Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop Out from Primary Schools, in Nkhata-Bay South District, Malawi

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Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop Out from Primary Schools, in Nkhata-Bay South District, Malawi

by

Grace Chawanangwa Gondwe

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
St. Cloud State University
in partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science in Educational Administration and Leadership

May, 2016.

Thesis Committee:
Frances Kayona, Chairperson
John Eller
Cary Martin
Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop Out from Primary Schools, in Nkhata-Bay South District, Malawi

Grace C. Gondwe

The problem of the study was to identify factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary schools, in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi. The research objectives sought to establish the school related factors and out of school factors influencing rural female drop out.

To generate and refine the study ideas literature review was essential. The reviewed literature includes different studies focusing on female dropout. The study was based on two theories of motivation: Bernard Weiner’s attribution theory and Abraham Maslow’s theory on human motivation.

The study adopted qualitative research design with some basic descriptive results in the form of frequency counts. The target population was rural female primary school dropouts and the study involved thirteen participants. Purposeful sampling and snowballing sampling were used to select the participants for the study.

The instrument used to collect data was semi-structured interviews which was done through Skype technology. For refinement and validation, the interview protocol was piloted on five rural primary school dropouts from a different area with similar characteristics as the study area.

The study data was analyzed by coding and grouping the emerging themes. The researcher translated all data into English from Chichewa, which was the language used during data collection.

The study revealed the following school related factors that influenced dropping out; poor academic performance, grade repetition, overcrowded classroom and teacher’s absenteeism.
Pupils’ own lack of interest in school, lack of financial support due to poverty, pregnancy, early marriage and taking care of sick relatives were out of school factors that the study established.
Dedication
I dedicate this project to my beloved late mum, Modester Nyirenda. I wish you had lived longer
to reap the fruits of your sweat. Continue Resting In Peace.
Acknowledgements

First of all, I give tribute and thank GOD for making all good things happen in my life. My sincere acknowledgement goes to my advisor, Frances Kayona, for her exceptional guidance and vital comments during the whole research period. Thank you, Frances for your inspiration and advice throughout my study. Your guidance and open mindedness has taught me a lot. YOU ARE THE BEST EVER.

My special thanks goes to my committee members John Eller and Cary Martin. I am grateful for the valuable feedbacks and contributions.

I would like to thank FULBRIGHT through the IIE, for awarding me a scholarship that funded my studies.

I also wish to thank all the participants for their cooperation and participation in the study. Deep appreciation goes to my family and friends for their great assistance, love and encouragement during my study.
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Chapter I: Introduction

Access to basic education lies at the heart of development. “Lack of education is both a part of the definition of poverty and a means for its diminution” (Lewin, 2007, p.2). “Education is the driving force behind any strong economy and a prerequisite for social and economic growth. It creates opportunities and provides societies with a better educated and skilled workforce which is necessary for stimulating development” (Govender & Steve, 2004, p. i). Education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty, give people opportunity to improve their lives and raise their voice, promotes harmonious co-existence, improve health, productivity and foster participation in civil society (United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2005). Mac-William and Kwamena-Poh (1975) echoes that the main purpose of education whether formal or informal is to produce people who will be useful members of society. Hence, educational attainment has long been at the forefront of development policies (Westberg, 2010).

According to Arko (2013) education for both males and females is necessary for sustainable development. There is a compelling case, therefore, for investing in both sexes to promote economic growth and more efficient use of public resources. With the realization that primary schooling is important for the achievement of national development, many governments have made access to primary education a basic human right (Morara & Chemwei, 2013). Most countries in Africa have made this possible through the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE). However, many nations have not achieved UPE with an estimated 101 million children being left out of school (UNESCO, 2007). Govender and Steve (2004) concur that fewer than half of African children get a chance to finish primary school. Among the approximately
500 million children who start primary school in Africa more than 100 million, two thirds of which are female, dropouts before reaching the fourth year of primary school (Adadevo, 1999). In other words there is high female dropout in primary schools in Africa. In the view of Mamudu (1992), increasing girls’ participation in education has been identified as one of the most significant development challenges facing schools in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In 1994, Malawi became the first country in Sub-Saharan Africa to eliminate primary school fees in order to improve access to schooling for all children, particularly girls and the rural poor (Grant, 2012). The gains of increased primary school access in Malawi have been diminished by the fact that significant number of those enrolled in primary education dropout of the system. “Out of every 100 children entering primary school, only forty-six complete Standard eight” (Wamba & Mgomezulu, 2014, p. 327). The World Bank (2010) points to the fact that Malawi has not achieved UPE due to a high rate of female dropout especially in rural areas. It is reported that Malawi has one of the highest school dropout rates in Southern Africa with fifteen percent of girls (three in every twenty) and twelve percent of boys (three in every twenty-five), dropping out between standard five and eight of primary school (Education Statistics, 2010). It is for this reason that this study was carried out to examine factors influencing female pupils’ drop out from primary schools.

