educating young females who later become mothers in detail.

2. 2 GLOBAL PROSPECTS ON YOUNG FEMALES

Education for young females has received much attention around the globe due to the fact that females, in general, have historically been behind males in all aspects of education and there is a call for equity (Lewin, 2007:4). International organisations like UN (1948), UNICEF (2009), UNESCO (2011) and World Bank (2014), to mention a few, make specific reference to young female education, prioritising it as a right for every girl, and how it is important to make sure girls are not left behind. For example, the UN provides a framework for many international instruments and legislation, which confirm the right to education for all children. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the first to be adopted by all nations in 1948 at the

United Nations General Assembly (UN, 2014:1). At this meeting, the term human right was set as a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations. Since then the UN has adopted many other legally binding international human right treaties and agreements. Among them is the declaration of education for all, that was adopted at a conference in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, which reaffirmed the notion of education for all as a fundamental human right and urged countries to intensify efforts to address the basic learning needs of all (UNESCO, 2014:1). During the conference, the term education for all was made very clear to mean that both sexes be treated equally and that any gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated in the process, narrowing the gender gap.

Ten years later, in 2000, the issue of equal access to education was reaffirmed at the world education forum that was held in Dakar. An agreement was set by establishing the eight MDGs, among which was equal access to education between girls and boys (UN, 2006:1). Among the millennium development goals, this study mainly focuses on goal number 2, which states that, to achieve universal primary education with the target of ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015, and goal number 3, which states that, to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015. In line with the education for all (EFA) and MDG policy, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa introduced free primary education as one of the ways of increasing child participation in schools. The removal of tuition fees in primary schools, which was implemented in the 1990s by most African countries following the Jomtien conference, produced an increase in the enrolment rates, which increased rapidly for both girls and boys (Riddell, 2003:3; Oketch *et al.*, 2007:131).

Despite so much effort rendered by the policy makers in equal access to education, gender disparities in education remain high in most countries (UNICEF, 2012:6 UNESCO, 2015:7). A large number of girls are unlikely to participate in and complete primary, let alone secondary school. For example, countries in southern and western Asia like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bhutan are still struggling to attain the 100 percent education for all initiative, with factors like

cultural and religious beliefs, political and economic drawbacks as some of the contributing setbacks (Chitrakar, 2009:29). According to UNESCO (2008:1) statistics, in 2004, about 77 million children around the globe were out of school of which 70 percent were girls, and 15.8 million, which is about a fifth of the share, were from south Asia. Progress has been seen in these countries in later years, as governments are putting in more effort in order to achieve equality in education, however, at a much slower pace than required (UNESCO, 2014:24).

The picture for gender parity in education is also similar in sub-Saharan countries like Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana. According to UNICEF (2013:1), sub-Saharan Africa countries have one of the lowest gender parity rates in the world. In 2012, estimated 31 million girls of primary school age and 32 million girls of lower secondary school age were out of school. It was projected that only 69 percent and 48 percent of the countries will have achieved parity in primary and lower secondary education respectively by 2015. The issue of gender gaps in education is different in the developed world, for example in the OECD countries, education is compulsory up to the age of 15-16 years and the completion rate is almost 100 percent. The next section discusses gender parity and equity in detail.

2.2.1 Gender parity and gender equity in education

The issue of gender parity and gender equity needs to be given special attention, especially in countries that have a huge gap between them. With the existence of democracy amongst most developing countries, issues of gender parity and equity in education should have been minimal. However, trends have shown the opposite with mostly girls and women being affected (Unterhalter, 2010:2). In most cases, women have been seen to receive lesser privileges to education as compared to men, despite so much effort that has been rendered towards equality and parity in this field of education. Before digging deeper into the problem of gender parity and equity in education, a clear understanding of the two terms needs to be clarified as to what we really mean when we say gender equity or parity.

In discussing issues that arise in terms of education and gender, Subrahmanian (2005) in his paper on gender equality in education, discussed gender parity and gender equity in detail; he first defined the two by distinguishing them into two different categories. He defined gender parity as an aim of achieving equal participation for girls and boys in education, and gender equity as the right to gain access and participate in education. Equity also encompasses issues of benefit from gender-sensitive and gender-responsive, educational environments and meaningful education outcomes that ensure that education benefits translate into greater participation in the social, economic and political development of their societies. He further described gender parity as one component that is used as a first step towards gender equality. Despite the fact that gender parity offers a first stage measure of progress towards gender equality in education, the ideologies behind it are different. These can be best described by looking at the indicators of the two concepts, which are discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 Gender parity and gender equality and its indicators

As the definition of gender parity in the preceding section states that gender parity mainly focus on the principle of getting an equal participation in education between boys and girls, Subrahmanian (2005:400), clarified the concept as being quantitative and static, hence can be measurable by using indicators. Ibid described the gender parity indicators as a description of whether the representation of men or women, boys and girls in matters of education are equally presented. Therefore, the parity to education is measured in terms of access, attendance, survival, retention, and to some degree, transition between levels of education.

In terms of gender equity, the notion goes further that the formal equality explained in numbers of boys and girls in school is merely a starting point for assessing gender equality as an educational goal. Thus, gender equality within education refers to the right of men and women, to nondiscrimination in educational opportunities in the following aspects: learning content, teaching methods and process, choice of subjects, assessment modes, management of peer relationship and learning outcomes. In order to avoid any discrimination between genders, Ibid proposed that the functioning of education institutions should be in ways that may not cause any

conflicts and/or propagate any gender stereotypes. This may exert psychological influences or promote institutional barriers between boys and girls, men and women, in relation to the education on offer. If the above mentioned is properly observed and adhered to, then the words equality of treatment can be used, which in turn is reflected in equality of outcome. Both process and outcome indicators can add up to provide a useful picture of gender equality within education (Subrahmanian, 2005:402)

2.2.3 Measurement of gender parity and gender equality

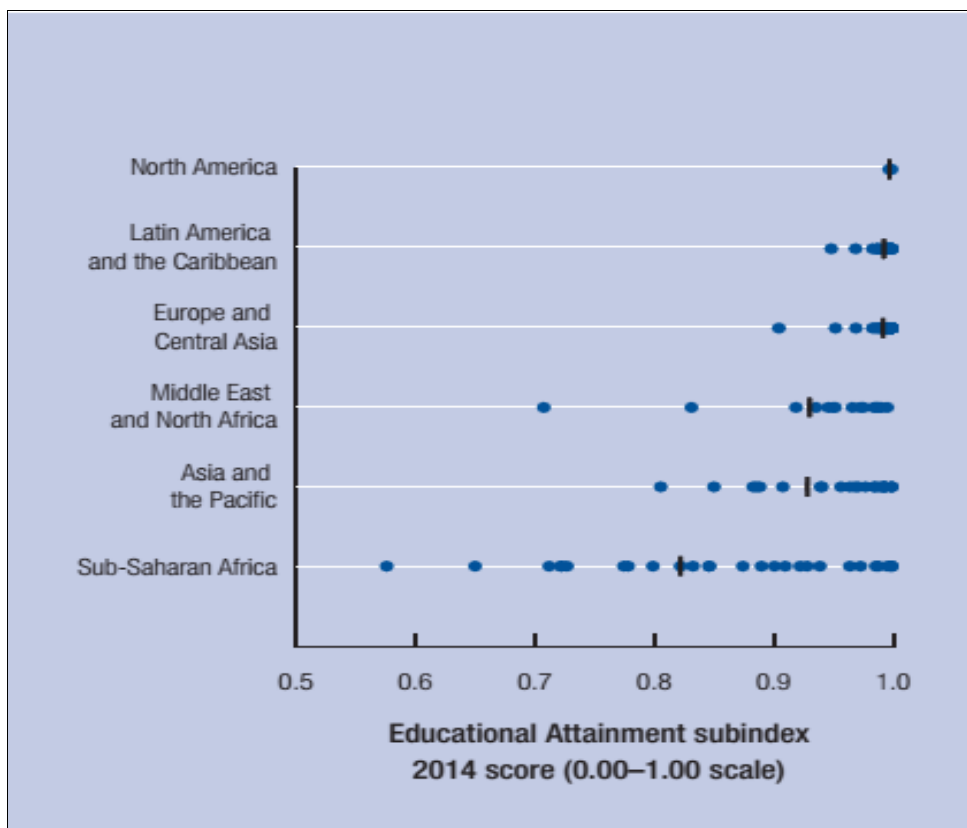
A gender parity index (GPI) can measure gender parity in education. This measure is defined as a socio-economic index usually aimed at measuring the relative access to education of females and males. As discussed by Subrahmanian (2005:400), it is calculated by dividing female gross enrolment ratio by the male gross enrolment ratio for the given level of education. A GPI value that is equal to one signifies parity in the indicators for boys and girls, whereas a GPI of less than one indicates that the value of an indicator is higher for boys than for girls, while the opposite is true when the GPI is greater than one. In circumstances where higher values of indicators are desirable (e.g. school participation rates), a GPI value of less than one means that girls are at a disadvantage, while a GPI greater than one means that boys are at a disadvantage. For indicators where lower values are desirable (e.g. drop-out rates) a GPI of less than one means that boys are at a disadvantage, and a GPI greater than one means that girls are at a disadvantage (Subrahmanian, 2005:400). Dealing with the problem of young female participation, therefore, requires clear understanding of the different measures used in the literature. For example, a good parity measure does not mean that there are high levels of participation; it only means that the number of boys and girls are the same, be they high or low.

Matters discussed about gender equity have usually focused on finding ways to help girls equalise with boys in terms of access, participation, completion and long-term educational attainment. However, by using the measures above, boys globally continue to enjoy significant advantages throughout the developing world (Subrahmanian, 2005:401). This is why both education for all goals, as well as the MDGs and other educations forums have put so much emphasis and invested so

many resources over the last two decades in gender equity in order come up with ways of how to close the gap between girls and boys in these countries completely (UN, 2014:1).

In recent years, statistical trends in pupil enrolment rates by gender have shown improvements around the globe, in particular countries whose GPI ratios were in the past very low, like south western and eastern Asia and African countries and sub-Saharan countries (UNESCO, 2003). For instance, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa have improved over the years in enrolment rates, especially in the first grades, in particular countries like Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania who introduced free primary education. The biggest challenge facing these countries in gender parity is the extensive girl dropout and success rates, which are contributing to the failure to achieve the fourth millennium goal of equality in education (Subrahmanian, 2005:396).

Figure 2.1: Education attainment sub index 2014 score



Source: World Economic Forum (2014)

Figure 2.1 displays the educational attainment results by region across the world, with North American countries attaining a 100 percent parity, followed by Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and Central Asia closing almost a 99 percent gap, Middle East and North Africa and Asia and the Pacific follow next, each having closed approximately 93 percent of the education gender gap. However, the lowest average comes from sub-Saharan Africa at almost 82 percent, signifying most of the OECD countries have closed the gender parity gap in comparison to the developing countries, sub Saharan in particular.

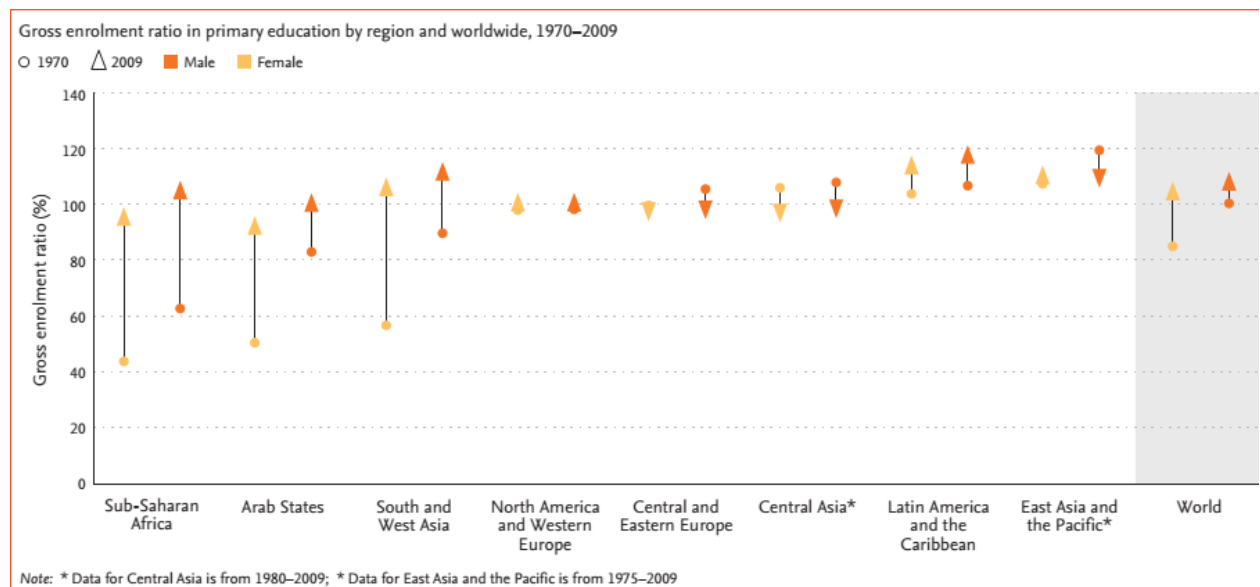
2.2.4 Gender disparities in education in sub-Saharan countries

National concern on gender disparities in education is not only a problem in sub-Saharan countries; it is a worldwide issue, which usually is tabled as a major concern in several national forums. The effort rendered in eradicating this problem of gender disparities in this region has produced fruitful results; however, the problem has not been eliminated. According to the UNESCO (2008) report, the last data collected on gender disparities across the region was 2005 and it states that the issue of gender disparity in sub-Saharan countries is still far from being eliminated and is profound in higher levels of education. The report further describes that such disparities are noticeable as early as in the first grades. From the last data, the average GPI of the gross intake rate in primary education in all African countries was below 0.92 in 2005, while the global average was 0.94. However, gender disparities in access to education have improved since 1999 with a primary gross enrollment rates (GPI) from 0.86 in 1999 to 0.89 in 2005. Progress was noteworthy in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea and Niger. Progress towards the reduction of gender disparities in primary education was particularly significant in Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia and Guinea. Important disparities affecting girls still prevail in the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Niger. Despite this positive trend, the number of girls starting school across the region is still less than 80 percent.

Notwithstanding the mentioned shortcomings, girl access to school has been improving over the years, though at a very slow pace. The picture that appeared to

be hopeless a few decades ago in sub-Saharan countries has seen some improvements over the years. Table 2.2 illustrates a significant upward trend in gross enrolment rates from 1970 to 2009, in primary education for both sexes around the world. In particular, sub-Saharan countries have shown a noticeable change in the enrolment rates for both girls and boys. The table shows a remarkable increase in gross primary enrolment rate from approximately 62 to 106 percent for males and from 43 to 97 percent, for females. Other regions that have seen some significant changes in female GERs are the Arab states, and south and west Asia (UNESCO, 2012:30)

Figure 2.2: World gross enrolment ratio in primary education 1970-2009



Source: UNESCO (2012)

Most of the success stories in the increase of enrolment rates among sub-Saharan countries are related to an increase in enrolment rates particularly those countries that introduced free primary education like Malawi, Ghana, Mozambique, Kenya and Ethiopia. As a result, the enrolment of both girls and boys increased in primary school. For example, in Ethiopia, soon after the abolishing of fees in 1994 to 1995 there was a remarkably increase of about 23 percent and by 2005 the rates sharply increased to approximately 80 percent. Malawi abolished the primary school fees in the same year, and there was a sharp increase in enrolment rates of about 134 percent. Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique also abolished the school fees payments in

the years 2005, 2003 and 2004 respectively. The result was also successful; with Ghana experiencing a 93 percent enrolment rate increase, Kenya 103 percent and Mozambique 113 percent.

2.3 FACTORS AFFECTING YOUNG FEMALE EDUCATION

Factors affecting young female education have been documented extensively over the years, bringing in mixed arguments (Brock & Cammish 1997; Nekatibeb, 2002; Ombati & Ombati 2012; Arku, 2014). These barriers range from supply-side constraints to negative social norms at household, school and country level. Johannes (2010:61) argued that most African countries are devoted to traditional cultural practices and beliefs of sex preferences, a belief that has been inherited from the colonial forefathers. Ibid, described that in a normal African culture, boys are given more preference in all matters of life, as they are the fathers to be, entrusted with the responsibility of fending for the house while women stay at home doing the house chores. The Brock and Cammish (1997:20) study on factors affecting girl child education in seven developing countries, found that a mixture of socio-economic and religious factors affected girl education participation. They further specified socio-cultural factors, gender bias in teaching materials, geographical location of the school, girl's early marriages and heavier domestic and subsistence workload on girls, as some of the main contributing factors. Other related studies are of Hunt (2008:52), who affirms that girl's education is affected by traditional and cultural practices, financial needs, poor quality of environment and learning process, inadequate healthcare, insecurity, civil unrest, and unenforced laws and policies protecting girls and women.

The foregoing discussions are just a few of the barriers depriving the success story to girl's education throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Looking at some of the household characteristics affecting girl education, it has been argued that factors like the education level of the parent(s), the marital status of the head of household, religious beliefs of the household, cultural norms, like favoring boys education and child labour, are some of the most intrinsic factors affecting girl education (Ombati & Ombati, 2012:123). The fact that most countries with high gender disparities in education in sub-Saharan are also related to high poverty levels, puts poverty as one

of the main determining factors affecting girl education. The subsequent section discusses the mentioned factors and other related factors in detail, with emphasis on poverty as the main determining factor.

2.3.1 Poverty and young female education

Poverty is one of the persistent problems throughout the world, having its effects bringing in deleterious impact on almost all aspects of households, especially in developing countries. In simple terms, the pioneers of poverty studies in the nineteenth century defined poverty as the lack of enough money to satisfy basic physical needs (Booth, 1889; Rowntree, 1901). Due to different understandings of poverty, different approaches and ways of thinking about poverty, the definition of poverty has been tackled and described differently by many other scholars. In 1995, at the world summit on social development in Copenhagen, a multidimensional definition of poverty was adopted and endorsed by 118 heads of state (UN, 1995:1). Poverty, being regarded as multidimensional, was hence described as absolute poverty, which is a condition characterised by lack of basic human necessities such as food, shelter, sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, health, education and information. There are still different approaches of understanding poverty, the common one being the monetary measure. The subsequent section looks at the common measures of poverty in the literature.

2.3.1.1 Measure of poverty

Measuring poverty is regarded as a complex phenomenon because many factors have to be considered in order to come up with an exact measure. Coudouel *et al.* (2002:29) describes three ingredients to be considered for the best measure as follows:

- A poverty line, which has to be selected, should have the capacity of differentiating those regarded poor and non-poor.
- A relevant indicator and dimension of well-being.
- A measure reporting for a subgroup population only or population as a whole.

Ibid further narrated that there are also monetary and non-monetary indicators that have to be considered when dealing with poverty and its measurement, whereby the monetary mainly focuses on income and consumption as an indicator, which determines the wellbeing of human beings both at an individual and household level. Whereas the non-monetary indicator focuses mainly on the insufficient outcomes with respect to health, literacy levels, nutrition, deficient social relations and insecurity. They further argued that, in most cases, it is more practical to apply the same tools that have been developed for monetary measurement to non-monetary indicators of well-being. In order to achieve the said goal, one entails the feasibility of comparing the value of the non-monetary indicator for a given individual or household, to a threshold, or poverty line under which it can be said that the individual or household is not able to meet basic needs.

2.3.1.2 Poverty line

The most common way of measuring poverty is by drawing a poverty line that separates those that meet a certain requirement from those that do not meet the requirement. Geodhart *et al.* (1976:504) defined a poverty line as a cut-off line that separates those that are regarded as poor from those that are non-poor, which can either be monetary (example income or consumption) or non-monetary (example literacy level). Dunga (2013:70) elaborates further and describes the poverty line as what economists call the normative concept, which is opposed to what is generally at ground level. The poverty line, in actual sense, denotes the collective value of all goods and services that are considered necessary, by some agreed-upon standard, to satisfy the basic needs of an individual or household. There are three main approaches that can be identified in explaining the poverty line, namely absolute poverty line, relative poverty line and subjective poverty, which will be discussed briefly in the next section.

2.3.1.3 Absolute poverty line

Absolute poverty line is regarded as one of the most important measures that can be used to compare two different scenarios, based on an amount of income that is needed to acquire goods and services for a household in order to satisfy a stated absolute minimum (Ravallion, 1992:25). The common set standard of absolute

poverty line is \$1 per day, initiated by Ravallion *et al.* (1991:1), though some changes have been made in recent years to \$2 a day or \$1.5 dollars a day. The standard of \$1 a day was also adopted by the UN millennium goals on reducing poverty to half (UN, 2000:1). The calculation of the poverty line is somehow too complex, as many factors have to be taken into account, for example, what is determined as the cost of buying certain necessities of a household. Now the problem arises as to what is taken as the basic need, whether food, clothes or shelter, and if it is clothes and food, what type? Because people differ in what they eat or wear, and what is regarded as good shelter in one region may not be applicable in another region (Dunga, 2014:77). He further argued that, with such problems, a correct measure could never be arrived at as one gets mostly estimates. Oosthuizen (2008:3) pointed out the food poverty line, which has been adopted in most African countries that use the absolute poverty line as a measure. The food poverty line seems to be more palatable since at least the adequacy of food intake has a universal amount of nutritional requirements for an individual or an adult.

2.3.1.4 Relative poverty line

Poverty can also be looked at in relative terms, as opposed to absolute. What is perceived as being poor in a very high-income country like Norway may be a very good position in a poor country like Malawi. Relative poverty lines are either set on the median or mean of equalised aggregated income of the population (Bourguignon, 2004:1). The relative poverty line depends on some income distribution characteristics so that the line changes with the average standard of living. Hence, at an individual level, a person is considered poor in relation to the society she or he lives in, the same may be interpreted at household level (Foster, 1998:336).

Another notable poverty measure instrument is the subjective poverty, which mainly deals with people's opinions on a particular topic. Mostly, the measurement can be collected through a household survey asking people for their perceptions (Rio Group, 2006:36). The effects of poverty on young female education are explained further in the next section that discusses the economic constraints.

2.3.2 Effects of economic constraints on young female education

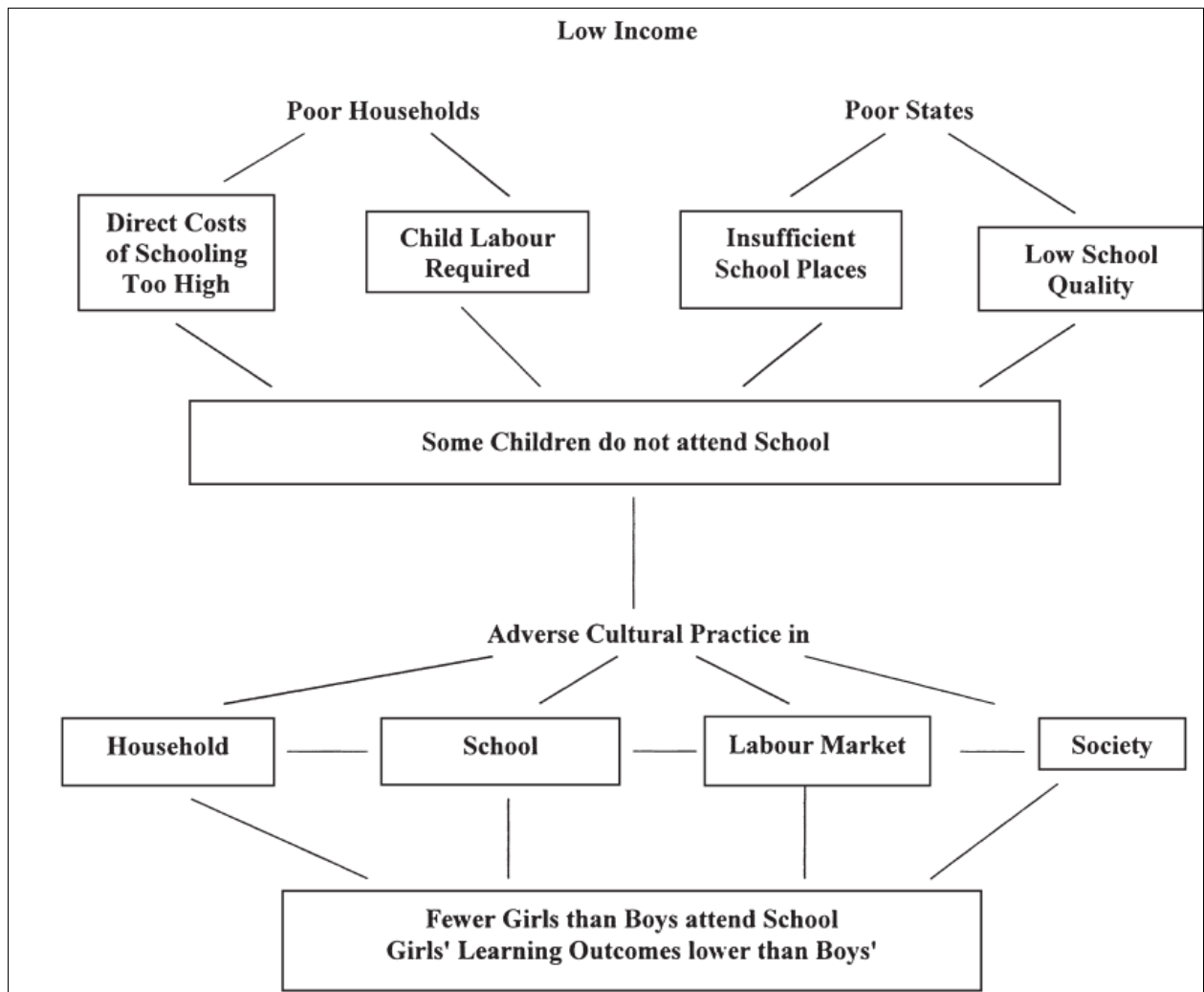
Economic issues may be defined as those aspects in life that are affected by the availability or the need for money or any kind of income for personal or household wellbeing (World Bank 2012). The absence of these aspects or income for the achievement of the same becomes a constraint to the households' wellbeing. Issues of economic constraints are regarded as a major factor contributing to young female education in developing countries, as Ombati and Ombati (2012:118) argue that many countries in the developing world are faced with economic constraints, which lead to the insufficiency of national budgetary allocations to the education sector. They further isolated sub-Saharan Africa as one of the regions where such economic constraints are very high. As such, poverty remains one of the hindering factors to development in sub-Saharan Africa, with most people living below the \$1 a day poverty line, for example in countries like Malawi, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Zambia (World Bank, 2013:1). The majority of the people living under the \$1 a day mostly reside in rural areas. In most of the countries, this rural population is significantly large. A good example would be Malawi, which is regarded as one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. According to World Bank (2012:1) report, Malawi had one of the highest figures of population living in rural areas of approximately 84 percent with almost 50 percent living below the national poverty line (NSO, 2012). In another report by NSO, (2012) on an integrated household survey, it was reported that poor girls in the rural areas constituted a significant portion of Malawi's school age population.

In the area of gender inequality and disparity, poverty is regarded as the single largest factor contributing to gender disparities in education especially amongst poor households in the sub-Saharan regions. It is evident that poor households struggle to provide adequate support or the basic necessitates for their children to be able to attend school. For example, in countries where school fees are still required in primary school, poor households struggle to pay (Raja and Burnett 2004:1). In most countries, however, these poor households have problems buying school uniforms, and providing food and good shelter for their school-going children. Where meager resources are available, preference is given to boys to attend school (Hunt, 2008:50; UNICEF, 2006:1). Studies also show that gender inequality in education is more

profound in poor households as compared to non-poor household in countries that have relatively very low school attendance. In most cases poverty weighs more on girls, lessening the possibility of them attending school. Some good examples are Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Malawi and Niger (UNESCO, 2009:8). In these countries, girls from the non-poor households are more likely to attend school than those from poor household.

Colclough *et al.* (2000:6) explains the effects of poverty, whether at household or national level, as something that brings in deleterious effects on children's education, which is seen more in girls than it is seen in boys. With the aid of a diagram depicted in figure 2.3, Ibid shows a sketch that connects poverty and gendered outcomes of schooling. They argued that children who do not attend school are mostly from poor households as compared to their counterparts, and the majority is girls. The first impact poorer households' face is that of the direct costs of sending their children to school; costs that exist even in the absence of school fees, for example the buying of school uniforms, exercise and texts books, which may be high for them because of poverty. The other reason is that poorer households mostly depend on their children's labour, which helps them supplement household income, be it directly or indirectly. Ibid further argued that, for the reasons given above, parents that are poor may prefer to send their children to school and in most circumstances, girls are disadvantaged. The preferences in gender that may occur are also linked to some of the adverse cultural practices at household, society, labour market and schools, as depicted in Figure 2.1, which, in turn, results in fewer girls than boys attending school or girls outcomes being lower than that of boys.

Figure 2.3: Interactions between schooling gender and poverty



Source: Colclough *et al.* (2000:6)

A study by Velasco (2001) in Cambodia, which is also regarded as a poor country, cited a few factors hindering girls education, amongst those mentioned, poverty was regarded as the biggest problem facing parents in that area. He observed that poor parents were not able to send their children to school, rather opting for them to do housework or other related labour, which could help bring income. Ibid further noticed that preference to education was given to boys, as girls could help with house chores and other jobs that could help them earn an income for the household, some even went to the extent of trafficking their daughters in exchange for money (Velasco, 2001:3).

2.3.3 School environments

Despite poverty, girl education can also be affected by some unfavorable school environments for example, lack of proper facilities in schools like toilets, water and proper learning structures. Safety and behavior patterns of schools may also be a limiting factor to girl education, for example, undesirable classroom environments where girls may face violence, exploitation or corporal punishment. If schools do not provide proper safety measures for girls, most girls prefer staying at home for safety. Tembon *et al.* (1997:3) clarifies the issue of school environments as one of the important factors to be considered in most sub-Saharan countries. Kadzamira and Rose (2003:510) talk of Malawi facing the same problem since the introduction of free primary education in 1994, which benefited the country but brought in challenges, and government could no longer service schools as before due to financial constraints. This led to the deterioration of basic facilities in schools in particular those in rural areas like toilets, which, if not in palatable conditions, could have potential negative effects on girls.

Odaga and Heneveld (1995: 31) argued that teachers' attitude and teaching practices towards students might also be one of the contributing factors to young female education. They gave an example of schools in sub-Saharan Africa where cultural beliefs are so profound, most teachers tend to look at women as inferior to men, which de-motivates girls in their academic pursuits. Inside school environments, girls also face abuse committed by both teachers and male students. In Malawi, a study conducted by the international center for research on women (2010) reported that almost 85 percent of girls interviewed in a certain community responded that sexual abuse was a common phenomenon in most schools in that region, where male students and teachers were the perpetrators. Prinsloo (2006:306) gives an example of South African schools where assault, rape and sexual harassment of girls are widespread. He further argued that in most schools in the country reports have been received of girls being raped, fondled or harassed in empty classrooms or toilets by male students or even teachers. Beninger (2013:284) contends that it is not only the case in South African schools, but also schools in Uganda, Rwanda, Congo, Zimbabwe, Malawi Kenya and Ethiopia, where girl violence in schools is very common.

The location of schools may also be another limiting factor discouraging girls from completing their studies. (Brock & Cammish, 1997:13) argue that the distribution of schools in sub-Saharan countries is more concentrated in urban than in rural areas in that children in rural areas have to walk long distances to school on paths that are dangerous. They further argued that in such cases girls are prone to being raped, molested or even kidnapped, which discourages most parents in such areas from sending their girls to school.

2.3.4 Cultural constraints

When it comes to matters of education, cultural constraints form another major part affecting girl child education in most regions around the World. Masemann (1999:114) defines culture as all aspects of life, including traditions, history, values and language that contribute to the identity of the group. Temba *et al.* (2013:25) argues that each country, community, race or grouping has its own cultural-based education it follows, which forms part of informal education, and it differs from the formal education provided by the state. They further described some cultures followed by some groups as major contributing factors affecting girl education. They gave an example of the Maasai group in Tanzania whose culture gives more dominion to men in all matters of life, which also includes issues of education where women are denied access to education and other economic activities. Therefore, most Maasai women stay out of school. Such practices are not only common among the Maasai people but also amongst other African cultures, for example, countries like Malawi, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia, just to mention a few. Some of the common cultures amongst these countries are initiation ceremonies, girl circumcision, early marriages and sex preference.

In a study by Nekatibeb (2003:7) on causes of low female participation in education, a case of Ethiopia pointed out several factors, amongst which was the issue of cultural constraints. He cited girl initiation ceremonies and girl circumcision as customs that bring confusions and dilemmas in girls. Usually, girls that go through such traditions do not consider schooling as relevant but rather prefer getting married because of what they are taught in those ceremonies. He also pointed out the fact that such traditions usually overlap school calendars, leading to absenteeism

and dropouts. Davison and Kanyuka (1990:3) refer to Malawi as another country with similar cultures practiced in some districts, and so did Arku (2014:6) on Ghana.

De Silva-de-Aiwis (2008:1) describes the practices of traditional gender roles and marriage expectations of females as a major limiting factor to education in most parts of sub-Saharan countries. He further describes how parents benefit from girls marriages as they receive what is called the bride price (*lobola*), hence the tendency of early girl marriages being widespread, especially in rural areas. In such setups most girls end up getting married at a tender age, some get pregnant; others even lose their lives in childbearing. Ombati and Ombati (2012:120) describe other cultural practices practiced in most African countries that hinder girl's education, like the belief of early girl marriages, which most parents force their girl into as a way of protecting them from becoming pregnant outside marriage, while others regard young girls as an economic burden, hence preferring them to get married. Tuwor and Sossou (2008:368) describe another culture common in Benin, Togo, Ghana and Nigeria where young girls are enslaved as young virgins, and kept in temples as goddesses to atone for the sins and crimes committed by their relatives, depriving them of education.

Such cultures are not only common in African countries but also in Asia and Middle East countries. For example, in Tajikistan, Amjad (2010:169) stipulates that religion and socio-culture practices act as main barriers to girl child education. In this country, most parents do not expect their girls to go to school mainly because of the culture, which considers the most valued qualities of women as that of beauty, housekeeping, child-rearing skills and special care for in-laws, and not education. With the mentioned cultures and customs, most girls are deprived of their right and access to education but also other socio-economic benefits such as effective participation in their societies.

2.3.5 Child labour among girls

One of the problems still confronting the global economy today is the use of children in the workplace, especially in poor countries. Child labor is regarded as a very complex problem and is often an invisible issue. International Labour Organisation

(2014:1) defines child labour as any work, which by its nature or employment conditions is detrimental to a child's physical, mental, moral, social or emotional development. Ibid further argued that girls are generally the most affected when it comes to child labour. An estimate of 100 million girls are in child labor and in most circumstances they are exposed to some of the worst forms of work conditions, often in hidden work situations including in agriculture and domestic work. Hunt (2001:11) contends that the link between educational access and child labour is also gendered, and normally it is the girl child who is most affected. In most cases, girls are burdened heavily with house chores, which results in them performing poorly in school compared to their counterparts. In some circumstances, girls are taken out of school to stay at home to help with house chores while the mothers go to work. Brock and Cammish (1997:34) cite that such problems are more profound in rural setting where most people are impoverished. In cases where mothers are working, the older girls have to look after the siblings. Davison and Kanyuka (1990) give an example of Malawi where cultural influences, practiced in most districts in the country, contribute so much toward gender-specific attitudes about the division of labour, but also shape the decisions about whether a child should or should not be in school. They further argued that in such cases, education preference is given to boys, while girls stay at home to help out with house chores. UNICEF (2014:1) cites human trafficking as another major factor affecting girls' education where girls are kidnapped and sold as slaves to work in unfavorable conditions.

2.3.6 Parental perceptions towards girls education

Parental attitude and perception towards girl education has been seen to be another factor limiting girl education. Chimombo *et al.* (2000:16) argue that the responsibility of sending children to school lies in the hands of the parents. Some may argue that such mandate is surely the responsibility of the government, but the government can only work up to a certain level (for example, build schools and make education affordable), so the onus rests on parents as to whether they send their children to school or not. When it comes to gender and education, matters of who is best to acquire the highest level of education is the mandate of the parents, such decisions are influenced by what parents perceive to be the benefit of schooling between girl or boy child.

The perception of girl education in most cultures worldwide lies in the importance of girl education. Sometimes the perceptions are determined by the cultural and religious beliefs on parents. Jain (2008:17) argues that a woman's role in society has been perceived as that of a mother or wife; hence, their education was not seen as relevant. Because of changes in development in countries, such perceptions are dying off in most countries but in some parts, especially those that have a strong hold on cultural beliefs, such beliefs are practiced heavily. Many have alluded to the concept that girl education is related to the perceptions of their families and communities as to how they value their daughters' education. Chimombo (2000:19) cites the education of parents as a contributing factor to what they perceive on girl education. He further argued that illiterate parents are not likely to send their girls to school.. This can be proven by the growing number of gender gaps in education in areas where most adults are not educated. He suggested the solution to this problem might not be to build more schools, but to convince those illiterate parents of the importance of girl education.

In a recent report on Malawi, CAMFED (2015:1) reported that there is a growing concern in Mulanje district (Malawi) over girls dropping out of school, despite the organisation offering its support to vulnerable girls in terms of bursaries, catering for food, clothing and other girl child necessities so they could continue with their studies. This was reported by a district manager in this organisation after he addressed chiefs in that district on the matter. One of the reasons given by the chiefs was that of the perceptions of parents towards girl education. They said parents in that area do not regard girl education as important. They said most poor parents would rather pay huge sums of money for their girls to go for initiation camps than pay for school's needs. Those that receive bursaries are not encouraged to do their school work, hence most girls drop out of school due to lack of moral support.

2.3.7 School girl pregnancy

Much has been said about improvements in enrolment rates in most sub-Saharan countries, especially amongst girls. Most of the success stories of high enrolment rates have been partially because of policies that have been put in place by international organisations on education for all and millennium development goals.

The issue still rests on the success story of those that enrolled in schools. Most studies (Meekers & Ahmed, 1999; Henry & Fayorsey 2002; Mayor, 2004; Hallman and Grant, 2006; Were, 2007; Sedgh *et al.*, 2015) have identified girl pregnancy as one of the contributing factors to high levels of girl drop out, especially in upper grades, but also as a major factor contributing to an increase in teenage deaths in most developing countries.

According to United Nations Population Fund (2013), approximately 95 percent of teenage pregnancies occur in developing countries and 36.4 million women become mothers before age 18. Ibid, reported sub-Saharan Africa as having the highest rate of teen pregnancies in developing countries, more than half of the births in this region are those of teenage girls. Loazi and Liang (2013:11) cite delayed school entry, grade repetition, and periods of temporary withdrawal from school, that is common amongst girls in this region, as a contributing factor. Ibid, argued that most girls in this region enrolled in primary school or junior secondary level well past puberty and into their late teens, thus increasing their risk of pregnancy-related school disruption. South Africa is amongst the countries that have registered very high levels in teen pregnancies in Africa; according to NRC-IOM (2005:1), about 30 percent of teenagers in South Africa would have already given birth at least twice before reaching the age of 18 years, though the rates have decreased for the past years but still seemingly very high (Holt *et al.* 2012; Flanagan *et al.*, 2013) South Africa has a policy of girls to be accepted back to school but now the issue rests on how many really return to school.

In a study on teen mothers and schooling in South Africa, Chigona and Chetty (2008:276) argued that despite the willingness in some girls to go back to school, the mandate lies on the moral support from the parents, immediate family members, teachers and fellow students. They employed a qualitative survey where parents and teen girls were interviewed on some of the problems they face as teen mothers. Their results indicated that the majority of the girls were willing to return to school or some actually returned to school but could not complete with their studies because of lack of moral support. At school level, issues of misunderstandings between teen mothers and teachers were reported, which in their explanation do not abide with the

rules set by the education policy-makers in the country, which specifies that teen mothers should be given special care and be treated like special-needs children. Another point was on the disputes arising between fellow students, where in most cases teen mothers are scorned and mocked for having a child. With these problems, most teen mothers opt to stay at home and not continue with their studies.

In Malawi, teen unplanned pregnancies are amongst the contributing factors to girl child failure in education (Kaphawagawani, 2006:5). Over 30% of girls have been married and gotten pregnant before the age of 18, signifying high rates of girl early marriages as well (UNFPA, 2013:17). Overall, one in every four teenagers in Malawi that are between the ages of 15-19 have begun childbearing. About 27% of such teenagers are from the rural areas as compared to 21% from urban areas (Malawi Demographics and health survey, 2010:50). Ibid further indicated that the percentage of teenagers who have started childbearing decreases with increasing level of education, and that 45% of teenagers with no education have already begun childbearing as compared with only 4 percent of those with more than secondary education, but also teenagers in the lowest wealth quintile are more than twice as likely to have started childbearing than those in the highest wealth quintile (31 and 16 percent, respectively).

UNFPA (2014) reports that such occurrences are not only a common phenomenon in South Africa and Malawi, but also in many regions in Africa and South Asia, where teen pregnancies are on the rise. Projections given by the organisation's reports are that if no proper measures are taken, approximately 78 million girls will give birth during the next decade. This means on average 7.8 million girls will give birth every year from 2011 to 2030, and that by 2030, the number of adolescent mothers would be even higher, reaching approximately 86 million. Ibid further reported sub-Saharan countries to have the highest rates, for example, in West and Central Africa alone, the number of pregnancies among adolescent girls less than 18 years of age could increase by 67 percent, from 5.4 million in 2010 (1.1 million per year) to 8.9 million in 2030 (1.8 million per year). Over the same period, in Eastern and Southern Africa, the number of adolescent girls pregnant could increase by 57 percent, from 4.7 million (0.9 million per year) to 7.4 million (1.5 million per year).

2.4 BENEFITS OF EDUCATING YOUNG WOMEN

Education is regarded as an important instrument in a person's life due to the benefits that accrue from it. The importance of education can be seen at an individual, community and national level. It is generally recognised today that the education of girls and women is one of the wisest and most profitable investments in social and economic terms. An old African proverb says "if you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family/nation". This proverb was written by Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir-Aggrey 1875-1927. The proverb bears the fundamental belief that education is beneficial to all. It also incorporates the notion that when women are educated, the benefits are magnified, and enjoyed by a wider society. The fourth world conference held in Beijing in 1995, recognised that women's literacy is a key to empowering women's participation in decision-making in society and to improving families wellbeing. In addition, the United Nations has articulated the MDGs, which include goals for improved education, gender equality, and women empowerment. The MDGs emphasise education's essential role in building societies and creating a foundation for sustained economic growth. Thus, educating women has become a trend, as seen in the mounting global attention focusing on providing access to education for girls and women (Suen, 2013:61). The benefits that accrue from women's education are numerous. The first beneficiary is the individual herself and later, the social spillovers are felt by her family (husband, children, and parents), the community, society and the whole country (UNESCO, 1996:1).

2.4.1 Benefits to girl as an individual

The individual economic effects of women education is easily noticeable and has been proven more effective in women. This is because an educated woman is said to have self-confidence, greater self-esteem and opens up new horizons in life. It is also believed that educated women are able to develop themselves fully and increase their resistance to gender discrimination (Hill & king, 1995). The first and most important benefit that accrues to the individual is the income earned as a result of being educated. There are earnings differentials that can be noticed between men and women of the same qualification. Although disparities still exist in other countries

where men are paid more than women for a similar work do, the picture is better in a number of countries. A study on economic benefits of women education in South America and Brazil, found that an additional year of schooling yielded a 15 percent increase for men versus 16 percent for women in Brazil and a 9 percent for men versus 11 percent for women in Venezuela. In another study, Patrinos (2008:54) found that women received a higher net monetary gain over the course of their lifetime if they invest in education as compared to men. Patrinos further argued that women who invest their resources in education could yield almost 1.2 percent higher returns than men could. In terms of monthly income, any additional year of education increases their wage rates, for example, one extra year of education to girls increases their income by 10-20 percent, depending on the country. This increase is 5 percent more than the corresponding returns on providing a boy with an extra year of schooling.