The Education System of Malawi

The education system in Malawi follows an 8-4-4 pattern comprising primary, secondary and tertiary. In Malawi grade levels in primary schools are known as standard, in secondary schools grade levels are called form and at the tertiary level they use year. Therefore, in this study a standard will be used to refer to a grade. Primary education lasts eight years and is divided into three sections comprising infant (Standard 1 and 2), junior (standards 3 and 4) and
senior (Standards 5, 6, 7 and 8). Secondary education lasts four years and includes two cycles each lasting two years. Secondary education is also divided into two sections consisting of junior (Form 1 and 2) and senior (Form 3 and 4). The duration of tertiary varies and oscillates between two and four years. This level includes technical and vocational education, primary teacher training institutions and university education.

Public examinations are used to select students to proceed from one level to the next in the education system. The Malawi National Examination Board (MANEB) handles these examinations. In standard eight, students sit for the Primary School Leaving Certificate of Education (PSLCE) examination while in Form two, they sit for Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) examination and the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) in Form four. The PSLCE examination is used for selection into secondary school. In order to proceed into tertiary education, the students have to pass the MSCE examinations.

The official entry age into primary school level of education is six years though variations appear (Kadzamira & Rose, 2001). It is encouraged by the government to teach the first classes (Standard 1-4) in the local language. However, English and Chichewa are taught as a subject in these Standards and in the highest classes (from Standard 5 onwards) English is the language of instruction (Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) and the Malawi Nation Commission for UNESCO, 2004).
Table 1

Primary/Secondary level school system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Standard/ Form</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>6 – 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
<td>8 – 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>5 – 8</td>
<td>10 – 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>1 – 2</td>
<td>14 – 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
<td>16 – 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Statistics, 2004

In Malawi females tend to be under-represented at the secondary and tertiary education level. This is due to high female dropout at primary level especially in rural areas (Wamba & Mgomezulu, 2014). It is, therefore, why this study aimed at exploring factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary schools in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine factors influencing young Malawian females between the ages of six to eighteen to drop out of primary school in rural areas. Specifically, this study aimed at identifying school related factors and out of school factors. The study adopted a qualitative study design. A qualitative study is a research design with emphasis in understanding the lived experiences and to reflect on, and interpret, the understandings and shared meanings of people’s worlds and social realities (Haller & Kleine, 2001). Hence a
qualitative study design had been considered the most appropriate design which would lead to the achievements of the intended purposes of the study. For this study, interview data was collected using visual digital technology such as Skype and was collected during spring 2016. Data was collected from thirteen Malawian females who were identified as dropouts. The collected data was coded into patterns and themes related to in-school and out of school factors that result in female students leaving primary school.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study sought to establish factors that contributed to rural female pupils drop out in primary schools in Nkhata-Bay south, Malawi and made recommendations as to how the problem can be reduced.

Education of the female child is widely acknowledge as being a powerful vehicle for self-advancement and the fulfilment of developmental outcomes for present and future generations of children (Maluwa-Banda & Kholowa, 2002). In an attempt to achieve this, and in response to the Jomtien international convention which recognizes education as a necessity and fundamental human right, in 1994 Malawi introduced Free Primary Education (FPE). Malawi like other African Countries had made a commitment to expand educational opportunities for children by 2015. The major drawback in attaining education for all is the rising cases of school drop-out especially among females. Illiteracy levels in Malawi are higher among women and also more girls drop out of school as compared to boys. It is reported that only 67.3 percent of women are literate versus 76.5 percent for men (World Bank Report, 2010). In fact, Malawi is ranked as one of the countries in the southern African region with the highest female dropout rates (Milner et al., 2001).
This study recognizes rural Malawi’s challenges with female school dropouts at the primary level. Due to this, the research aimed at learning about the main challenges hindering effective female education attainment in rural Malawi.

According to Hunt (2008) there are fewer studies around dropouts from schools than expected, given the scale of the problem and its crucial relationship to Education For All (EFA). In many of the studies which exist, drop out has not been given the prominence it deserve, rather it is embedded within discussion of other subjects. Munthali (2004) concurs that more research needs to be done in order to address questions of why girls are not being enrolled or retained in schools despite the move towards EFA. Therefore, this study was undertaken to aid in the body of research on Malawi primary school female dropout.

The findings and recommendations of the study were expected to help the Ministry of Education in Malawi to develop and implement policies that can reduce girls’ primary school dropout in rural areas. The study may also be beneficial to education officers, parents, teachers and all stakeholders in education as it will guide them in their work.

**Objective of the Study**

This study contained the following objectives:

1. Review research and literature on factors influencing female drop out of school.
2. Seek permission to interview minors from parents and St Cloud State University.
3. Make sure Skype technology is available to selected participants.
4. Establish a process to identify women who have dropped out.
5. Publish the results and recommendations.