2.4.2 Benefits to the family and society

A wide range of benefits of female education can also be recognised at family, community as well as the society level in terms of social and economic growth. Educated women are associated with better family characteristics in the sense that they are more aware of the needs of their little children. These include knowledge on under-five childcare like vaccinations, proper diets and hygiene. In turn, there are fewer under five deaths in households where the mother is educated. Where a mother is not educated, children may suffer and, in serious cases, even die of preventable diseases because the mother is not knowledgeable of the basic health requirements. The household size of an educated woman is also more likely to be small and manageable as most educated women are aware of birth control issues. In cases where the woman is not educated, children are not properly spaced and there is high chance of younger children falling into malnutrition due to poverty. Uneducated women are also more likely to have large families, as they are not aware of modern ways of birth control. Women education is said to have a multiplier effect, because when more women become educated, they tend to be healthier, participate more in the formal labor market, earn more income, have fewer children, and provide better health care and education to their children, all of which eventually improves the well-being of all individuals and can lift households out of poverty.

Women education is also said to have intergenerational benefits because the mentioned benefits are also transmitted across generations. The next section discusses the social benefits of young women education to the society in detail.

2.4.3 Benefits of women education to the nation

Female education is regarded as one of the tools that contribute to economic growth of a nation. Investing in the education of girls has proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty. One of the set MDGs is to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. This signifies that women's roles in any country should be given the same priority as men. With the awareness of their roles as citizens, educated women can play a more dynamic role in addressing both the economic and social challenges faced by their country; in the areas of food self-sufficiency, agricultural production, the fight against environmental degradation, the use and conservation of water and energy. Education alone is obviously not enough to solve the world's problems, but it remains one of the essential factors in any development activity. It is essential for nations to recognise the importance of women education, as it is one aspect for national development, as the proverb stated in 2.4 upholds the view that women are agents of development. There is evidence that differentiates the outcomes of education for men and women. Educated women have higher capabilities to yield externalities, additional benefits, which would contribute to the development of their families and the nation as a whole. Studies show that an educated woman has more benefits to society. Thus, this view renders educated women as better development agents when compared to men. At national level, the benefits of education for young females can be viewed at both economic and social terms as discussed below.

2.4.3.1 Economic benefits

The spillover benefits of women education can be enjoyed later at national level on an economics and social side. Studies conducted on the link between education and economic growth have been viewed to have a positive link while not disregarding others that have argued differently on this matter but as in both the augmented neoclassical growth theories and the endogenous growth theories emphasises at

least three mechanisms through which education may affect economic wellbeing. First, education can increase the human capital inherent in the labor force, which increases labor productivity and thus transitional growth toward a higher equilibrium level of output growth (Mankiw *et al.*, 1992). Secondly, education can increase the innovative capacity of the economy; the knowledge on new technologies, products, and processes promotes growth (Lucas, 1988; Romer, 1990). Lastly, education can facilitate the diffusion and transmission of knowledge needed to understand and process new information and to successfully implement new technologies devised by others, which again promotes economic growth (Nelson & Phelps, 1966).

Kingdon (2002:2) argues that if education has a positive effect on economic growth, then female education should also be regarded as equally important as male education. This is because female schooling should also be able to raise human capital, productivity, and economic growth as much as male schooling does. Steven and Wales (2003:1) agree with the argument and go on to give an example of developed countries whose standard of living has changed over the past decade mainly because of education. As discussed above, most of these countries have achieved at least a 100 percent in gender parity, meaning the percentage of women and men education is at par and most women in these countries are at least working, hence increasing the human capital in the labour force, which later increases productivity, contributing to the economic development of the country. Other studies conducted in developing countries (Schultz, 2002; Hertz; Sperling, 2005) on the benefits of female education found a positive relationship between female education and economic growth. They argued that better-educated women participate in paid employment whose benefits can be seen from higher income earned, which overall increases productivity. In some other rural economies, the education of women and girls may translate into higher agricultural production, for example, in most African developing countries that rely on agriculture, like Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Ghana, just to mention a few.

2.4.3.2 Social benefits

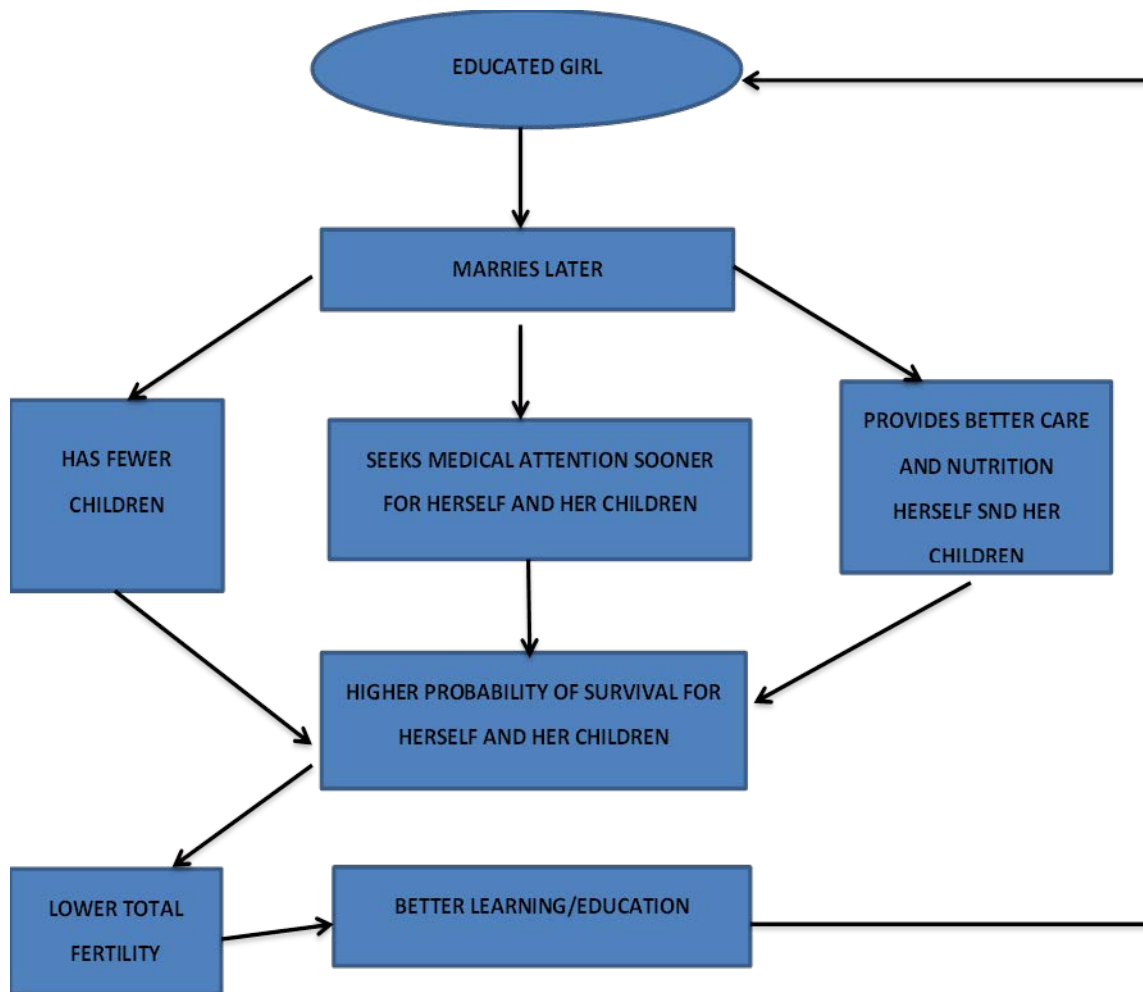
It is also evident that the social benefits from educating young females have far greater advantages as compared to those investing in boys. The most prominent

being the ones pointed out in the studies by (Schultz, 1989; Summers, 1992; Weale, 1992; UNICEF, 2000b) who found that there is a positive link between women education and their social impact with regards to health issues, child bearing and the marrying age. It is argued in these studies that a mother's education improves reproductive health, as educated women are more likely to seek adequate prenatal care, skilled attendance during childbirth and use contraception. They tend to engage in sexual activity, marry and begin childbearing later than uneducated women do. They also have fewer children and every three years of additional education correlates with up to one fewer child per woman source. The children born to educated women tend to suffer less from malnutrition as evidenced in the incidence of wasting and stunting, and are most likely to receive immunisations at appropriate age levels, and, therefore, experience much lower infant/child mortality rates than children born to women with little or no education.

King and Hill, (1997) agree with the other scholars and stipulate that in most cases, educated women also have the tendency to choose to have fewer children than their non-educated counterparts do. Female education tends to reduce fertility rates among women, and, therefore, the population growth rate. They further argued that education could influence fertility by changing perceptions of the costs and benefits of having children, postponing the time of marriage and helping shape attitudes to contraception.

As mentioned earlier, female education creates intergenerational educational benefits and is an important predictor of children's, especially girl's, educational attainment. All things being equal, it is evident that educated mothers are more likely to send their children to school and in future daughters of educated mothers will more likely attend school, thereby, women education improves a family's economic prospects by improving women's qualifications and skills.

Figure 2.4: Generational benefits of female education



Source: Santosh & Jolly, 2006.

The social benefits of female education are illustrated in Figure 2.4 Jolly and Santos (2006) contends that, an educated girl marries later, and when married she has fewer children. With the knowledge obtained from education she takes care of her little ones by immunising them in good time and seeks medical attention whenever she notices anything wrong with them, in so doing lessening infant deaths. Hence it can be concluded that it is very important to educate a girl as much as it is important to educate a boy.

2.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Girl child education has been a common topic of discussion amongst many forums around the world, because of an increase in reports on gender disparities in education, of which young girls have been blamed for the problem as compared to

boys. Some of the problems highlighted as the contributing factors to such irregularities have been documented as socio-economic, socio-culture and school-related factors. The aim of this study was to establish the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success. In accordance with the set theoretical objectives, this chapter focused on some of the household socio-economic factors hindering girl education around the world, specifically in developing countries, for example sub-Saharan Africa, with Malawi as a focal point of the study. In an attempt to cover the first theoretical objective, the first part of the chapter began with the global prospects of young female education, mostly relating to developing and developed countries. It was noticed that gender parity in education is a common phenomenon amongst most countries in the world; this is why the issue of achieving gender parity in education has been one of the main set goals of the MDGs.

The chapter further discussed gender disparities in education in sub-Saharan countries where several countries that have not yet achieved parity in education were isolated, for example Malawi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Burkina Faso, and Chad. Progress has been made to achieve parity in some of the mentioned countries, mainly because of the policy implemented of free primary education, which resulted in a high percentage of girls enrolling in schools, for example in Malawi the gross enrolment rose above 100 percent. However, the problem now rests on the success part of it; out of those enrolled, how many complete their studies.

The second part of the chapter, which is the main focus of the study, analysed some of the factors affecting girl child education whereby socio-economic, socio-culture and school-related factors were highlighted as some of the main hindrances. In an attempt to address the mentioned factors, poverty was emphasised as one of the common issues amongst developing countries, therefore, a deeper review on poverty was analysed by looking at some of the attributes of poverty, for example, what is it, how it is measured and how does it impact people. Other mentioned factors were cultural constraints, girl child labor, negative parental perceptions towards girl education and teen pregnancies.

The chapter has also reviewed some of the benefits of educating women, where the woman herself can relish such benefits, as well as her family and the nation she lives in, thereby bringing development into the country. The next chapter discusses gender and education in Malawi.

CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATION IN MALAWI

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed literature on girl education, emphasising more on gender inequalities in education that exists around the globe, especially in most developing countries. A general picture on factors that hinder girl education around the world, but also the benefits that accrue from educating young girls who later in life become mothers or guardians was also discussed. The discussion in chapter two was mostly generalized around developing countries, but also where concerned, Malawi was cited. This chapter will concentrate on gender and education in Malawi emphasising more on the statistics on drop out, repetition rates and other school related factors between girls and boys in Malawi over the past few years. The first part discusses a brief profile of Malawi, followed by a discussion on the education system and some of the problems girl children face on their journey in education.

Figure 3.1: Map of Malawi showing all districts including Zomba District.



Source; Malawi Atlas (2016)

3.2 BRIEF PROFILE OF MALAWI

Malawi, as shown in the map in figure 3.1 is a small landlocked country situated in the south east of Africa, with Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia as its neighboring countries. Formally known as Nyasaland, Malawi was colonised by the British in 1891 and gained its independence on 6 July 1964. Malawi is one of the poorest of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 153 out of 169 countries on the Human Development Index for 2010 (World Bank, 2010:1). Malawi is divided into three regions (northern, central and southern region) and subdivided into 28 districts (NSO, 2010) Malawi’s population as per last census survey conducted by NSO (2008) was estimated at 13.1 million, 52 percent being females and 48 percent males, with just 15.3 percent of the population residing in urban areas in 2008. The majority of the total population consists of young people below the age of 20. This indicates that Malawi has a youthful population with potential to grow (UNICEF, 2014:1).

In 2010, the country's population growth rate was estimated at around 2.4 percent, with projections for it to increase in the near future (NSO, 2010:1). Malawi being a poor country has high levels of poverty amongst many households as one of the main challenges the country is facing. Poverty in Malawi is still widespread, though improvements have been seen in the poverty status of the country in latter years, however, it remains high. In 2009, the proportion of the population living below the poverty line was estimated at 39 percent, a slight drop from 40 percent in 2008. A total of 43 percent of the rural population lived below the poverty line, while in urban areas the proportion was 14 percent NSO (2012:217).

Malawi is dedicated to improve the poverty status of its people, the government of Malawi is undertaking unequivocal efforts in reducing poverty and improving the welfare of its people. One major step was when the government of Malawi, along with 189 other African countries, signed the agreement to be part of the millennium development goals UNESCO in 2000 at the UN general assembly meeting. The eight set millennium goals are:

- MDG 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- MDG 2 Achieve universal primary education
- MDG 3 Promote gender equality and empowerment of women
- MDG 4 Reduce child mortality
- MDG 5 Improve maternal health
- MDG 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- MDG 7 Ensure environmental sustainability, and
- MDG 8 Develop a global partnership for development.

Due to the nature of this study, much of the focus will be on goals two and three, which are to achieve universal primary education and promote gender equality and empowerment of women respectively (UNESCO, 2000).

3.3 ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MALAWI

In Malawi, education is regarded as one of the most important sectors often ranked number two from agriculture. In fact, schooling in Malawi is considered to be one of

the most important levers for increasing the populations living conditions (Kadzamira *et al*, 2001:5). According to Maluwa-Banda (2004), Malawi's education system follows a formal structure of an 8-4-4 pattern, which comprises of three levels, namely the primary, secondary and tertiary level. He further describes the primary level as one having an eight-year cycle, which runs from standard one through to standard eight. Primary level is further divided into three sections, which are the infant section, which comprises standards one and two, junior section comprising standards three, four and five and senior section comprising standards six, seven and eight. The official age of entry into primary education is six years, though at times there may be variations due to a number of factors (Kadzamira & Rose 2001). At the end of standard eight, which is the final level of primary education, students sit for the Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (PSLCE) examination to qualify for entry into secondary school? Primary education is taken to be the most important education systems in Malawi because it forms the foundation for knowledge gain into secondary and eventually university education (Mzuza *et al.*, 2014:49).

The secondary level education runs for four years and consists of two phases - junior (forms one and two) and senior (forms three and four). At the end of both phases' students sits for a national examination. At the junior level in form two, they sit for Junior Certification of Education (JCE) examination to enable them to qualify for the senior forms. At the end of the senior forms, students sit for the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) in form four. The MSCE is also a very important certificate because it determines their ability to qualify for university education. A body called the Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) administers the public examinations written at each final level of primary and secondary examinations. The last level is the tertiary education, which also includes technical and vocational and teacher education. The number of years for this level varies depending on the course being pursued and ranges from one year to five years (Maluwa-Banda, 2004:5).

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is the overseer of Malawi's education sector as well as all matters relating to science and technology in the

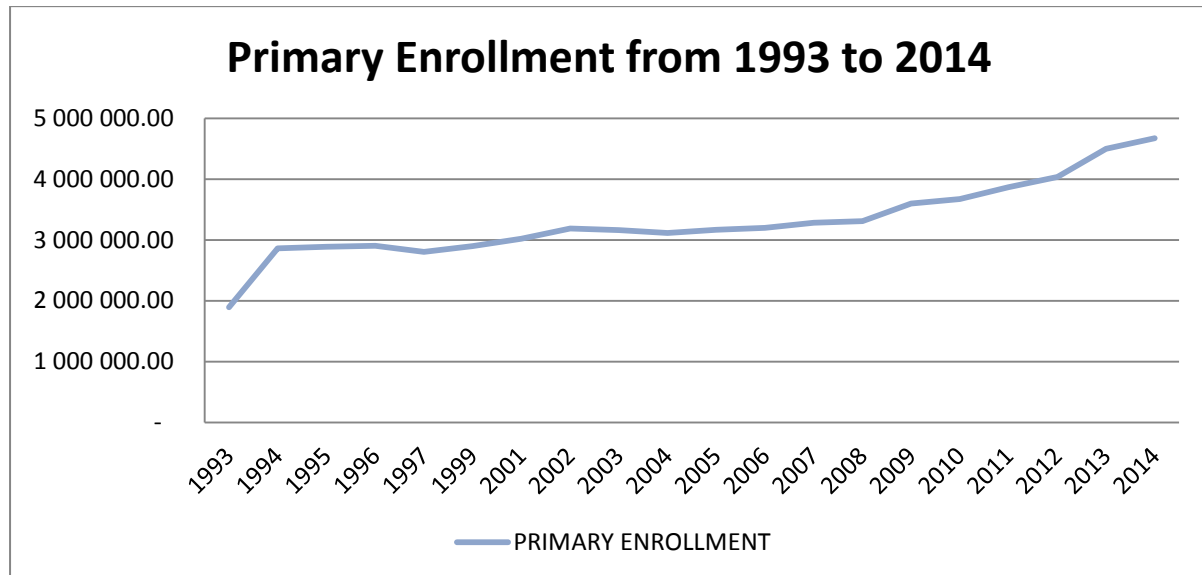
country. The ministry is the government arm that is responsible for providing policy guidance and direction on all education, science and technology issues. The ministry is divided into administrative, financial and academic control over primary, secondary, tertiary and distance education as well as the training of primary school teachers. The ministry is divided further into different tiers. At the top of the national structure, is the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MOESC), which is headed by the minister of education. While MOESC plans and administers the system as a whole, the responsibility of managing and administering the three levels above is assigned to separate principal secretaries (basic and higher education) and all these are under the overall responsibility of a secretary for education. The second tier is the division administration. At the bottom of the tier, are the schools. According to EMIS (2013), there were 5561 primary schools, of which, 5359 were public and 202 private schools, and 1190 secondary schools of which 981 were public and 209 private schools as of 2013 in the country. Malawi has the following colleges: Malawi College of Distance Education centers (MCDEs), Teachers training colleges (TTCs), technical colleges and universities (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2015).

3.3.1 Education policy choice and process in Malawi

Kadzamira and Rose (2001:6) describe Malawi's policy on education to have shifted from emphasising on secondary or tertiary education to primary education over the past decade. Such changes have been adopted in line with the changes in international policies, which have mainly been perceived as a role to reduce poverty. In line with the education for all policy (EFA) that was highlighted at the world conference held in Thailand in 1990, and the MDGs, Malawi embarked on the free primary education policy. Among issues addressed at the conference was a highlight on major problems facing primary education in developing countries, which included improved quality and narrowing the gender disparity in enrolment at all levels, and progress towards increased access to schooling. Since the conference, considerable attention has been focused on the improvement of primary education, in particular women education. Thereafter, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, introduced free primary education for all schools, making primary education its top priority. Malawi introduced free primary education in 1994; the benefits of free primary education

were appreciated mostly due to immediate response from parents by sending their children to school, which was signified by the increase in enrolment rates for both girls and boys illustrated in Figure 3.2

Figure 3.2: Students enrolled in primary school from 1993 to 2014.



Source: EMIS (2014)

Figure 3.2 illustrates the trend in pupil enrolment between 1994 until 2014. The figures shows there was a steep increase in the number of pupil enrolments between 1993 and 1994 and remained high in the consecutive years signifying that the introduction of free primary education after 1994 resulted into high numbers of students enrolled into primary schools in Malawi. However, much as primary school enrolment has been a success since 1994, the concern now is with regard to the internal competence of primary education; the ability to retain pupils until they graduate from primary school. Chimombo, *et al.* (2000:3) argues that despite these remarkable enrolment gains, the primary education system in the country continues to be affected by various problems. The most pressing of these problems is low internal efficiency, which is manifested through high dropout and repetition rates, mostly among females and low school quality. Problems related to education in Malawi, such as school drop outs, completion rates and inequalities will be discussed in detail in the next section using secondary data showing the trends in certain years.

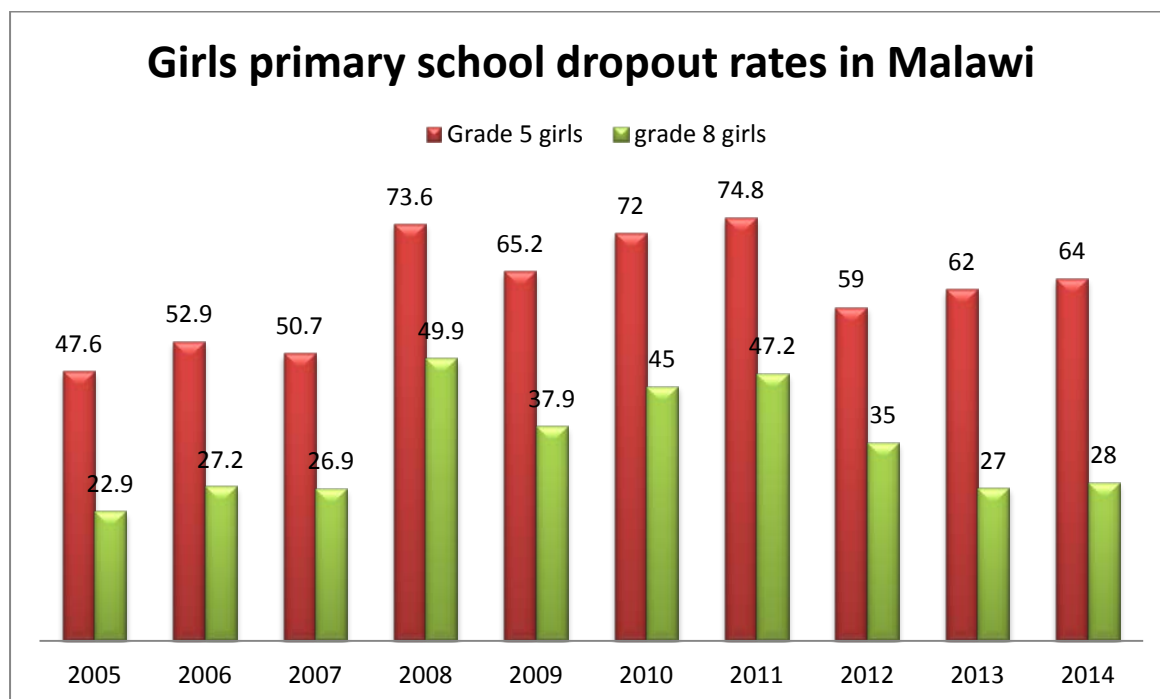
3.4 GENDER AND EDUCATION IN MALAWI

The topic of gender and education in Malawi has been an ongoing discussion for some time. Malawi government, in coordination with other non-governmental organisations have been working hand in hand to come up with ways to achieve parity in education but also a 100 percent completion rate mostly amongst girls. This section describes the position of Malawi in terms of gender and education, school drop outs amongst girls, but also a comparison in repetition, completion rates amongst boys and girls but also statistics on qualified teachers in primary schools. In order to achieve this, references from previous data on educational outcomes in Malawi were obtained from different sources over the past years.

3.4.1 Young female school dropout in Malawi and school dropout

The status of young female education in Malawi is not far much different from other sub Saharan countries. As explained in most sections of chapter two that girls in Malawi often drop out of school because of many barriers, the most profound being socio-economic, school related and cultural reasons. This section presents a brief overview of girls primary school dropout rates at national level, especially in the upper grades depicted in figure 3.3

Figure 3.3: Dropouts and survival rates for primary school girls in Malawi for grades five and eight.



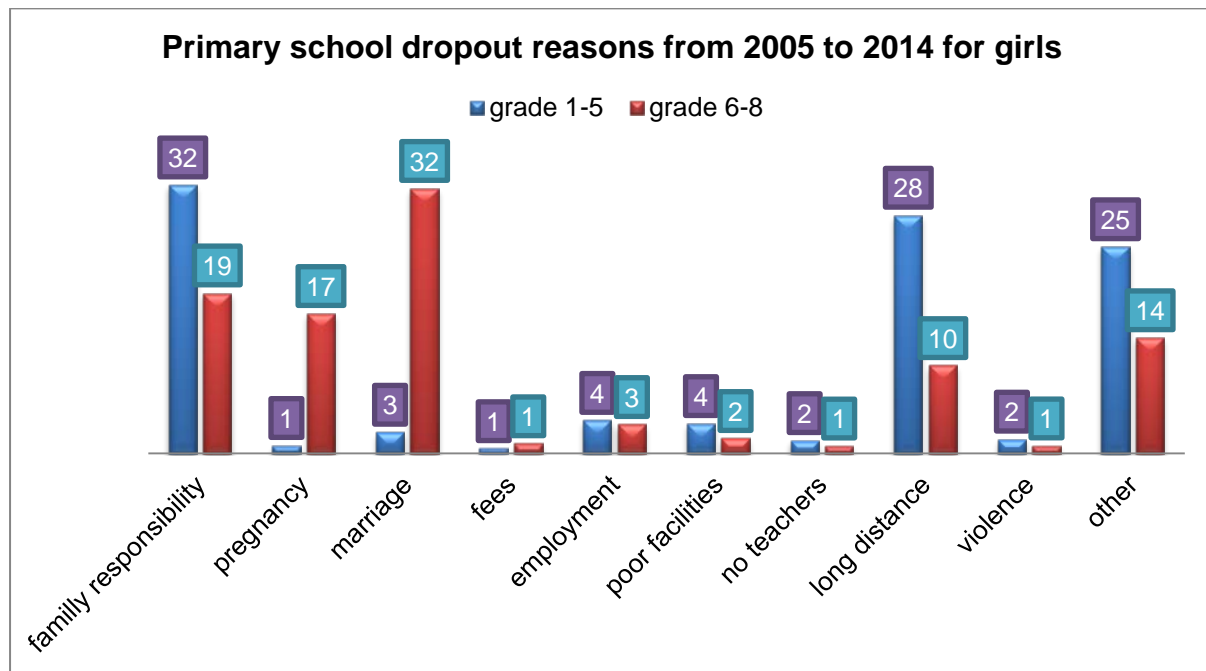
Source EMIS (2014)

Figure 3.3 shows primary school girls' dropout and survival rates in Malawi for grades five and grade eight from 2005 to 2014. In general girls survival rates are high in grades five for the entire years as compared to grade eight. But there are drastically dropout rates shown in grade eight which can be seen from the survival rates meaning that most girls dropped out of school between grades five to eight. The most significant drop out was seen between 2005 to 2007 and 2013. For example in 2005, 47.6% managed to up to grade five as compared, but by the time they get to grade eight only 23% survived, which means that 52.4% dropped out in grade between grade one to five while 77% dropped out between grade six to grade eight. This signifies that most girls dropped out of school before reaching grade eight, which is the final level of primary school. The next section goes further to establish what have been the given reasons in the past years of why girls dropout of school.

3.4.2 Reasons why young females drop out of school in Malawi

The study went further to look at some of the profound reasons of such high levels of girls drop out at National level, using previous data collected by EMIS (2014), depicted in figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Reasons for girls' primary school dropout from 2005 to 2014



Source: EMIS (2014)

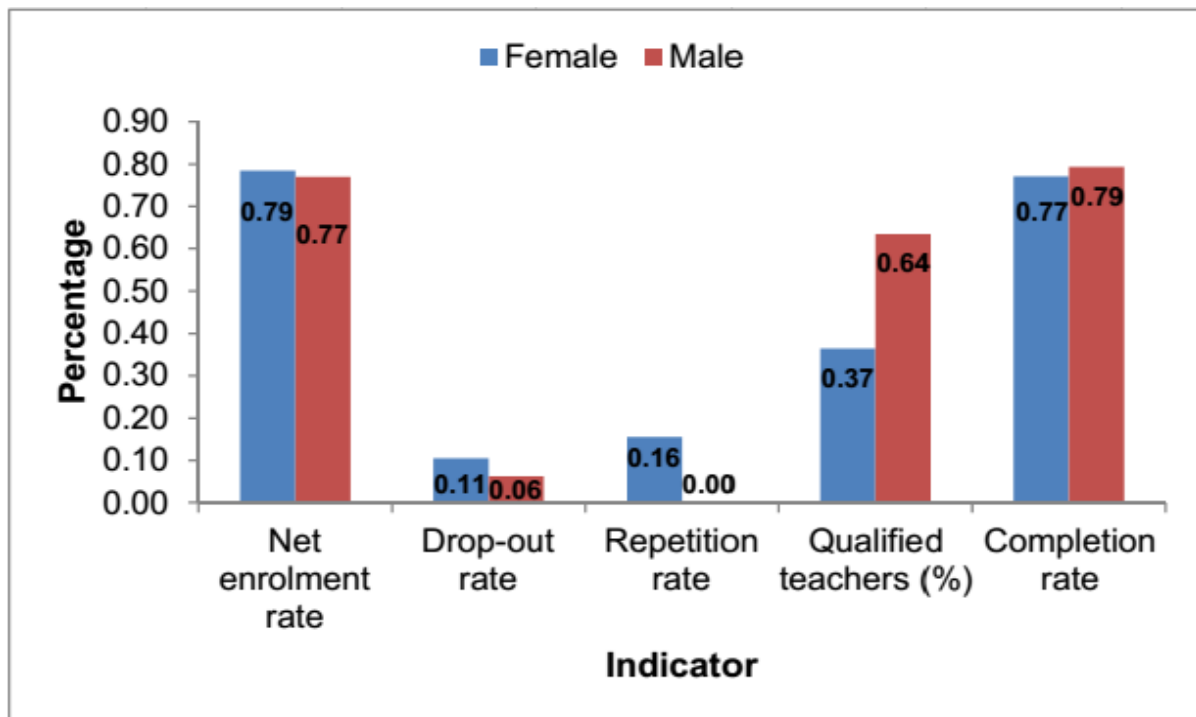
Figure 3.4 displays some of the reasons why girls in Malawi dropout of school, an average rate was drawn from 2005 to 2014 between grade one to five and six to eight. Figure 3.4 shows that, on average 32% of girls that dropped out of school from grades one to five were because of family responsibilities and 28% of girls of same grades dropped out of school because of long distances to primary schools. As discussed in chapter two that some parents may not be willing to send their girls to school because of long distances, the statistics shows that this is very common amongst parents that have younger girls in grades one to five. Looking at the statistics, long distance to primary and family responsibilities constitute over 50% of the reasons why girls drop out of school in Malawi. Between grades six to eight, on average, marriage and pregnancy were some of the noticeable reasons why girls dropped out of school in Malawi. This is similar to what was discussed in chapter two

that older girls tend to drop out of school because of teen pregnancies and marriage unlike those in lower grades, but also this figure 3.4 shows a very smaller percentage of girls dropping out of school because of marriage and pregnancies this could be because of some girls who repeat classes thereby older girls could be found in smaller grades.

3.4.3 Comparison between girls and boys dropout rates in Malawi

When a comparison is drawn between girls and boys primary school dropout in Malawi, girls are seen to be behind boys. Chimombo (2000) demonstrated that the most disturbing feature of primary schools in Malawi is the thinning down of enrolment, as pupils progress to upper standards. He further observed that while the enrolment of boys and girls are almost the same in the first two grades boys have a higher propensity to persist in school than girls and that where there are more schooling problems, it is the girls who are affected more by these problems. A pertinent question then becomes why this is so, despite the massive efforts to improve girls' education in Malawi?

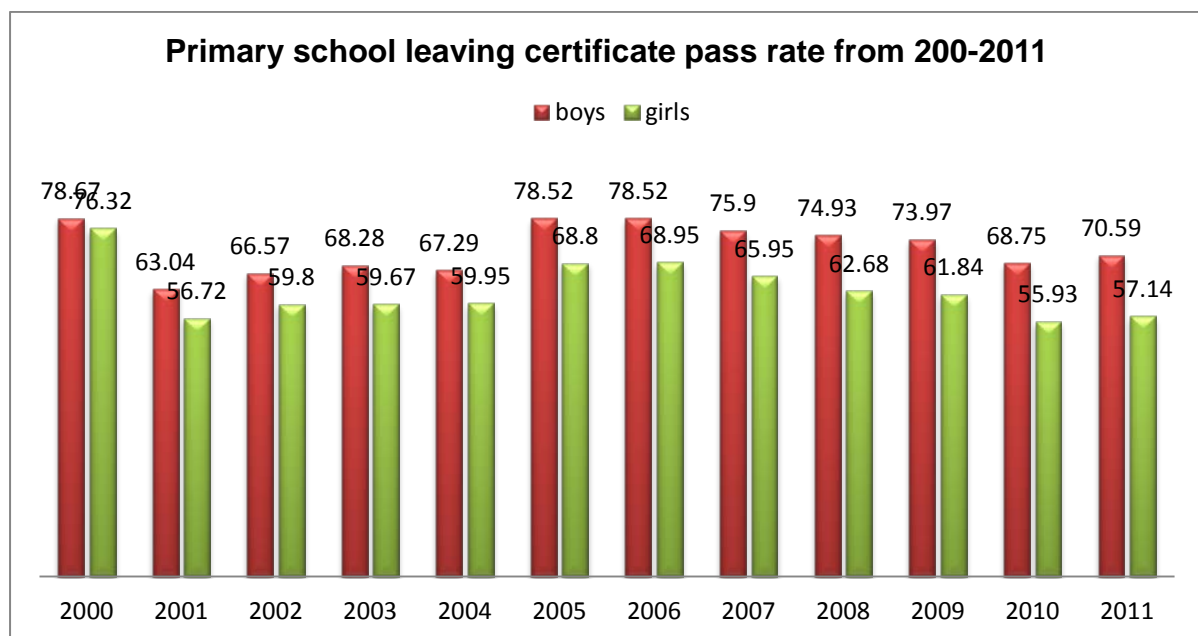
Figure 3.5: Survival rates in education between girls and boys



Source: Survey data (2014)

Figure 3.5 shows the overall picture of Malawi in terms of gender and education. The net enrolment rate increased significantly and it was made up of more girls. As time progressed more girls dropped out of school as compared to boys and also the repetition rates skewed more on the girls' part. The completion rate is slightly higher for boys as compared to girls. Corresponding to the high dropout rates of girls it can also be noticed that there are more male qualified teachers as compared to boys. The survival rates, or the transition rate, from primary to secondary education in Malawi has reportedly been very low over the years. The same issue of gender equality applies at this level, where the transition rate of girls lags behind as compared to the counterparts. Figure 2.8 shows results of the pass rate of boys and girls in grade eight, which is the final stage of primary school.

Figure 3.6: Primary school leaving certificate pass rate from 2000-2011



Source: EMIS (2012)

In figure 3.6 is a clear picture of the trend in primary school leaving certificate pass rate between boys and girls over a period of 11 years. As shown over the years, the pass rate of girls has always been lower. For example in 2011 approximately 70.29% boys passed the primary examinations as compared to only 57.14% of girls. This signifies that the majority of girls that enroll in grade one do not succeed and transit to secondary schooling. This is why gender gaps in education are still a major problem in Malawi.

3.5 EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF THE MALAWI LITERATURE ON GIRL EDUCATION

Studies on education and gender have been well documented, both at national and international level. In most African countries, the issue of gender disparities in education was seemingly very high a decade ago. It has been through international policies like the education for all and MDGs, that have been of great help in as far as solving the issues of gender disparities in education is concerned. Some countries that responded to the policies have reaped fruitful results, for example, countries that introduced free primary education, school enrolments rates increased sharply, as the case of Malawi.

Regardless of all the good policies in place on ways to eliminate disparities of gender in education, girl education is still faced with a lot of obstacles in most countries. Many studies conducted on girl education have come up with mixed results. Maluwa-Banda (2004:76) cites socio-cultural, socio-economic and school-related factors as the main characteristics that commonly have been documented in most research as the main contributing factors that prevent girls from completing primary education. Socio-cultural aspects include pregnancies and early marriages, initiation practices, parental attitudes and aspirations for children, household chores, puberty-related issues, death in the family, and caring for sick parents or relatives. Socio-economic characteristics include family poverty, direct costs of the school, which includes cost of school materials, levies and opportunity costs of schooling. Lastly, school-related characteristics include distance to school, attitudes and perceptions of teachers, lack of female teachers to act as role models, academic performance, and resource allocation within schools, curriculum length and quality of teaching time.

In a study conducted by Kanyuka and Davison (1990), on factors affecting girl education in southern Malawi, the country had not yet introduced free primary education. They adopted a qualitative study using ethnographic observations of classrooms, school environments and the homesteads of 80 children. All headmasters, teachers and parents of children that were in grades 5 to 8 were interviewed in order to ascertain their attitudes and opinions and/or perceptions

towards girls education. In their results, they found that economic, socio-cultural, psychosocial factors were amongst the biggest problems influencing girls to drop out of school. On economics constraints, lack of school fees was the biggest challenge amongst most resource-poor households, when it comes to preference of who should be sent to school, boys were given more preference. This was based on socio-cultural practices in Malawi of boys being given an upper hand as compared to girls. Other related studies were that of Kainja and Mkandawire (1990), Hyde and Kadzamira (1994). In Hyde and Kadzamira's (1994) study, the issue of school fees was repeatedly given as justification for non-attendance, late entry and dropout by both girls and parents. This resulted in most girls dropping out of school before completing primary education.

On studies conducted after free primary education, similar issues of socio-economic, socio-cultural and school-related factors were highlighted by many studies as factors limiting the success story of girl education in Malawi. This time the issue of school fees was not presented as a hindering factor. But, Kadzamira and Rose (2003:506) argue that despite the introduction of free primary education, which resulted in a vast number of school-aged population enrolling in schools, many poor households were later not able to sustain their initial demand for education. This was because of other direct costs related to school needs, which are substantially higher than the school fees. They further argued that such costs increased in upper classes, where better quality school accessories are needed, as a result many children, especially girls, drop out of school before completing primary education.

3.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter looked at primary education in Malawi at national level, emphasising more on young female education in Malawi. Secondary data sourced from Education management information systems(EMIS) was utilised which helped to come up with a national general picture of what has been going on in Malawi for the past years in terms of girl education. The first part of the chapter briefly discussed what Malawi is, where it is situated later the chapter discussed the education systems in Malawi where issues like education structural lay out of education systems in Malawi were

looked out. The chapter went further to discuss the trend in enrollment rates for both girls and boys from 1993 to 2014, it was noted that there was a significant increase in the enrollment rates particularly in the year 1995 this was because of the effects of school fees abolishment that had happened in 1994.

Much emphasis of the chapter was on girl education in Malawi which is the aim of the study. The second part of the chapter analysed the girl education at national level in terms of drop out and repetition rates. In terms of drop out it was noted that most girls dropped out of school in the higher grades like from grade six to grade eight. Different reasons were given as to why girls dropped out of school in such large numbers amongst them on average, over 50percent of girls dropped out of school in grades six to eight because of either marriage or pregnancies. There were also some significant dropouts in the lower grades, on average over percent dropouts were caused by due to long distances to school and family responsibilities.

The chapter also looked at gender and in education in Malawi where a comparison was drawn between girls and boys repetition rates, dropout rates and completion rates. In general statistics showed that girls were in all matters of education behind boys. The last part of the chapter looked at some empirical review of Malawi literature on young female education. Overall girls in Malawi like many other girls in sub-Saharan Africa are faced with many obstacles that hinder them from attending school. The next chapter focuses discusses the research methodology of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to establish if there is a relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Zomba (Malawi). The areas where the data was collected include Mpunga, Chikanda, Namalaka, Matawale, Chinamwali, Mable-Ndola, Jali, 3 Miles and Govala and Matiya. This chapter provides an overview of the methodology covered in this study. To achieve this, the discussion of this chapter is structured around the research design and methodology, population sampling, data collection, data analysis and on how ethical considerations and measures were obtained. Before going into detail, it is important to have a clear understanding of what is meant by research.

4.2 RESEARCH

As human beings, we are inquisitive to learn and discover new things. Such intuitiveness probes mankind to research and discover the unknown. Therefore, research is defined as an investigation that uses appropriate scientific methodology in order to discover new knowledge, which later can be interpreted as facts, theories, behaviours, applications or events (Pellisier, 2007:6).

Research can be categorised in two forms, as qualitative or quantitative approach.

4.2.1 Quantitative research approach

Gravetter and Farzano (2009:158) define quantitative research approach as one that involves measuring of variables for individual participants to obtain scores, which are usually in numerical values that are submitted to statistical analysis for summary and interpretation.

4.2.2 Qualitative research approach

A qualitative research approach involves the subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour of people, which is then summarised and interpreted in a narrative report (Creswell, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998:3).

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative analysis was conducted using a questionnaire method. More details will be discussed later in this chapter.

For a research to be successful whether using a qualitative or quantitative approach, there are certain rules or guidelines that have to be followed, called research design and methodology. Research designs mainly focus on the end product, that is the kind of study being planned and what is to be achieved in the end. Research methodology focuses on the process the research will follow and the kind of tools to be used, for example document analysis, survey methods and the analysis of primary or secondary data (Van Wyk, 2012:13). Methodology is a mechanism that embraces the research design, target population, ethical considerations, instruments used to collect data, data analysis and its interpretation (Cohen *et al.*, 2000:44).

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGNS

Research designs are categorised into three main parts, namely exploratory, descriptive and casual research design. Each part has its own purpose, therefore, can be used differently. Gilbert and Churchill (1996:114) describe them as follows:

4.3.1 Exploratory research

Exploratory research focuses on insights and ideas of a respondent. A good example of exploratory research is that of an online survey, which has open-ended questions. In such, the respondent is not limited to a specific answer but can rather clarify a term in their own words, of which the responses can never be statistically measured or quantified but rather give enough information that help a researcher to discovery of new initiatives or problems that should be addressed.

4.3.2 Descriptive research

As opposed to the exploratory research, descriptive research is said to be quantitative in nature where it is pre-planned and structured in design so that the information collected can be statistically inferred on a population. In so doing, the researcher is able to define the opinion, attitude and behaviour held by a group of people on a given subject.

4.3.3 Casual research

Casual research is described as similar to descriptive research, in a way that they are both quantitative in nature as well as pre-planned and structured in design. The only difference comes in when explaining the cause and effects of the relationship between variables. Casual research is mainly applied on instances where there is a requirement to indicate the extent of the variation caused by one variable to another variable, but also to determine the nature of the relationship between the causal variables and the effect to be predicted.

Having discussed the fundamentals of research, the proceeding sections describe in detail the approaches this research follows, for example the type of research design, population sampling, data collection, data analysis and how ethical considerations and measures were obtained.

4.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The focus on the study was to discover the factors affecting young female education participation and success in Zomba district.

The following empirical objectives were formulated for this section of the study:

- To establish if there is a gender bias in the households perceptions in terms of education support.
- To establish if there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of young female education across different cultures.
- To establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation in Malawi.
- To establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl success for those in school (success is measured in terms of the relationship between age and grade).

4.5 SAMPLING PROCESS

Research sampling is defined as a process of selecting units from an entire population of interest, for example people or organisations, so that in the end, by

studying the sample, a researcher may fairly generalise the results back to the population from which they were chosen (Gilbert & Churchill 1996:477). Ibid describes the sampling process in six main categories as follows:

- Defining the target population
- Identification of the sampling frame
- Selection of the sampling procedure
- Determining the sample size
- Selection of sample elements
- Data collection from the designed elements.

4.5.1 Target population

Target population is the first step in the sampling process and it refers to the entire aggregate population that fits the criteria of the study (Zikmund, 2000:342). The first priority given when dealing with the target population is to make sure that the subject population best fits the research purpose. In order to achieve this, this study specified the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Yale University (2006) defines inclusion criteria as the characteristics that best suit a research and hence can be included in a study, while exclusion criteria is one that does not fit in a study, hence should be excluded. The target population in this study constituted of both poor and non-poor households in rural and urban areas of Zomba district. Due to the nature of the study, only households that have children aged between seven to 18 years could be included in the study.

4.5.2 Sampling frame

The second step in sampling process is the sampling frame, whose main purpose is to identify the elements of the population. Zikmund (2000:344) describes this process as one of the most important parts when conducting a research and that it is ideal for a researcher to compile a list whereby all members of the population are identified and in the absence of such, provisions such as maps or aerial photographs could be used instead as a sampling frame. In this study, a map was used as a sampling frame in both the rural and urban areas. Households in the urban areas were already numbered; hence, the existing numbers were used and recorded on the questionnaire, whereas in the rural areas specific numbers were giving to those

households that were fit for the study. During the survey where household members were not available to be interviewed or where it was not possible to trace the house a next household that fits the study was selected instead.

4.5.3 Sampling procedure

Sampling procedure is the third step in sampling process. It is the method that is used when selecting the sample units. Various sampling techniques can be adopted when conducting a research but the two main types of sampling techniques are the probability and non-probability techniques.

4.5.4 The probability technique

Beins (2004:126) describes the probability technique as the gold standard of sampling, which, by definition, is a technique that specifically specifies the likelihood (equal-chance) that each member of a population has of being selected. There are three main strategies for probability sampling techniques, which include:

- Random sampling, a group is drawn from the population, with every member of the population having an equal chance of being selected.
- Systematic sampling is a process of sampling where an unbiased but random sample is created, for example, when an option of selecting every tenth member of population is chosen
- Stratified sampling involves selecting a group of a population that reflects accurately certain segments of a population, for example young versus old, female versus male are selected then participants are selected from the chosen groups
- Cluster sampling is a process whereby certain groupings that are important to the research are already established, and then some clusters are randomly selected for participation in the study.

This study adopts the random probability sampling, as it best fits the study where each element of the sampling has a probability to be selected (Gilbert & Churchill, 1996:487; Zikmund, 2000:65, 350 Coldwell & Herbst, 2004:80).

4.5.5 Sample size and sample elements

The size of the sample is given by determining how small or large a sample should be and the number of elements to be incorporated in the sample (Hair *et al.*, 2006:33). It is not easy to determine whether the size of the sample is too small or too large; such determination is usually a matter of judgment coupled with a lot of experience and is better left to an expert (Kinneer & Taylor, 1991:396). However, Zikmund (2000:64) argues that the bigger the sample size, the greater the chances of achieving quality results. If a proper procedure of probability sampling is adhered to, even a smaller proportion of the entire population can also give a reliable measure of the whole population (Zikmund, 2000:64). For this study, data were collected from 330 households of both rural and urban areas randomly. Since Zomba district has the majority of the population living in rural areas, much of the sample was from the rural areas.

4.5.6 Data collection

Creswell (2009:161) describes data collection as a systematic way of gathering information, which is relevant to the research purpose or questions, which could be in a form of a test, questionnaire, tally sheet, log, observational checklist and inventory or assessment instrument. Data collection is an important stage when conducting a research because, if not well planned or administered, a researcher may not get a true picture of the required information. Data collection can be obtained from two sources, either primary source or secondary source. The primary source, also called raw data, is one that is obtained from original sources through face to face interviews or questionnaires while secondary data are collected from secondary sources such as books, reports, journals, the Internet and many more (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:184). The decision on the type of data source depends on the nature of the study. Collecting secondary data is not as tedious and expensive as primary data collection because with secondary data you only retrieve information that was already collected, unlike primary data where you have to conduct the interviews, a process that may be expensive (Gilbert & Churchill, 1996:287; Housden, 2005:91; Jugenheimer *et al.*, 2010:31).

There are two main methods of collecting primary data, that is the questionnaire and the interview methods. With the questionnaire method, questions are set and printed on a piece of paper or electronically, which is given or sent to the respondents to answer, while with the observation method, the behaviour and pattern of people is observed and recorded on a piece of paper without necessarily questioning or communicating with them (Gilbert & Churchill, 1996:287).

In this study, data were collected from a primary source using the interview method. A questionnaire was set with questions, which the respondents had to answer. Where the respondents were able to read and write themselves the questionnaire was given to them to fill in but where the respondents were not able to read and write the numerator read the questions to them aloud and the response was written down. The next section describes the design of the questionnaire that was used.

4.6 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The questionnaires consisted of six main sections of closed-ended questions. The first two sections, A and B, outlined the different aspects of household socio-economic and demographic characteristics, such as household size, gender distribution, household structure, education attainment of parents, employment status and income of parents. Section A was based on the education of children in the household, it being the focus of the study. Some of the questions asked were, the number of children under 18 years in the household, whether the children are in school or not, if not reasons were meant to be specified as to why, to lessen the work a list was compiled whereby the respondent was only meant to circle the right one. Distance to schools was amongst some of the questions raised and also the mode of transport used when travelling to and from school. Grade repetition was another important question raised under this section. The respondent was meant to specify if anyone of the children ever repeated a class.

The second section consisted of the perceptions of parents on girl's education and the last section consisted on questions pertaining to household food security. Section C,D and I aimed at identifying the perceptions of parents on girl education, each question in this section was a statement followed by a five-point Likert scale

ranging from 'strongly agree' (coded as 1) to 'strongly disagree' (coded as 5). The last sections, E, F, G and H were aimed at household food security.

The questionnaire was set in English, but because some respondents could not read or write in English a provision of translation to the respondent's language was made. The sequence and wording of the questions was set to be understandable, simple and easy to answer, making it easier for the respondents when answering the questionnaire. In general, close-ended questions were used in the questionnaire in order to simplify the data analysis and interpretation process. In order to avoid data error collection, pilot testing was conducted before commencement of the main survey discussed in detail below.

4.6.1 Pilot study

To ensure that there are no uncertainties in how the research questions are constructed, a pilot study must be conducted. Gray (2009:339) defines pilot testing as a trial run of the major study whose purpose is to verify whether if the data collection plan for the main study followed the right procedure and to minimise errors that may occur due to improper design elements.

A pilot study was conducted in selected sections of this study by conducting interviews using a small sample to determine whether the data collection plan for the main study followed an appropriate procedure. The researcher was able to observe some of the reactions made by the participants, and noticed some of the problems that respondents came across. The proper procedure was followed by eliminating some ambiguous questions and clarifying those that needed clarity, some questions that were not relevant to the study were eliminated.

4.6.2 Main study

Primary data as well as secondary data were employed in this research. Primary data were the main source of data utilised in the study, while secondary data were employed to gather information relevant to the first chapter and the literature review. This was meant to aid the understanding of the conceptualisation of the obstacles young girls meet on their journey to attaining the best. A detailed literature review included books, journal articles, reports on girl education around the world, Malawi

government publications, the Internet, previous research studies, conference papers and many more reliable sources. Books and journal articles were reviewed to provide a theoretical perspective on young female education. Government publications included regulations and policy briefs on the state of young female education around the globe as well as the study country (Malawi).

During primary data collection, a household survey was conducted using the face-to-face interviews method. Before commencement of the research, an interview was conducted to employ field workers after which four enumerators and one supervisor were employed. This was done to employ people that were knowledgeable and capable of conducting the survey. Vigorous training on how to conduct the interviews was given to both the enumerators and the supervisor. Part of the training session was how to translate the questions from English to the local language for those participants that could not understand English.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Gravetter and Farzano (2009:73) define ethics in research as some of the guidelines and responsibilities, which a researcher has to follow when conducting a research. Such guidelines are divided into two categories, namely:

- Responsibility to ensure the safety and dignity of the individuals, both human and non-human who participate in their research.
- Responsibility to ensure that the public reports of their study are accurate and honest.

Any research that involves human or non-human participation immediately raises the question of ethics. A researcher has no power and no right to abuse or harm the participants or subjects. Such harm includes physical, mental and legal harm. A researcher is supposed to ensure the participants of the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of the information rendered (Sarantakos, 2005:21). Ethics do not only consider those being researched, but also those conducting research so that they should be aware of their obligations and responsibilities. It is important that all researchers are aware of research ethics to protect parties, the enumerator and the respondent (Gray, 2009:74).

This study dealt with information from humans, hence ethical considerations needed to be adhered to. The research was conducted with fairness and justice by eliminating all potential risks. Ethical issues observed in a study included informed consent, right to anonymity and confidentiality, right to privacy, justice, beneficence and respect for persons. In order to achieve this after questionnaire compilation, it was sent for approval at the North West University ethics committee of which authorisation was granted to carry on with the survey. Consent was also acquired from the district commissioner of Zomba, Malawi, to conduct a survey in the area.

4.8 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

To answer the main objective of the study, a link between the household socio-economic factors and girl education participation is established in three steps. First, basic descriptive statistics are done on the household factors to establish the trend in the main factors like income and other head of household characteristics that are important in determining the social economic status of the household.

The second step is to establish relationships between the socio-economic characteristics and the girl education participation. Thus, correlations and cross tabulations will be employed to see which characteristics of the household are associated with the ability to fail of young female members of the household's attendance of school.

The third step is to employ a regression analysis where education attendance is a dependent variable and the household socio-economic factors are independent variable. A second regression will have success as a dependent variable and the same household socio-economic characteristics used in the first regression will be used as dependent variables.

4.8.1 Model specification

In order to answer empirical objective three and four of the study, two regression models are used. Both these models have the same independent variables, being the household characteristics, and the dependent variables are of the same form, that is they are both categorical. The model specification below, therefore, serves to present a general form for these two regressions.

4.8.1.1 Regression model 1 for school attendance

As pointed out in the preceding section, the first regression model is used to investigate the factors that are significant in determining the probability of whether a girl child will be in school or not. Since attendance is measured as a categorical variable with two categories, namely in school, or out of school, a binary logistic regression will be specified as follows.

$$SA_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \varepsilon_i \dots (4.1)$$

Where SA_t is the dependent variable, which is categorical measuring the probability of a girl child being in school or not and hence the dependent variable will be defined as follows

1- girl child in school,

0- girl child not in school

β_0 is the constant

The other parameter are defined as follows,

$\beta_1 \rightarrow$ is the intercept term of the regression

$\beta_{1,2,\dots,n} \rightarrow$ are the coefficients corresponding to independent variables $X_{1,2,\dots,n}$

$\varepsilon_i \rightarrow$ is the error term of the regression

The regression for objective number three will have all the variables of interest included as follows;

$$SA_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{location}) + \beta_2(\text{age_child}) + \beta_3(\text{Dist_primary}) + \beta_4(\text{Dist_sec}) + \beta_5(\text{Dist_WP}) + \beta_6(\text{Age_hh}) + \beta_7(\text{income}) \dots \varepsilon_i \dots (4.2)$$

β_1 - β_6 are the coefficients for the corresponding variables.

Table 4.1 shows the socio-economic and demographic characteristics, which are assumed to influence the reasons why girls are in school or not.

Table 4.1: Description of explanatory variables in the regression model

Variables	Description
Location	Location of household (0 urban 1 rural)
Age Child	Age of female child (in years)
Dist P.S	Distance to nearest primary school (assuming all kids attend the nearest primary school)
Dist Sec	Distance to the nearest secondary school
Dist W.P	Distance to the nearest water point
Age HH	Age of the household head (in years)
Income	Income of head of house

4.8.1.2 Regression model two for success in school

The second regression addresses the fourth objective where the girls in school are successful or not, a regression model is run with grade repetition as a measure of success, where those that never repeated a class are considered successful and those that repeated a class are considered not successful. The binary logistic regression is specified as follows:

$$Success = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_nX_n + \varepsilon_i \dots \quad (4.3)$$

Where *Success* is the dependent variable, which is categorical variable measuring the probability of a girl child repeating a class or not and hence the dependent variable will be defined as follows

1- Repeated a class

0- never repeated a class

β_0 is the constant

The other parameters are defined as follows,

$\beta_1 \rightarrow$ is the intercept term of the regression

$\beta_{1,2,\dots,n} \rightarrow$ are the coefficients corresponding to independent variables $X_{1,2,\dots,n}$

$\varepsilon_i \rightarrow$ is the error term of the regression

The regression for objective number four will have all the variables of interest included as follows:

$$Success = \beta_0 + \beta_1(Distance\ PS) + \beta_2(nearest\ WP) + \beta_3(dist.\ sec) + \beta_4(age.\ hh) + \beta_5(age.\ child) + \beta_6(m.\ stat) + \beta_7(emplo.\ stat) + \beta_8(Location) \dots \varepsilon_i \dots \dots \quad (4.4)$$

The same independent variables used in regression one have been adopted in the second regression, which are the household socio-economic characteristics, which include; distance to nearest primary school, distance to the nearest water point, distance to nearest secondary school, age of household head, age of child, marital status of household head, employment status of household and location.

4.9 DATA DESCRIPTION

This sections outlines a general description of the data that was employed in this study, a summary of the quantitative information gathered is employed and described by using figures and tables. The first part of the section starts with a general description of the geographical area of the study; followed by a description of the participants, demographic characteristics, literacy of the population and economic features of the sampled population.

4.9.1 Geographical description of Zomba district

This study was conducted in Zomba district, situated in the south-eastern region of Malawi, and it covers a geographical area of 2541 square kilometres. According to NSO (2008), the population of Zomba as of the 2008 census was 667,953. 13 percent of this population lived in the urban area while 87 percent lived in the rural area. 51 percent of the total population constituted of children who were 18 years and below. There were 276,650 males and 302,989 females in the rural setting, and 44,755 males and 43,559 females in the urban setting (NSO, 2008). As stated above almost half of the total population of Zomba districts are children of 18 years and below hence why it is important to conduct this research in Zomba district as it has a large population of children below 18 years.

4.9.2 Demographic characteristics of participants

The study sample comprised of 327 households in Zomba district, out of the total sampled population, 77 percent comprised of male-headed households and 23 percent comprised of female-headed households.

4.10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The chapter discussed in detail the methodology adopted in this study. The primary objective of the study was to distinguish the relationships between girl education and socio-economic characteristics in Zomba district Malawi. A quantitative research design method was adopted. A random sampling technique was used to collect data from 327 households from both rural and urban households in Zomba district. Due to the nature of the study only households that had both girls and boys were interviewed.

The study employed both primary data and secondary data methods. The secondary data were collected from reports and other internet sources and it was used for Chapter one and two. The primary data were the main source of data and was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire covered different aspects of household characteristics from demographics, socio-economic characteristics to perceptions on girl education. Descriptive analysis was administered first to establish the trend in the main factors like income and other head of household characteristics that are important in determining the social economic status of the household. Secondly, correlations and cross tabulations were also employed to see which household characteristics were associated with the ability of failure of young female members of the households attendance of school. Lastly, a binary regression model was adopted as the model to be used in analysing the data. The next chapter addresses the results obtained from the regression as well as the main descriptive characteristics in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the methodology adopted in this study, including how this research was conducted. A questionnaire method of data collection was adopted in order to collect data on the variables that were to be used to analyse the household social economic factors that affect girl education participation and success in Zomba district, Malawi. A total of 327 questionnaires were collected from this district comprising both rural and urban areas. This chapter, therefore, presents the results and then discusses the findings in detail.

The study set theoretical and empirical objectives. The theoretical objectives were answered in the literature review presented in Chapter two. The empirical objectives are answered in this chapter. The empirical objectives answered in this chapter are as follows:

- Establish if there is a gender bias in the households perceptions in terms of education support
- Establish if there is a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of young female education across different categories of heads of households.
- Establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation in Malawi
- Establish if there exists a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl success for those in school (success is measured in terms of the relationship between age and grade)

The results are presented in such a way that the first part discusses the demographics and socio-economic factors of the study such as, household size, gender of household head, age of the head of household, marital status, household head education attainment, the household head income and other income of the household, number of people staying in the household permanently, education level of parents and years of schooling of parents. After the presentation of the descriptive statistics, the results for the objectives above are presented and discussed in the

order they have been outlined. The first two objectives are answered using cross-tabulations and chi square test, and the last two objectives are answered using two regressions as was discussed in the preceding methodology chapter.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHICS CHARACTERISTICS

This section provides a profile of various demographics characteristics of the sampled population from different aspects. The section describes the household size of sample in categories, gender of head of household, employment status among other things

5.2.1 Household size in categories

The household size of the sampled population of Zomba district is shown in Table 5.1. A total of 327 households were interviewed, a 100 percent feedback was achieved. Table 5.1 shows results on sampled population household sizes. On average, the household size was calculated at 6.211 people per household. The minimum was two and maximum was 13 people in a household.

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics on number of people in a household

	Total number of HH	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of people in the household	327	2	13	6.211	1.7483

Source: survey data (2015)

A further analysis was conducted where the household sizes were categorised into three groupings, those that have two to three, four to six and seven and above people living in the household. The results are shown in table 5.2. A total of 4.6 percent of the sample had a size of two to three people living in the household, 52 percent of the sampled population had a size of four to six people living in the household and lastly 43.4 percent of the sample had a size of seven and above people living the household.

Table 5.2: Household size in categories

Number of people in the household	Frequency	Percentage
size of 2 to 3	15	4.6
4 to 6	170	52.0
7 and above	142	43.4
Total	327	100.0

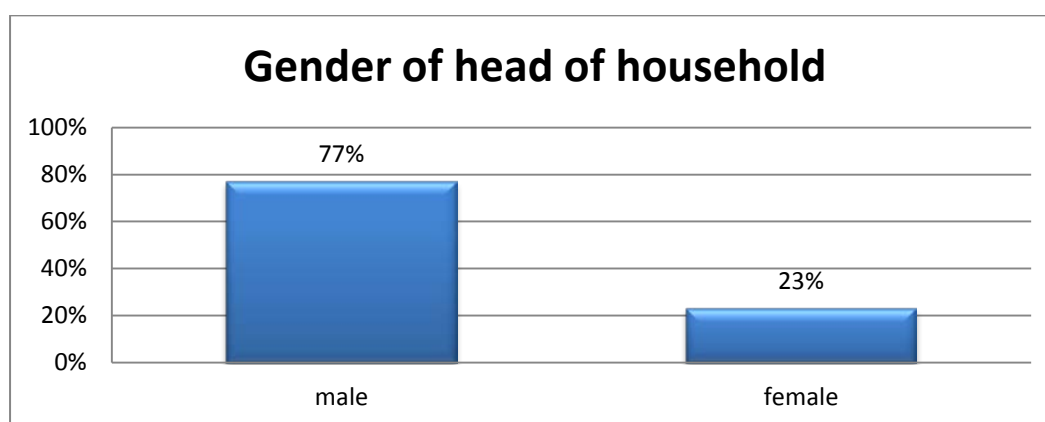
Source: Survey data (2015)

The results emerging from Table 5.2, indicates that most households had large numbers of people, which may have a strain on the resources available to support girl education. Large household sizes indicate competing needs from the members, and in most cases, priorities have to be set as to what is more important.

5.2.2 Gender and marital status of the head of household

The distribution of the gender of head of household is shown in Figure 5.1.

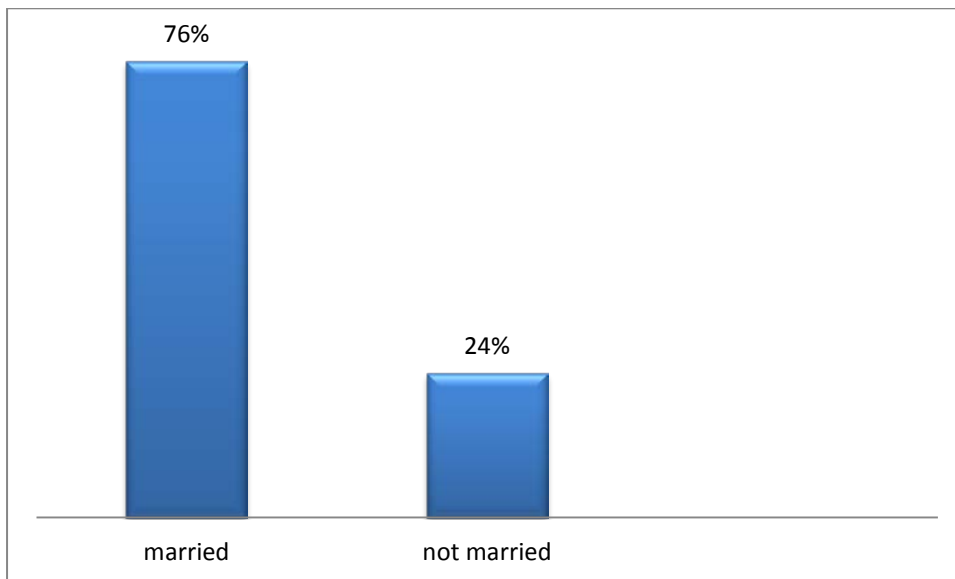
Figure 5.1: Gender of head of household



Source: Survey data (2015)

Figure 5.1 indicates that from the total sampled population, 77 percent of the sample comprised of male-headed households while 23 percent of the sample comprised female-headed households. This is an indication that most households have both parents and only in a few cases single heads of households exist. This finding can be verified by looking at the marital status, which in this case should indicate more married heads of households. Figure 5.2 presents the distribution of marital status of the household heads in the sample.

Figure 5.2: Marital status of household heads



Source: Survey data (2015)

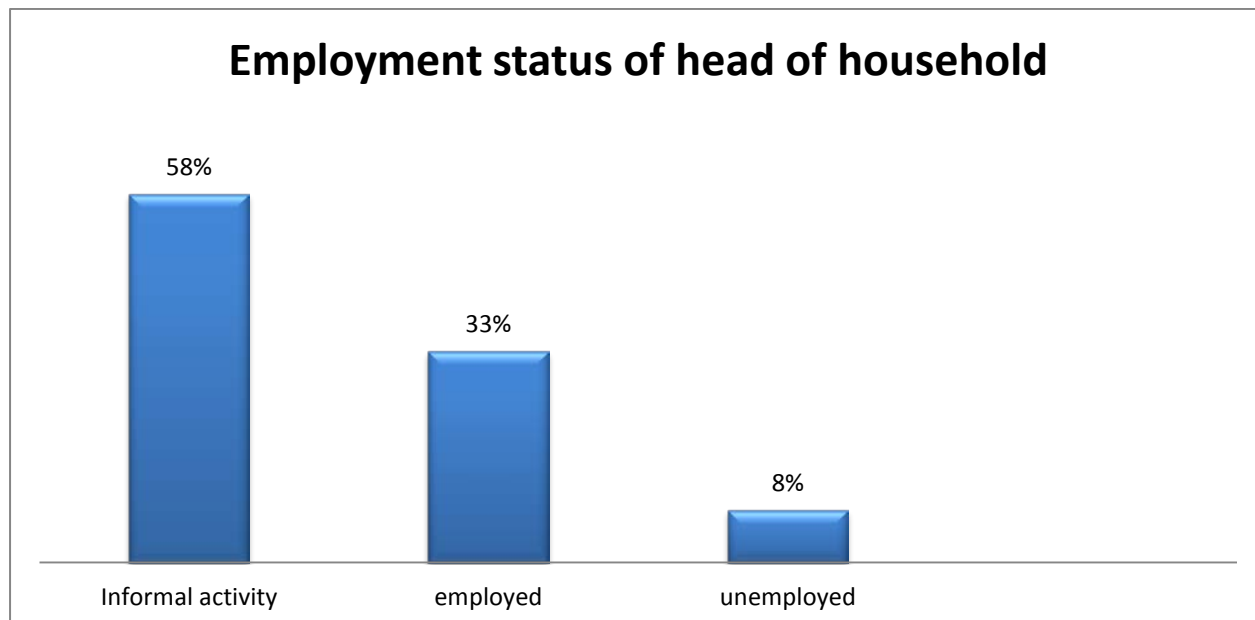
Figure 5.2 shows that, as aforementioned, there are more heads of households that are married than unmarried ones. Out of the 327 homes, 76 percent of the heads of households were married while 24 percent were not married. Those that were not married were divorced, widowed or never married. Segregating by gender, a higher percentage of household heads who were not married were those headed by females. The fact that more heads of households were male as indicated in Figure 5.1 is because of the defector nature of the headship (Buvinic *et al.*, 1997). In households where a man is available, he is considered the head and only those without a man have a female heading the household. In most developing countries, women still rely on a husband to provide for them and in countries like Malawi, a man heads most households.

5.2.3 Employment status of head of household

Whether one is employed or not may be of great influence on how they support their families, including sending their girl child to school. Since the introduction of free primary education, most girls are now able to attend school in Malawi. The employment status of the sampled population head of household is presented in the Figure 5.3. From the sample of 327 households, 58 percent of the heads of

households are not fully employed they depend on informal jobs, 33 percent are fully employed and 8 percent are completely unemployed.

Figure 5.3: Employment status of heads of households



Source: Survey data (2015)

The fact that 58 percent of the head of households are involved in informal activity, points to the problem that exist in the country. Although unemployment figures are presented as low by the National Statistical Office (NSO, 2012), where they are said to be around 3 percent, these are misleading figures since they include informal activities and even subsistence farmers. However, the number of those that are in paying jobs in the industries like manufacturing and the financial sector is very low.

5.2.4 Average length of stay in Zomba district

Table 5.3 indicates the average length of stay in Zomba district for the sampled population. Results show that approximately 53.8 percent of the population have stayed in Zomba for more than 11 years, while 36.1 percent have stayed in Zomba for a period of two to 10 years and only 10.1 percent have stayed in Zomba for less than one year. The average length of stay of the sampled population is 15.7 years. This signifies that the majority of the households from the sampled population have been residents of Zomba district for some time.

Table 5.3: Average length of stay in Zomba district

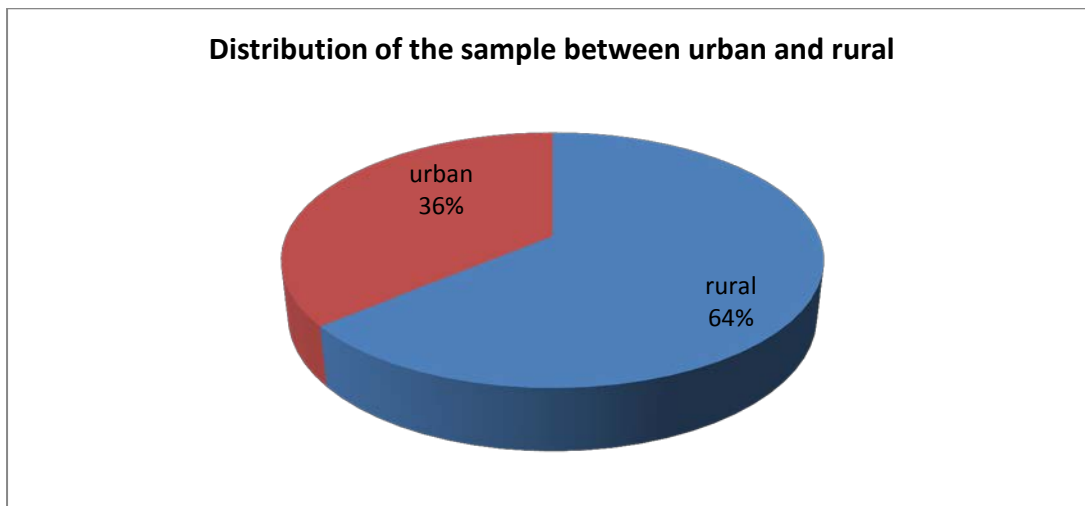
Average stay in years	Frequency	Percent
0-1	33	10.1%
2-5	67	20.5%
6-10	51	15.6%
11-20	90	27.5%
20 above	86	26.3%
Total	327	100.0%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.2.5 Distribution of the sample between urban and rural residents

The distribution of the sample between those residing in rural and urban areas is depicted in figure 5.4; results show that 64 percent of the total sampled population resides in rural areas, while 36 percent reside in urban areas. As stated in the previous chapter, Zomba district is divided into two settlements, the rural and urban settlement. The majority of the population residing in Zomba district comes from the rural settlement, which is why the study has more participants from the rural areas.

Figure 5.4: Distribution of the sample between urban and rural residents



Source: Survey data (2015)

5.2.6 Number years of schooling of household heads by gender

Table 5.4 describes results obtained from the number of years of schooling of the household heads by gender in categories. From the total of 327 sampled households, 31.60 percent of females in the sample only attended grades two to five, and 27.60% attended grades six to eight. When compared with males number of years of schooling, 29.5% of males in the sample attended up to grade eight and 16.7% attended grades nine and ten. Already we can see that 50 percent of females in the sample had primary schooling as the highest qualification while 50 percent of males in the sample had atleast secondary schooling as the highest qualification. This could be because of the existence of gender inequality in education. As discussed in chapter two, on the importance of womens education, a womens education has a generational benefit whereby a daughter of an educated mother is more likely to be educated as well. In our sample most females do not have secondary schooling this could have an impact on girl education in the area.

Table 5.4: Household head number years of schooling by gender

Number of years schooling	Male	Female	Total	% within Male	% within Female	Total %
0-1	14	11	25	5.6%	14.50%	7.60%
2-5	36	24	60	14.3%	31.60%	18.3
6-8	57	21	78	22.70%	27.60%	23.90%
9-10	42	7	49	16.7%	9.2%	15.0%
11-12	74	10	84	29.5%	13.2%	25.70%
13 and above	28	3	31	11.2%	3.9%	9.50%
Total	251	76	327	100.0%	100.0%	100%

Source: Survey data (2015)

It is worth noting that from the sampled population most females only attended up to grade eight which is the last level of primary school. Therefore, the majority of the sampled population of household heads at least attended primary school, seconded by secondary school and very few attended tertiary schooling. A chi-square test was obtained and results show that there was a significant difference between the number of years of schooling between female and male-headed household. The next section discusses results obtained from education status of children in the sample.

5.3 EDUCATION STATUS OF CHILDREN IN SAMPLE

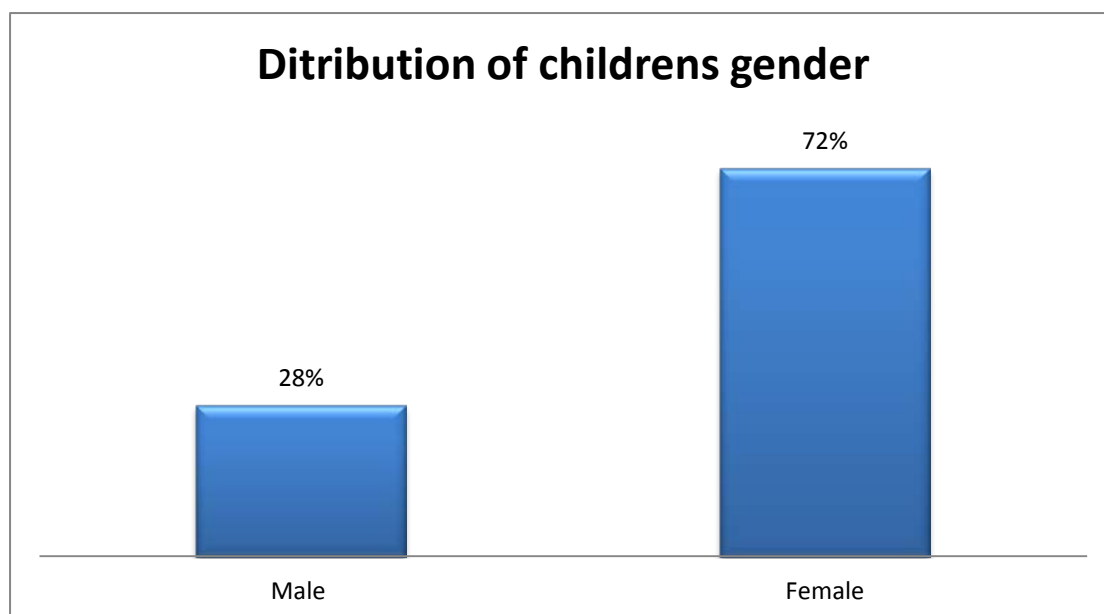
This section presents descriptive results obtained from the sampled data of children on various categories. First, a descriptive of the number, gender of children in the study will be discussed followed by the progress of schooling of children, for example, information of whether a child is in school or not, if not the reason, drop out grade, if the child ever repeated a class and if yes, the number of times. Due to the

nature of the study, emphasis will be on the girls, but in most cases, a comparison between the progress of girl and boys in school will be looked at.

5.3.1 Gender distribution of children

The gender distribution of the children in the sample is illustrated in the Figure 5.5, the sample had a total of 848 children out of which 28 percent were males and 72 percent were females. It relates to the population of Zomba district, which shows a higher percentage of females than males (NSO, 2008).

Figure 5.5: Gender distributions of children



Source: Survey data (2015)

5.3.2 Age distribution of children by gender

Age distribution of the total population of children by gender is presented in table 5.5. The ages were divided into three categories, from seven to ten years in one category, 11 to 14 in another category and those that were 15 and above in one category as well. Results show that there were more males between the ages of seven to 10 years by frequency, however, if compared with the percentage within the gender, shows a higher percentage of males than females that are between the same ages. Results on the children aged 11 to 14 shows that by both frequency and percentage within gender there are more females compared to males within those

ages. Lastly for those that are 15 and above, 70 were males and 208 were females and the percentages within gender show similar trends of more females compared to males.

Table 5.5: Age distribution of children by gender

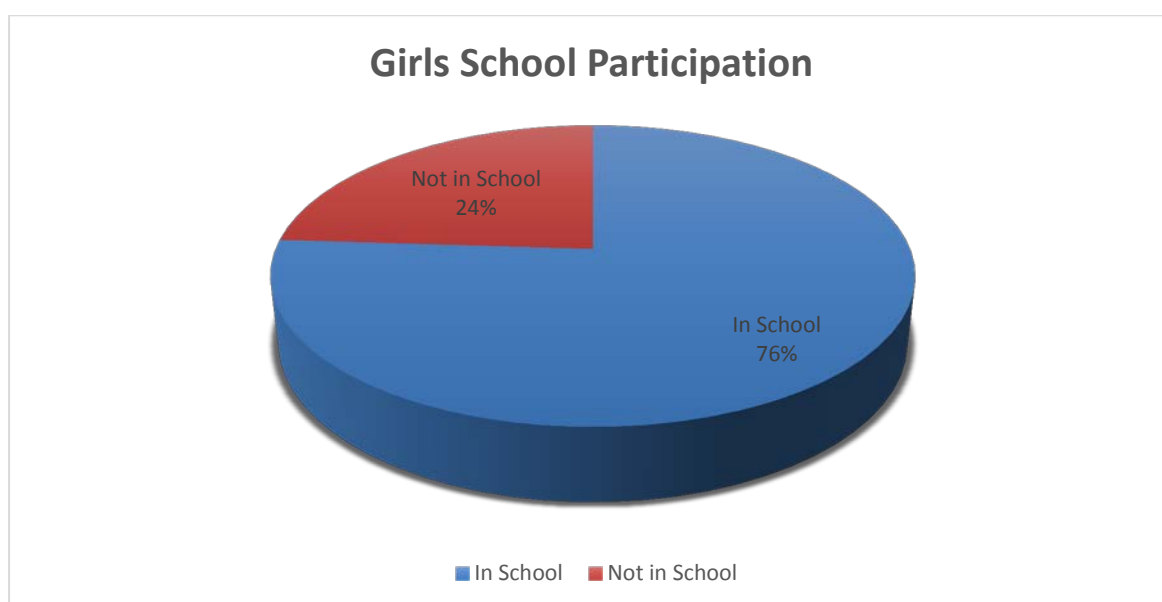
Ages of children	Male	Female	Total	% within male	% within female	% Total
7-10	100	193	293	42.0%	32.6%	34.6%
11-14	68	209	277	28.6%	34.30%	32.70%
15 and above	70	208	278	29.4%	34.1%	32.8%
Total	238	610	848	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Survey data, 2015

5.3.3 Distribution of girls in school and not in school

Figure 5.6 presents the results on the distribution of girls between those that were in school and not those that were not in school. Approximately 76 percent of the girls in the sample were in school and only 24 percent were not in school. This shows that by comparison amongst the girls only, the majority of girls were still in school as compared to those that were not in school. However, a comparison between girls and boys that were in school and those not in schools was conducted to compare the differences in numbers and results are shown in Table 5.6.

Figure 5.6: Distribution of girls in school and not in school



Source: Survey data (2015)

5.3.4 Distribution of children in school and not in school by gender

From figure 5.6, results indicated that the distribution of girls that were in school seemingly was higher compared to those that were not in school. Amongst data on girls only, however, just from that comparison, a conclusion cannot be drawn to say that girls participation in school was high in this study; hence a further analysis was conducted by comparing girls to their counterparts (boys). The results are shown in Table 5.6, when a comparison is depicted between the percentages of girls and boys within the gender it has shown that 94.1 percent of the total boys within gender were in school while 76.1 percent of the total girls within gender were in school. For those not in schools, 5.9 percent of the total boys within gender were not in school while 23.9 percent of girls within the gender were not in school. This indicates that from the sampled population gender inequality in education exists between boys and girls.

Table 5.6: Distribution of children in school and not in school by gender

	Boys	Girls	total	% within male	% within female	% total
In school	224	464	688	94.1%	76.1%	81.1%
Not in school	14	146	160	5.9%	23.9%	18.9%
Total	238	610	848	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Survey data (2015)

A chi square test was run for further analysis. Results showed a p value of .000, therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference, at 1 percent, between the children in school and those not in school, by gender.

5.3.5 Distribution of girls in school and not in school by location

Table 5.7 illustrates the distribution of girls that are in school and those not in schools by location. Location is divided between those in rural and urban areas. Results shows that within the percentage of those in the rural 73 percent of the girls were in school while those in urban 83 percent. For those not in school 27 percent from the rural and 17 percent from the urban within their areas were not in school. It shows that a higher percentage of those in school came from the urban areas and those not in schools from the rural areas. The results found in this section relates to what was discussed in chapter two that most of the girls that have difficulties in attending school come from the rural areas where issues of socio economic hindrances are more as compared to those in the urban areas. This could also be because of the education of the parents especially their mothers.

Table 5.7: Distribution of girls in school and not in school by location

	Rural	Urban	Total	% within rural	% within urban	Total
In school	308	156	464	73.0%	83.0%	76.1%
Not in school	114	32	146	27.0%	17.0%	23.9%
Total	422	188	610	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Survey data (2015)

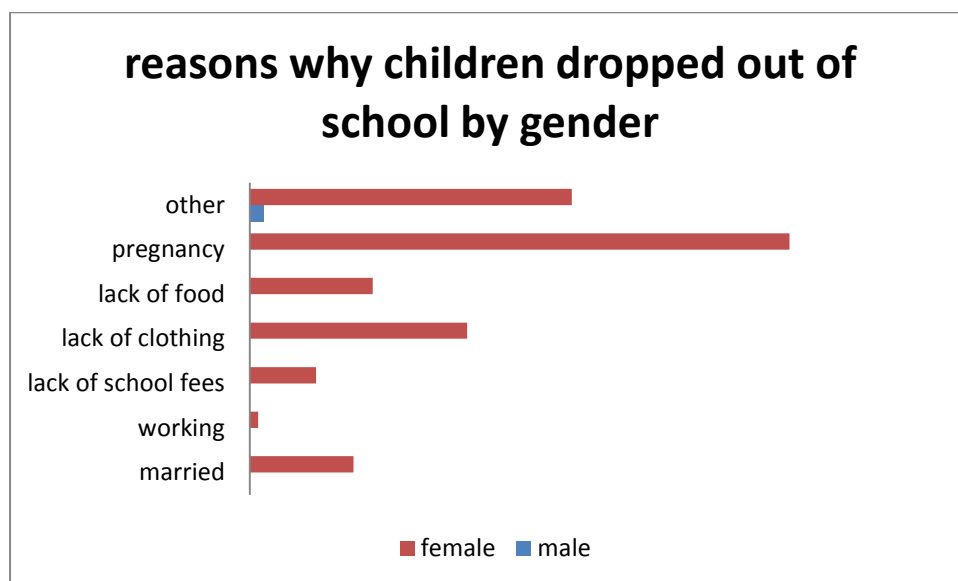
A chi square test was run for further analysis. Results showed a p value of .000 in which it can be concluded that there was a significant difference, at 1 percent, between the children in school and those not in school, by location. The next section went further and looked at some of the given reasons by households heads why girls find it difficult to participate in school.

5.3.6 Distribution of reasons why children are not in school by gender

Figure 5.7 illustrates the reasons given by the respondents as to why children dropped out of school; the results are a combination of both boys and girls from rural and urban areas. It shows that there were more girls that dropped out of school as compared to boys about, 40 percent of girls were reported to have dropped out of school because of pregnancy, followed by other reasons 25 percent and those that dropped out of school because of lack of resources were also more on the girls side. Others were reported to have been married as one reason as to why they did not complete their schooling.

The results obtained in figure 5.7 relates to the discussion in chapter three on Malawi where most girls especially in the upper grades dropped out of school because of pregnancy and marriage this entails that such problems are not only particular to the study sampled area but rather at national level as well.

Figure 5.7: Distribution of reasons why children are not in school by gender



Source: Survey data (2015)

Similar results were obtained in Table 5.8; however, this time a comparison amongst girls only by location was conducted the results are discussed in section 5.3.7.

5.3.7 Distribution of reasons why girls are not in school by location

Section 5.3.6 discussed results obtained from the reasons why children drop out of school based on gender and it showed that more girls dropped out of school for various reasons. This section went further and looked at the same reasons, amongst girls only between those in the rural and urban settlements.

Table 5.8 shows that 37 percent of girls from rural areas dropped out of school due to pregnancy compared to 33 percent of girls from urban areas. The same applies to lack of clothing and food where more from rural areas dropped out of school because of lack of clothing and lack of food. Other reasons not specified by the respondents, urban areas show a larger percentage on other reason not specified. Results also show that more girls in the rural areas dropped out of school because of marriage. These are some reasons why girls are unable to complete their schooling in Malawi.

Table 5.8: Distribution of reasons why girls are not in school by location

	Rural	Urban	Total	% within rural	% within urban	Total
Married	9	2	11	7.38%	5.56%	6.96%
Working	0	1	1	0.00%	2.78%	0.63%
lack of school fees	4	3	7	3.28%	8.33%	4.43%
lack of clothing	20	3	23	16.39%	8.33%	14.56%
lack of food	12	1	13	9.84%	2.78%	8.23%
Pregnancy	45	12	57	36.89%	33.33%	36.08%
Other	32	14	46	26.23%	38.89%	29.11%
Total	122	36	158	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.3.8 Distribution of children that repeated a class by gender

Table 5.9 presents results of repetition rates of school going children in the sample by gender, out of a total of 848 children, 553 had ever repeated a class, however, from the total approximately 67 percent were girls while 32 percent were boys. This shows that more girls than boys repeated a class.

Table 5.9: Distribution of children that repeated a class by gender

	Male	Female	Total	% within Male	% within Female	% Total
yes	135	418	553	56.7%	68.5%	65.2%
no	103	192	295	43.3%	31.5%	3.8%
total	238	610	848	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.3.9 Distribution of the times children repeated a class by gender

Section 5.3.8 presented results of class repetition rate by gender, this section went further to analyse the times children ever repeated a class by gender as well. Table 5.10 shows the results that on average girls repeated classes more than boys as

shown that there were 8 girls that repeated a class for 5 times against zero boys. Approximately 20 percent of girls repeated twice compared to 16 percent of boys, and about 31 percent females never repeated a class compared to 44 percent boys. This signifies that more girls repeated a class compared to boys.

Table 5.10: Distribution of the times children repeated a class by gender

Repetition times	Male	Female	Total	% within Male	% within Female	% Total
0	105	191	296	44.1%	31.3%	34.9%
1	73	201	274	30.7%	33.0%	32.3%
2	37	121	158	15.5%	19.8%	18.6%
3	17	69	86	7.1%	11.3%	10.1%
4	6	14	20	2.5%	2.3%	2.4%
5	0	8	8	0.0%	1.3%	.9%
6	0	5	5	0.0%	.8%	.6%
8	0	1	1	0.0%	.2%	.1%
Total	238	610	848	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.4 HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD PERCEPTIONS ON CHILDREN EDUCATION

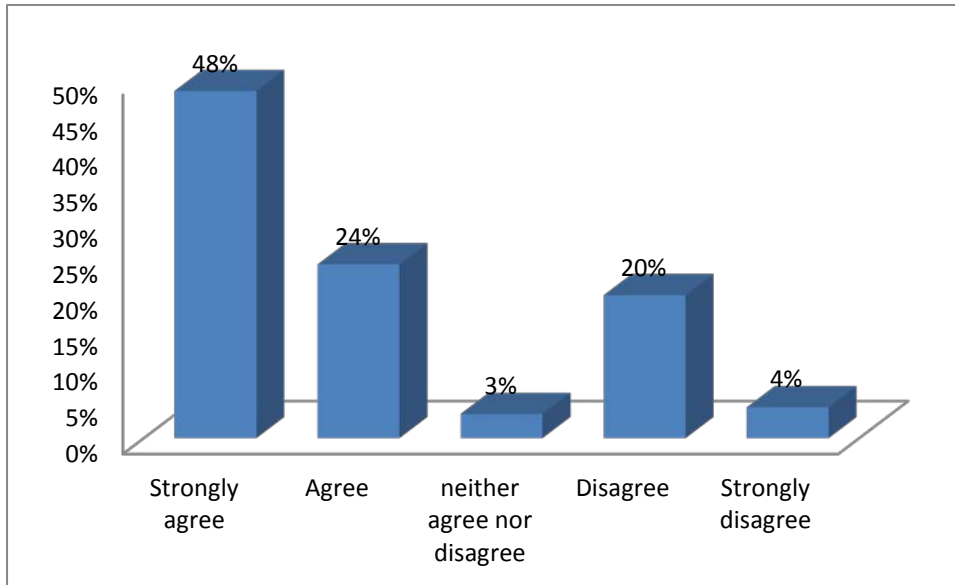
As part of open-ended questions, head of households were asked about their perception of children education between boys and girls on different issues. A Likert scale of one to five between strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree respectively was formulated in order to help the respondents. The results were as follows:

5.4.1 Parental perception on the important of girl education

The first question posed in the questionnaire regarding household heads perceptions on children education was how they regarded the importance of girl education. Figure 5.8 presents results as follows: approximately 48 percent responded that they strongly agreed that it is important, while 20 percent disagreed to the fact that girl

education is important, 4 percent responded that they strongly disagreed with the fact that girl education is important.

Figure 5.8: Parental perceptions on the importance of girl education



Source: Survey data (2015)

From the results indicated in figure 5.8, in general most parents conceived girl education to be important. But after a further analysis on the same perception were conducted, this time comparing how people in the rural areas and urban areas perceive the importance of girl education, gave different results. The results are presented in Table 5.11

5.4.2 Parental perception on the importance of girl education segregated by location

Table 5.11 illustrates the results obtained from the perceptions of household heads on the importance of girl education, this time segregating them according to location. Table 5.11 presents the summary in detail as follows, from the total of 327 households between the rural and urban areas, 209 were from the rural and 118 from the urban. Approximately 74 percent of the total population within the urban strongly agreed with the notion of girl education against only 34 percent of the population within the rural. None from the urban areas disagreed with the notion, but 31 percent from the rural disagreed and some 6.70 percent actually strongly

disagreed with the fact that girl education is important. We can conclude that not all parents from the rural areas consider girl education as important hence why most girls from rural areas either repeat classes or even drop out of school, probably the other reason could be because of lack of parental support.

Table 5.11: Parental perception on the importance of girl education by location

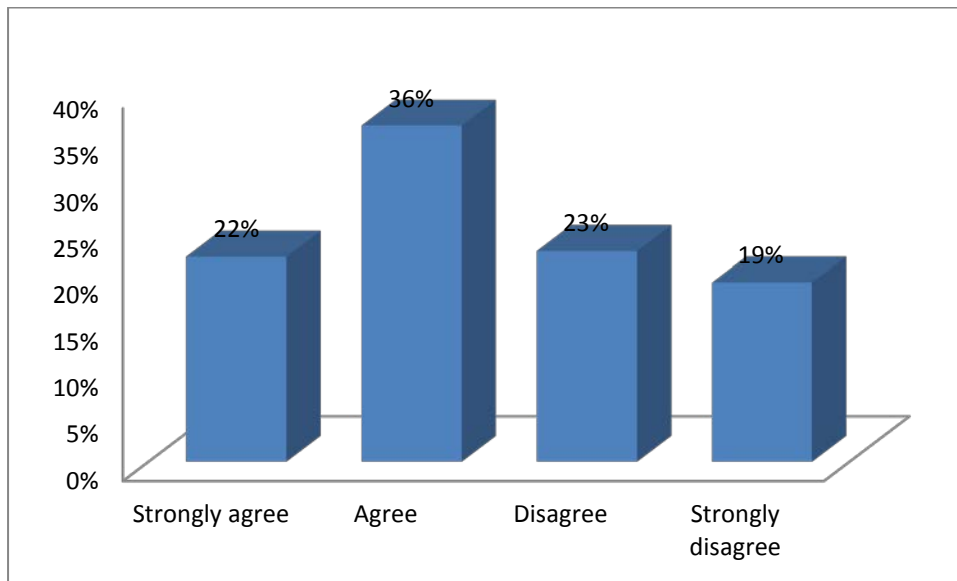
	Rural	Urban	Total	% within rural	% within urban	%Total
strongly agree	70	88	158	33.50%	74.60%	48.30%
Agree	49	30	79	23.40%	25.40%	24.20%
neither agree nor disagree	11	0	11	5.30%	0%	3.40%
Disagree	65	0	65	31.10%	0%	19.90%
strongly disagree	14	0	14	6.70%	0%	4.30%
Total	209	118	327	100.00%	100	100.00%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.4.3 Parental perception on education preference between a girl and a boy

Figure 5.9 presents results obtained from the response obtained from household head's perception of whether they would give the preference of education to a boy or a girl if they had both; 36 percent strongly agreed to the fact that they would prefer educate a boy a girl if they had both children, while 19 percent strongly disagreed. This is where the issue of boy favourism comes in as discussed in chapter two that most parents in developing countries like Malawi regard men superior hence they are given the first priority in all matters of life from tender age.

Figure 5.9: Parental perceptions on education preference between a girl and a boy



Source: survey data (2015)

5.4.4 Parental perception on education preference between a girl and a boy by location

Presented in Table 5.12 are the perceptions of heads of household by location on the preference they would give in terms of education if they had both girl and boy. Results show that 33 percent of rural heads of household agreed against the notion, 2.5 percent of urban areas, and 49.20 percent in the urban disagreed against 7.7 percent in the urban. This shows that those that agreed with the notion were more from the rural areas and those that disagreed were more from the urban areas.

Table 5.12: Parental perception on education preference between a girl and a boy by location

	Rural	urban	total	% within rural	% within urban	% total
Strongly agree	69	3	75	33.00%	2.50%	22.00%
Agree	106	12	118	50.70%	10.20%	36.10%
Disagree	16	58	74	7.70%	49.20%	22.60%
Strongly disagree	18	45	63	8.60%	38.10%	19.30%
Total	209	118	327	100%	100%	100%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.4.5 Parents perceptions on whether they would accept their daughter to drop out of school to get married

Table 5.13 shows results on head of household perceptions on whether they would allow their daughter to drop out of school to get married. From a total of 327 households, approximately 39 percent disagreed and 43 percent strongly disagreed with the notion. From those that disagreed 48 percent were from the urban areas, against 33 percent from the rural areas. A smaller population agreed with the notion and approximately 20 percent that agreed were from the rural areas and none from the urban areas.

Table 5.13: Parents perceptions on whether they would accept their daughter to drop out of school to get married

	Rural	Urban	Total	% within rural	%within urban	% total
Strongly agree	17	1	18	8.10%	0.80%	5.50%
Agree	41	0	41	19.60%	0%	12.50%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	0	2	1.00%	0%	0.60%
Disagree	69	57	126	33.00%	48.30%	38.50%
Strongly disagree	80	60	140	38.30%	50.80%	42.80%
Total	209	118	327	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Survey data, 2015

5.4.6 Parental perceptions on whether they would accept their girl to drop out of school and get a job by location

The results on heads of household perceptions on whether they would allow their daughter to drop out of school for her to get married are presented in Table 5.14. It shows that more parents disagreed with this fact; almost 80 percent from the total sampled responded that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed. However, they were others that agreed with this fact; almost 11.5 percent of the sample agreed and from those that agreed the majority were from the rural areas, while about three households responded neither agreed nor disagreed with the notion.

Table 5.14: Parental perceptions on whether they would accept their girl to drop out of school and get a job by location

	Rural	Urban	Total	%within rural	% within urban	% total
strongly agree	8	1	9	3.80%	0.8%	2.80%
Agree	33	5	38	15.80%	4.2%	11.60%
neither agree nor disagree	3	0	3	1.40%	0%	0.90%
Disagree	73	57	131	34.90%	49.20%	40.10%
strongly disagree	92	54	146	44.00%	45.80%	44.60%
Total	209	118	327	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.4.7 Parental perception on girl force marriage if pregnant before completing school by location

Results obtained from the perceptions of household heads on whether, if their girl was to fall pregnant, would they force her out of the house to get married to the man responsible for the pregnancy are presented in Table 5.15. From the total population, a larger percentage of the respondents disagreed with the fact; however, differentiating between the rural and urban areas, 63 percent within the urban areas disagreed against 41 percent from the rural areas and for those that agreed a larger percentage were from the rural areas.

Table 5.15: Parental perception on girl force marriage if she got pregnant before completing school by location

	Rural	Urban	Total	%within rural	%within urban	% total
strongly agree	16	1	17	7.70%	0.8%	5.20%
Agree	23	10	33	11.00%	8.5%	10.10%
neither agree nor disagree	10	1	11	4.80%	0.8%	3.40%
Disagree	87	74	161	41.60%	62.70%	49.20%
strongly disagree	73	32	105	34.90%	27.10%	32.10%
Total	209	118	327	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Survey data, 2015

5.4.8 Parental perception on the performance of girls in school from poor and non-poor families.

Table 5.16 shows results obtained from heads of household perceptions on whether girls from poor families are likely to perform poorly at school compared to their well-off counterparts. The results show that from the total population, approximately 47 percent agreed to the fact, a further analysis obtained by differentiating responses between rural and urban areas, shows that from the 47 percent, a larger percentage came from the urban areas. For those that disagreed, 46 percent came from the rural areas and about 9 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. This shows that most heads of household from the rural areas did not agree that girls from poor household are likely to perform poorly in school as compared to their well-off counterparts.

Table 5.16: Parental perception on girls' school performance between poor families and non-poor families

	Rural	Urban	Total	%within rural	% within urban	% Total
Strongly agree	8	40	48	3.80%	33.9%	14.70%
Agree	45	58	103	21.5%	49.2%	31.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	18	3	21	8.6%	2.5%	6.4%
Disagree	95	7	102	45.5%	5.9%	31.2%
Strongly disagree	43	10	53	20.6%	8.5%	16.2%
Total	209	118	327	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Survey data (2015)

5.5 REGRESSION RESULTS FOR GIRL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL

The third objective of the study was to see what household characteristics affect the probability of a girl child to be in school or not. The regression analysis used data for girls only. The dependent variable is a categorical variable defined as one for being in school and zero for those out of school. The binary logistic regression is the same as was defined in Chapter 3. Table 5.17a presents the frequency distribution of the dependent variable.

Table 5.17a: Participation status of school going age girls

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Girls school attendance status	Not in school	146	23.9	23.9	23.9
	in school	464	76.1	76.1	100
	Total	610	100	100	

Source: Survey data (2015)

The data used in the frequency for Table 5.17a only included girls and the one in Table 5.17b included both boys and girls.

Table 5.17b: Participation for both boys and girls

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Participation status	Not in school	160	18.9	18.9	18.9
	in school	688	81.1	81.1	100.0
	Total	848	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey Data (2015)

The results of Table 5.17b show that most children in the sample of the school-going age were in school, 18.9 percent were not in school. This figure is higher when only girls are considered as indicated in Table 5.19a, with those not in schools at 23.9 percent of the sample. Using a categorical variable of in schools and not in school where being in school was coded as one and out of school as a zero, meaning that the odd ratio represented the probability of being in school, the results of the binary logistic regression are reported in tables 5.18 to 5.20

5.5.1 Regression results of in school and not in school

A binary logistic regression was run, having in school or out of school as a dependent variable, in order to determine the household social economic factors, which significantly affected the probability of girls going to school. After running the regression using a categorical variable of in schools and not in school, where being in school was coded as one and out of school as a zero, meaning that the odd ratio represented the probability of being in school, the results of the binary logistic regression are reported in the following order: first part discusses results obtained from omnibus tests of model fitness, followed by results obtained from Cox and Snell R squared and Nagelkerke R squared, Homsmer and Lemeshow test and lastly, results of variables in the equation.

5.5.2 Omnibus tests results

An omnibus test of model coefficients shows an overall indication of how well the model performs, also referred to as a goodness of fit. (Pallant, 2010:175). Omnibus test results obtained from the regression model shows a chi square statistic of 124.223 with 7 degrees of freedom and p-values of .000, which is less than 0.01 hence, is significant at 1 percent. This shows that the model, as a whole, is a good fit.

5.5.3 Cox and Snell R squared and Nagelkerke R squared results

The model summary is another table that shows the usefulness of the model depicted by Cox and Snell R squared and the Nagelkerke R squared. The values obtained indicate the amount of variation in the dependent variable explained by the model described as pseudo R squared statistics (Pallant, 2010:176). The regression model shows results of values .184 and .276, suggesting that between 18 percent and 28 percent of variability is explained by this set of independent variables.

5.5.4 Hosmer and Lemeshow test results

The Hosmer and Lemeshow tests also show results on how useful a model is. The interpretation is opposite to one in the omnibus test, where the latter is a goodness of fit that is indicated by a significant value of less than .01, .05, this test looks for a significant value of more than the mentioned (Pallant, 2010:176). Our model results of hosmer and lemeshow shows a chi square statistic of 11.2 with a significant value of .188, which is greater than .05, indicating that the model is a good fit.

5.5.5 Regression coefficients of variables in the equation

The last part in a binary logistic regression model is shown in Table 5.18, it is important because it provides the estimates of the coefficients for the predictors, which are included in the model. In this case, we use in school and not in school as a dependent categorical variable, and household characteristics as independent variable to establish the probability that a child case falls in a certain category. The table gives information about the contribution or importance of each of the predictor

variables, such as coefficients, their standard errors, the Wald test statistic with associated degrees of freedom and p-values, and the exponentiated coefficient (also known as the odds ratio).

The first step in interpreting the results in Table 5.18 is to look at the p values; this helps to check the variables that contribute significantly in predicting the ability of the model. The next step in interpreting the regression is to look at the B values, which are provided in the second column of the table. The B values help to calculate the probability of a case falling into a specific category or the direction of the relationship, which can be realised with either a positive or negative sign. A negative B value indicates that the increase in the independent variable score will result in a decreased probability of the case, recording a score of one in the dependent variable. A positive B value indicates that an increase in the independent variable score results in an increased probability of the case recording of zero in the dependent variable (Field, 2009:285).

Table 5.18: Regression on being in school or out of school

Variables in the Equation									
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
In school and not in school	Location rural	-0.71	0.263	7.307	1	0.007	0.491	0.294	0.823
	Age of child	-0.298	0.036	67.891	1	0.000	0.742	0.691	0.797
	Distance to primary	-0.762	0.339	5.046	1	0.025	0.467	0.24	0.907
	Distance to secondary	-0.152	0.084	3.254	1	0.071	0.859	0.728	1.013
	Nearest water point	-0.644	0.344	3.499	1	0.061	0.525	0.267	1.031
	Age household head	-0.014	0.01	2.064	1	0.151	0.986	0.967	1.005
	Income	0.108	0.03	13.059	1	0	1.114	1.051	1.181
	Constant	7.492	0.809	85.703	1	0	1794		

Variable(s) entered on step 1: Location, age of child, distance to primary, distance_to_sec, nearest_water_point, Age_hh, marital_status_hh.income

The final step when interpreting a binary logistic regression is to look at the odds ratio $\text{Exp}(B)$, which is 6th column presented in Table 5.18. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007:461) describe the odds ratio as one that represents the change in odds of being in one of the categories of outcome when the value of a predictor increases by one unit.

The first independent variable in the regression is location. In this case, location is a categorical variable coded as zero for urban and one for rural. The regression has given results for those situated in the rural settlement of which, by interpreting the same, the opposite applies to those in urban settlement. The results show that location has a p value of 0.007, which means it is a significant predictor of the probability of a girl child being in school or not. It is significant at 1 percent since 0.007 is less than the 1 percent critical value of 0.01. This signifies that location is one of the major socio-economic factors contributing to girls being in school or not. The B value for location is -0.71 with the odds ratio of 0.491, which means that girls that stay in the rural areas have a higher probability of dropping out of school compared to their counterparts, also the odds of the rural area girls not being in school is 0.491 higher compared to those in the urban areas. These results can also be related to what was discussed earlier on drop outs by location, where it was discovered that the dropout rates of those in the rural areas were higher as compared to those in the urban areas.

The second independent variable is age of child. The result shows a p-value of 0.000, hence significant at 1 percent, which means age of child is a significant predictor of the probability of a girl child being in school or not. The B value in this case is -0.298 and the odds ratio of 0.742. This means that the older the child gets while still in school, the higher the probability of her dropping out, and that the odds of her being in school decreases by 0.742 by each additional year. The same results also apply to sixth independent variable on the age of household head, which has a p value of 0.151, despite the fact that the p value shows the variable as not contributing to the model significantly, the B value of -0.014 and odds ratio of 0.986 agrees with the age of child. The negative B value means that the older the parents, the higher the probability of their girl dropping out of school, and that the odds of her

being in school decreases by 0.986 with any additional year. The result makes sense if it is to be related with the discussion in the literature that girls need a lot of parental support, hence if the parents are too old they may not be able to give the required support to the girl child. The other reason could be that older parents may not be able to do house chores and they end up relying on the girl child to help around the home, in so doing most girls may not be able to cope with schoolwork and the result is that they may drop out of school.

The third independent variable is distance to primary. The result shows a p value of 0.025; hence, it is significant at 5 percent, which means distance to primary school is one of the major factors contributing to our regression model. The B value in this case is -0.762 and an odds ratio of 0.467, which means that the longer the distance to primary school, the higher the probability of a girl to drop out of school and that as distance increases by a unit, the odds of a girl being in school decreases by 0.742. The result is viable because, as discussed in Chapter 2, it is evident that school-related characteristics impede girl's school participation. In this case, it can be related to the school factors with household factors, because most poor girls may not be able to cope if distances are long because they always have to walk to school, but if their parents had enough money this problem could have been mitigated by, for example, buying their child a bicycle to cycle to school.

The fourth independent variable is distance to nearest water point. Results show a p value of 0.061, which is significant at 10 percent as the p-value is less than the 0.1 critical value for 10 percent significance level. This means that the variable is significant to our model. The B value is -0.644 and the odds ratio is 0.525, it means that the longer the distance to water point the higher the probability of a girl dropping out of school and also that the odds of her being in school decreases by 0.986 for any additional unit in the distance. Since water is needed in our day-to-day life, as discussed in the literature, most poor households do not have water inside their homes and they have to fetch it from the nearest water point, and girls mostly do this. If the distance to the nearest water point is far, it may take longer to walk to and from school, hence by the time they get home they are exhausted, therefore, school may come second and chances of them dropping out are very high.

The last independent variable is income of the household head, which is also a very important aspect in terms of socio-economic characteristics affecting girl education. Despite the introduction of free primary education in Malawi, the rate of girls dropping out of school is still high. One of the contributing factors is the expenditure parents incurred apart from school fees, for example, parents still have to buy textbooks, school uniforms and other school-related needs. In this case, results on the p value show that income has a p value of 0.000; hence, we reject the hypothesis that the coefficient is not significant and say it is significant at 1 percent, thereby qualifying the variable as being significant to our regression model. The results also show a positive B value 0.108 and an odds ratio of 1.114, which means that with an increase in income the higher the probability of girls to be in school, and also that the odds of her being in school increases by 1.114 with any unit increase in income.

5.5.6 Girl education success

The fourth objective of the study was to assess education success of those girls that are still in school, or at least were in school at some point in time. Success in this case was proxied by the uninterrupted movement along the grades; repetition indicated the absence of success or compromised success. The objective was set as follows; establish if there is a statistically significant relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl success for those in school (success is measured in terms of the relationship between age and grade). Table 5.19a presents the frequency distribution between those that ever repeated a grade and those that never repeated a grade. 68.5 percent of the sample of girls repeated a grade, meaning that more girls were susceptible to repeating than boys as indicated in Figure 5.19b.

Table 5.19a: Success for both boys and girls

Ever repeated a grade					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
success	Never repeated	295	34.8	34.8	34.8
	Repeated a class	553	65.2	65.2	100.0
	Total	848	100.0	100.0	

The results show that the majority of the children, both boys and girls, repeated at least one grade, amounting to 65.2 percent of the sample of children. When the frequency is done for girls only, the percentage of those that ever repeated a class increases to 68.5 percent.

Table 5.19b: Success for girls only

Ever repeated					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Success	Never repeated	192	31.5	31.5	31.5
	Repeated a class	418	68.5	68.5	100.0
	Total	610	100.0	100.0	

Source: survey data (2015)

Hosmer and Lemeshow test for success

As discussed in the preceding Section 4.5.3, in order to determine whether a logistic regression is of good fit, you use the Hosmer and Lemeshow test. Our regression model of success, shows that it is a model is of good fit with a p value of .238 and a chi square of 10.40.

Table 5.20: Regression on girl's success.

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Girls success	Age of child	-.285	.031	82.213	1	.000	.752
	Location(rural)	1.029	.233	19.528	1	.000	2.799
	Nearest water point	-.109	.344	.100	1	.752	.897
	Income	-.155	.148	1.091	1	.296	.857
	Constant	2.449	.391	39.182	1	.000	11.580
Variable(s) entered on step 1: age_of_child, location, nearest_water_point, income hh.							

Source: survey data (2015)

Table 5.20 presents results of the regression on girl success; the results are presented as follows: The first independent variable is location, which has a p value of .000 hence, we reject the hypothesis and say that it is significant at 1 percent. The B value is -.285 and an odds ratio of .752, meaning that the older a child gets in primary, the higher the probability of her repeating a class and the odds of her repeating a class increases by 0.752.

The second variable is location, which is categorised between rural and urban settlement. Results show a p value of .000, which is significant at 1 percent. The B value is 1.029 and an odds ratio of 2.799. It can be concluded that girls in the rural areas have a higher probability of repeating a class compared to their counterparts and that the odds of her repeating a class increases by 2.799.

The third independent variable is nearest to water point, which has a p value of .752 hence not significant. The results for the B value is -.109 and an odds ratio of .897 meaning that the longer the distance to water point the higher the probability of a girl to repeat a class and the odds of her repeating increases by .897. This could be because if the distance to water point is far it takes girls a lot of time to fetch water

hence they may not have time to do homework, as a result she may fail and/or repeat.

The last independent variable is income of household head, which is a very important factor. The results show that income has a p value, which is not significant at all levels but the B values and odds ratio shows that with an increase in income, the probability of her repeating a class lessens and the odds of her repeating decreases by .857. This is mainly because a household that has enough income is able to invest more in a girl education like buying extra reading books, paying for extra classes and also that the chances of gender bias may decrease because now the parents have enough money to educate both children. If a child has the required school necessities, the probability of her passing and not repeating a class is higher. This argument can also be defended by the results obtained from location, where it has been proven that girls from rural areas have a higher chance of repeating a class compared to those in urban settlements.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed results obtained from the findings of the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success. To achieve this, the study obtained household data through the questionnaire method. The results were obtained through different steps following the set empirical objectives.

The first step was a description of the demographics, which helps us to be acquainted with the population involved in the study and their household characteristics, for example family size, gender of head of household, employment status and many more. The majority of the population was from the rural areas, as discussed earlier. The Zomba district comprises two settlements, the rural and urban areas, but most of the people reside in the rural areas. The next step was a discussion of results obtained from a chi square and cross tabulation between girls and socio-economic factors that mainly contribute to young females school participation and success. The results showed that in most circumstances girls were always behind boys, for example, results obtained from dropout and repetition rates

showed that more girls either repeated a class or dropped out with reasons like pregnancy, lack of clothing and child labour. The most prominent one was pregnancy with almost a 40 percent rate amongst the total girl population and when compared between rural and urban the results showed that more rural area girls dropped out of school because of pregnancy than urban area girls.

The third step was a discussion of results obtained from parental perception of girl education. As it has been discussed in the literature section the mandate of educating a girl child lies in the hands of the parents, hence if the parents have negative perceptions towards the success of the girl child through schooling then it becomes a big problem. In this chapter, a discussion was conducted on what parents feel about girl education and if in any circumstance, they would accept their girl drops out of school. The results showed that most parents, especially in the rural areas, did not regard girl education as important, that is why we find most of the girls not able to complete their education.

The last part was a discussion of the results obtained from the regression on girls' school participation, where participation was measured in terms of dropout or not. The results obtained from the regression were similar to the results from the cross tabulations. The regression showed that most of the girls dropped out of school because of socio-economic characteristics like income of the household head, location of the household, age of child, distances to school and to the nearest water point. The second regression addressed the issue of success, where repeat and not repeat were used as a measure of girl success. The results showed that approximately 69 percent of the girls from the total sample repeated a class and that some of the contributing factors were age of child, distance to the nearest water point, primary and income. The next chapter discusses the overall results of girl education participation and success in Zomba districts, but also some of the suggested recommendations on how girl education participation in Malawi can be improved.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship that exists between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in a Malawi district called Zomba. The issue of girl education has received so much attention for the past decade, yet there have been reports from different sources of high girl school dropout rates, especially amongst girls in the country. This problem, though, is not only a common phenomenon in Malawi, but also in most developing countries. This study, therefore, documented some of the theoretical socio-economic factors that hinder girl education as well as some of the benefits that accrue after educating a girl child, as well as the empirical findings about girl child education in Malawi. The study was set in a way that a general overview of girl education was established at global level and later to national level.

Theoretically, the study intended to examine the following objectives:

- Review the literature on the trends of young female education in sub-Saharan Africa and in Malawi
- Review theoretically the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and young female education participation and success in Malawi
- Review the literature on cultural practices and gender biases that hinder young female education participation and success in sub-Saharan Africa and Malawi
- Document the economic benefits of young female education
- Review gender disparities in education in Malawi

The study further examined the empirical objectives, which were hypothesised from the theoretical literature. The empirical objectives were analysed using data that was collected from selected parts of Zomba district. This chapter, therefore, consists of a summary of the study presented as follows. Section 5.2 presents a brief conclusion on the theoretical foundation of the study and Section 5.3 highlights the methodology and empirical findings of the study. The summarised conclusion of the study is presented in Section 5.4 and Section 5.5 includes some of the

recommendations that can be considered in an attempt to help solve the problems of girl child education.

6.2 THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY

The majority of girls worldwide are faced with many obstacles as far as educational matters are concerned; hence, the issue of girl education has received much attention around the globe. Education is regarded as a human right, therefore, it is mandatory that every child should receive the best and highest education qualification in order to be able to better themselves as well as help development in their countries. Despite many efforts rendered to improve girl education access and participation, there are many reports of girl dropouts due to many contributing factors, amongst them are socio-economic, socio-culture and school-related factors, which have been documented in the literature. The theoretical discussion was reviewed in an attempt to address the set theoretical objectives mentioned above.

The first objective was reviewed by addressing some of the trends of girl education around the world, where it was noted that gender inequality exists in education worldwide, with more boys than girls being given priority as far as education is concerned. The existence of such high inequality in education was established as a common phenomenon amongst developing countries. It was pointed out that most developed countries have actually attained 100 percent gender equality but the problem rests in developing countries, particularly those in the sub-Saharan region like Malawi, Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia and Uganda. A few countries in this region have, and some almost have, an equal gender participation in education. The reason given was the abolishing of the school fees policy, with the resultant increase in enrolment rates, most particularly girls.

In an attempt to address theoretical objectives 2 and 3, the chapter first highlighted poverty as one of the main contributing factors, the effects of which bring a deleterious impact on almost all aspects of households, especially in developing countries. It was noticed that due to poverty, most households cannot meet all school-related expenses and in situations where the household has both boys and girls of school-going age, the preference is given to the boys. When it comes to house chores, girls do more work than boys like helping around the home and taking

care of younger siblings, at some point girls are told to stay home while parents go out to work; in such cases most girls either repeat classes or even drop out. This argument was supported by the socio-culture factor, where it was mentioned that most developing countries are embedded in extreme cultural beliefs, the first one being that of gender favouritism, where boys are regarded as more significant compared to girls. Another argument highlighted on cultural norms was that of initiation ceremonies, which girls have to attend after reaching puberty. It was noticed that a substantial amount of the literature has argued this as being a common norm in most African cultures, and that most households, particularly those in the rural areas, support this norm. The effects of such ceremonies were highlighted as contributing negatively to girl school participation and success. In most circumstances such ceremonies take place during school days hence girls skip classes, which contributes to their failure, but also girls that go through such ceremonies do not regard schooling as important as their mindset is switched to marriage because of the traditions taught during these ceremonies; hence, this results in the dropout of the student.

Another important factor mentioned is school-related, where issues like distance to school, safety and behavior patterns of schools and teacher's attitude towards girls' education were highlighted. For example, the issue of distance to schools was stressed to be more common in rural settlements and parents get discouraged from sending their girls to school because of safety reasons. Some of the factors regarded as school-related could also be regarded as household factors because if such households had enough resources they could find ways of avoiding certain problems. Other hindering factors not mentioned include child labour amongst girls, and teen pregnancies. The summary was that of parental perceptions towards girl education, which is more related to cultural beliefs where most parents feel girl education is not important because girls are seen as future homemakers and not bread winners. The mentioned factors are evident to most developing countries, in particular those in the sub-Saharan region, and are very common in Malawi.

After analysing the factors affecting girl education, the chapter highlighted some of the benefits that accrue in educating a girl child. This was in an attempt to address the fourth theoretical objective. As discussed, education is regarded as a right,

hence every child, boy or girl, should have an equal right to education. Nevertheless, it has been documented that the benefits that accrue in educating a girl child are more profound compared to boys. Such benefits can be seen in the girl as an individual, the society she lives in and the nation as well. The benefits were summarised as economic and social benefits, where the economic benefits included mechanisms of reducing poverty and enhancing economic development in a country. The social benefits include that of intergenerational benefits, whereby an educated girl marries later, has fewer children, knows when to immunise them and seek medical attention for them, thereby reducing infant deaths. An educated woman is more likely to send her children to school.

The last theoretical objective was addressed by reviewing the education system of Malawi, where issues of free primary education and the benefits that accrued were discussed. Later, a review of gender and education in the country was highlighted. Secondary data on the trends of education in Malawi were sourced from different educational websites, especially from the government sector, which helped in the discussion of what is at stake on issues of girl education in Malawi. The general evidence showed that girl education in Malawi still needs some improvements, despite the introduction of free primary education, which resulted in an increase in enrolment rates especially for girls, and the repetition and dropout rates for girls are enormously high, especially in the higher classes, which leads to a very low transition rate to secondary school.

6.3 THE METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The aim of the study was to establish the relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl education, using the set empirical objectives stated earlier. Chapter 4 discussed the results in line with empirical objectives, whereby the first two objectives were addressed by the descriptive and cross tabulations and the last two objectives addressed by two binary logistic regressions.

In order to address the empirical objectives for the study, a household survey data were collected using a questionnaire from a sampled population of Zomba district. A total of 327 households with children between ages seven to 20 were interviewed

from rural and urban settlements and the average size of the sampled households was calculated at 6.2 people per household. The description based on the gender of the household head showed that male-headed households were higher than female household by 54 percent. And that the majority of those households had both mother and father. Zomba district has more females than males and a large population comprises of youth 18 years and below (NSO, 2008). From the sampled population, 64 percent were from the rural settlement and only 36 percent from the urban. Zomba district has the majority 87 percent in the rural areas and only 13 percent in the urban areas. Most of the people in the rural areas are very poor. The employment status of the sampled population showed that 58 percent were employed informally, 33 percent employed and 8 percent unemployed.

The population of children in the study was 74 percent females and 23 percent males with 23 percent of the total sample of girls not in school, 76 percent were in school, 94 percent of the total population of boys were in school, which means that even though the sample has less boys than girls, more of the boys were actually in school as compared to girls. Therefore, there is a gender bias in education with more boys in school compared to girls. This could also signify that that there is a gender bias by parents of whom they send to school. From girls that were in school 67 percent ever repeated a class as compared to only 32 percent boys signifying that even though the school participation amongst girls was seemingly high, the success would be a questionable aspect because a lot more girls repeat classes. This could be because of the fact that girls are given more house chores compared to boys.

A further analysis was conducted on the parental perceptions on girl education. Most of the parents responded that girl education was important, but when compared with boys, education of the latter seems to be more important. The general overview of parental perception on girl education shows that parents viewed boys education as more important compared to girls education, hence they could allow a girl child to drop out of school for reasons like marriage and work, which they felt could be of more benefit to them than education. The majority of parents with such perceptions were from the rural areas.

In an attempt to address the last two empirical objectives, two regression models were used. The first regression model was for school attendance used to investigate the factors that are significant in determining the probability of whether a girl child will be in school or not. A binary logistic regression was used having in school and not in school as dependent variables and location age of child, age of household head, income, distance to primary, secondary school and nearest water point were the independent variables. Results showed that girls from rural areas have a higher probability of dropping out of school and that the older the child in primary school, the more likely she is to drop out of school. The results also showed that girls that have older guardians are more likely to drop out of school, but also the distances to school and water point impacted girls' ability of staying in school. Income also showed that families with lower income have a higher probability of their girl child dropping out of school.

The second regression model was that of success, where class repetition was used as a measure of success, to determine whether those that never repeated a class are considered successful and those that repeated a class are not successful as a dependent variable and age of child, location and income of household as independent variables. Results showed that girls from rural areas had a higher probability of repeating classes hence may not be successful in schooling. Income of household heads impacted the success of girl child in education as girls from households with lesser income had a higher probability of repeating a class, hence there is a significant relationship between income of household and the success of girl education in terms of repeating a class or not. Overall results indicate that there exists a relationship between girl's education and household socio economic characteristics.

6.4 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to determine if there exists a relationship between household socio-economic characteristics and girl education participation and success in one of the poor district in Malawi (Zomba). The essence for the formulation of the title, the objectives and the methodology used was on the basis that Malawi as a country has been faced with the problem of girl education, a problem that was seemingly resolved with the abolishment of school fees in 1984, and seems to have resurfaced. EMIS (2014) reports girl school drop outs and repetition as a major problem the country is facing, they reported that most times girls drop out of school because of teen pregnancy, which in most cases is because most parents are not able to provide the required needs for a girl child. Other factors like cultural beliefs, girl child labour, parental perceptions of boy favoring in terms of who should get educated have been some of the profound reasons why girls are not able to succeed in school. Such reports are not only evident in Malawi but also in other countries in the sub-Saharan region.

The study had a sample of 327 households with school-aged children. The sample showed that there were more school going-age girls than there were boys, but the proportion of the girls in school was lower than that of boys. This shows that there exists a gender bias in terms of education. Results also show that more of girls than boys repeated a class. When segregated by location, more girls from rural areas repeated a class or dropped out of school. Among the reasons given by those who dropped out of school was pregnancy. The results found in the study are in line with what has been discussed in the literature of Malawi on the trend in girl education.

Another important point factored in this study was that of parental perception on girl education. It was discussed in the literature that if parents have a negative perspective of the importance of girl education, it becomes very difficult for their girl child to be educated. The results on the parental perceptions of girl education show that most parents, especially amongst the rural areas, do not regard girl education as important. Overall, from the sampled areas on which the study was conducted,

girls' education, especially in the rural areas, faces many obstacles that need so much attention to be mitigated.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

With so much being said about issues of girl education and some of the problems girls face that hinder their participation and success, the government of Malawi has, over the years, tried to eradicate this problem. From the analysis conducted in this study, it seems there is still a need for the government to put in more effort to deal with this problem.

Amongst the many programs put in place to solve the girl child education problems in Malawi, this study recommends the following that the government, in collaboration with the non-governmental organisation that deal with girls education in Malawi could also look into,

- The Government should continue to explore other ways of reducing the problems faced by girls in schools. There is a need to educate parents, especially those in the rural areas, about the importance of girls' education. This could be done through village-by-village campaigns.
- Government should also look into some of the cultures practised in different communities and maybe set by-laws stopping girls from attending, for example initiation ceremonies during school days. Over the years, several non-governmental organisations have been formed in Malawi that assists girls to attend school; some even give out scholarships to the disadvantaged. Despite such steps, some parents still feel culture should take precedence over education, especially for girls. Therefore, it is important to educate such parents on how culture could also be accommodated in girls' formal education.
- Policy-makers should revisit the re-admission policy and access information on how many of those that go back to school actually cope with friends, and highlight some of the problems they face, the mockery they endure from either their friends or even teachers, and maybe implement by-laws of discrimination against girls violence in schools, and set very tough punishments for those who violate the laws.

- Government should also build more schools, especially in rural areas, so that the distances from home to schools should not be vast, but also increase the intake of female teachers to act as role models for girls still in school.

The mandate to reduce problems girls face in education does not depend on government alone but also citizens of the country. It should be every woman's burden who has benefited from education or who can afford to help some other girl out there who is having difficulties in education. In the end, this could assist in empowering young girls and reduce the gender disparities in education.

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ANNEXURE: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire #		Date	
House Number		Interviewer	

Please note that the Head of the household should preferably answer the questionnaire

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION				
1	What is the position of the respondent in the Household?	Head (1)	Spouse (2)	
2	Gender of the head of the household	Male (0)	Female (1)	
3	Record one main material used for the roof of the dwelling			
	Iron sheets	Tiles	Thatching	Plastic
	1	2	3	4
4	How many people stay permanently on the site			
5	What language do you mostly speak at home?			
	1 Chichewa	2 English	3 Lomwe	4 Sena
	6 Tumbuka	7 Other: _____		
6	How long have you (respondent) stayed in this area (years)			

B HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION AND HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION																		
<i>Please provide the following information:</i>																		
1	Number of people in the household																	
		Father	Mother	1 st child	2 nd Child	3 rd child	4 th child	5 th child	6 th child	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th					
2	Age																	
3	Gender (1 female, 0 male)																	
4	Marital status (1 married) (2 non married)																	
5	Child In school or not (1 in school) (2 not)																	
6	If in school what Grade?																	
7	Reason if child not in school																	
8	If dropped out of school at what grade?																	
9	Have you ever repeated a class? (1 yes 2 No)																	
10	If yes how many times																	
11	Employment Status of head of household						1 Informal activity			2 Employed		3 Unemployed						
12	Number of years schooling of Head of Household		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Diploma	14 Degree	15 Post Grad
13	Number of years schooling of Spouse		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13 Diploma	14 Degree	15 Post Grad

14	Distance to the nearest primary school			
15	Distance to the nearest secondary school			
16	Distance to the nearest water point			
17	Means of transport to school	1 walk	2 use car/taxi	3 Bicycle
18	If walk for how long	1 PRIMARY	2 SECONDARY	
19	Have you ever heard of any incident of a girl being attacked on the way to school	1 Yes		2 No

C PERCEPTIONS OF GIRL EDUCATION							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
1	Would you say that girl education is important	1	2	3	4	5	
2	If you had a boy and girl would you prefer the boy getting better education than the girl?	1	2	3	4	5	
3	Would you accept your daughter to drop out of school to get married?	1	2	3	4	5	
4	If your daughter told you she wants to drop out of school to get a job would you allow her	1	2	3	4	5	
5	If your daughter fell pregnant would you chase her out to get married to the person who got her pregnant?	1	2	3	4	5	
6	Do you desire that your daughter attains the highest education?	1	2	3	4	5	
7	Would you say girls are getting married at a young age in your area?	1	2	3	4	5	
8	Would you say that girls education is equally important as boys education	1	2	3	4	5	
9	If a man with a lot of money asked to marry you 15 year old girl would you accept	1	2	3	4	5	

D PERCEPTIONS OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY IN GIRLS							
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
1	Would you say girls who resort to prostitution come from poor families?	1	2	3	4	5	
2	Would you say that girls from poor families are likely to get pregnant at a tender age as compared to their well off counterparts?	1	2	3	4	5	
3	Would you say that girls from poor families are likely to perform poorly at school as compared to their well off counterparts	1	2	3	4	5	
4	Would you say that girls from poor families lack ambition?	1	2	3	4	5	
5	Would you say that girls from poor families are unable to socialize and are prone to susceptible to social exclusion in this area?	1	2	3	4	5	
6	Would you say that girls from poor families have poor health outcomes compared from well off families?	1	2	3	4	5	
7	Would you say that girls from poor families marry early because of poverty	1	2	3	4	5	

E	INCOME (Take home pay per month of all members of household) MK.....	
1	Wages/salaries (Formal) for the whole household estimate	MK
2	Help (family/relatives/help in kind) for the whole household estimate	MK
3	Informal activities for the whole household estimate	MK
4	Other (Specify) for the whole household estimate	MK

F	HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE	
<i>How does your household spend their income per month, as indicated above?</i>		
	ITEM	KWACHAS per month
1	Housing	
2	Water.	
3	Energy	
	Electricity	
	Firewood	
	Charcoal	
	Paraffin	
4	Food	
5	Soap	
6	Cigarettes & Tobacco	
7	Beer, wine & spirits	
8	Transport	
9	Clothing	
10	Furniture	
11	School	
12	Entertainment (Movies etc)	
13	Medical Expenses	
14	Gambling	
15	Savings	
16	Housekeeping Services (e.g. Garden)	
17	Communication (Cell and Telephone)	
18	Loan repayments	
19	Other: Specify	

G	Household Food Expenditure	
How much do you spend on the following items.		
Maize Meal	MK	
Potatoes	MK	
Vegetables	MK	
Fruits	MK	
Meat including chicken	MK	
Eggs	MK	
Fish	MK	
Milk and Milk products	MK	
Salt	MK	

Oils/Fats	MK	
Sugar	MK	
Other not mentioned above	MK	

H	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS)			
	<i>(rarely: once or twice; sometimes: 3 to 10 times; Often: more than 10X in the last 4 weeks)</i>			
1	In the past four weeks, did you worry that your household would not have enough food? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q2)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
1a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
2	In the past four weeks, were you or any household member not able to eat the kinds of foods you preferred because of a lack of resources? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q3)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
2a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
3	In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a limited variety of foods due to a lack of resources? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q4)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
3a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
4	In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat some foods that you really did not want to eat because of a lack of resources to obtain other types of food <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q5)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
4a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
5	In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed because there was not enough food? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q6)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
5a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
6	In the past four weeks, did you or any other household member have to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q7)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
6a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
7	In the past four weeks, was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your household because of lack of resources to get food? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q8)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
7a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
8	In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food? <i>(if answer is No, skip to Q9)</i>		1: Yes	0: No
8a	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often
9	In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go a whole day and night without eating anything because there was not enough food?		1: Yes	0: No
9	How often did this happen?	1: Rarely	2: Sometimes	3: Often

I	POVERTY PERCEPTIONS: Poor people are poor because [probe for strength of opinion]					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	They lack the ability to manage money.	1	2	3	4	5
2	They waste their money on inappropriate items.	1	2	3	4	5
3	They do not actively seek to improve their lives.	1	2	3	4	5
4	They are exploited by rich people.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The society lacks social justice.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Distribution of wealth in the society is uneven.	1	2	3	4	5
7	They lack opportunities due to the fact that they live in poor families.	1	2	3	4	5
8	They live in places where there are not many opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5
9	They have bad fate.	1	2	3	4	5
10	They lack luck.	1	2	3	4	5
11	They have encountered misfortunes.	1	2	3	4	5

12	They are not motivated because of welfare	1	2	3	4	5	
13	They are born inferior	1	2	3	4	5	