**Research Questions**

This study was directed by the following questions:
1. What school-related factors influence girls drop out in rural primary school in Nkhata Bay south in Malawi?

2. What out of school factors influence girls drop out in rural primary school in Nkhata Bay south in Malawi?

**Assumptions of the Study**

The assumptions of this study were the following:

1. Both in-school related and out-of-school related factors result in female dropping out of primary school in rural areas.

2. Participants will to the best of their ability, respond to the interview questions in an honest and accurate manner.

**Delimitations of the Study**

1. Only Nkhata Bay south was used as a study area.

2. This study used Skype interview to collect data.

3. Only female adolescent were part of the study, no males or adults.

4. Only public school dropouts were used in this study.

**Human Subject Approval**

In effort to ensure that the rights and welfare of subjects participating in this study were adequately protected, all the requirements set forth by the St. Cloud State University Institutional Review Board were strictly adhered to. This study was conducted in an educational setting involving typical education practice.

**Definition of Terms**

1. Dropout: a pupil who leaves school before completing a given education cycle and without the school’s consent (Mawere, 2012).
2. Primary School Dropout: a pupil who leaves school before completing standard 8 and without the school’s consent.

3. Dropout rate: The proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given year who are no longer enrolled in the following school year. This measures the phenomenon of pupils from a cohort leaving school without completion.

4. Net Enrolment Rate: Enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

5. Gross Enrolment Rate: Total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year.

6. Promotion rate: The proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given school year who studies in the next grade in the following school year. This measures the performance of the education system in promoting pupils from a cohort from grade to grade, and its effect on the internal efficiency of educational system.

7. Repetition rate: The proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who studies in the same grade in the following year.

8. Completion rate: The ratio of the total number of students successfully completing (or graduating from) the last year of primary school in a given year to the total number of children of official graduation age in the population.

9. Tertiary level: The third-stage of learning that is done after graduating from high school or entering the workplace.
Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter reviews studies which have been carried out and literature which has been written on the issue of school drop outs. It takes into account factors that plays a role in drop out. The chapter has also described the theoretical framework of the study.

Review of Literature

The essence of this study was concerned with female drop out in rural primary schools in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi. This study was designed to determine the factors influencing female dropping out in rural primary schools in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi. The main focus was on the school related factors and out of school factors. The review process began by conducting searches on the internet using a variety of search engines. Searches using the Library database followed. This search revealed a number of references especially empirical journal articles. The review of literature includes different studies focusing on dropout for instance: Causes of female dropout in junior high school in Kassenanankana west district of upper east region, Ghana, the education of girls in Malawi: access and retention, causes and effect, drop out among pupils in rural primary schools in Kenya and dropping out from school: A cross country review of literature. Most of the literature used in this study are from peer reviewed empirical journals. Both studies carried out in Malawi and other African countries will be used as examples in this literature. Although there are differences between different African countries, a number of similarities can be found, therefore by using the research carried out in these countries, I can provide greater insight into the female primary school dropout situation in Malawi. One of the limitation of the literature is that few references were found on factors influencing female drop out directly, the researcher ended up using articles on factors influencing dropout in general.
Theoretical Framework

The study is based on Bernard Weiners’ attribution theory and on Abraham Maslow’s theory on human motivation. These theories present the background of the possible reasons for primary school girls to remain in school or drop out.

Attribution Theory

Weiner’s attribution theory has been a major theory of motivation for over 30 years (Eccles & Wigfield, 2001). This theory deals with four major perceived causes of success and failure in achievement situations. Snowman and Beihler (2012) define an attribution as an inference that individuals make about the causes of behavior. O’ Neil (2012) suggest that people generate these causes or explanations to make sense of their world. Therefore, female primary school pupils’ attributions can serve as a guide to their expectations for future success or failure thus leading to either retention or school dropout.

According to Woolfolk (2006) “students may attempt to explain their successes or failures by focusing on ability, effort, mood, knowledge, luck, help, interest or clarity of instruction” (p. 319). On the other hand, O’Neil (2012) argues that Weiner’s theory deals with four major perceived causes of success and failure which are ability, effort, task difficult and luck. These attributions are classified into three dimensions which are: locus of causality, stability and controllability (Snowman & Bieler, 2012; Eccles & Wigfield, 2001). Locus of control also known as locus of causality refers to the origin of the causes. The origin may be within or outside the person (O’Neil, 2012). Effort and ability originate within the person, so they are internal causes. Primary school learners who attribute their success or failure to either of these two causes are said to be internally oriented. Luck and task difficulty originate from outside the person, therefore they are typical external causes. Primary school learners who persist
to attribute their success or failure to either of these two causes are said to be externally oriented hence the causes of school dropout can be both internally and externally oriented. Stability is another dimension of causal attributes.

According to Hayes (2008) stability distinguishes between causes which are temporary and fluctuating such as mood or effort and causes which are stable and enduring such as talent and ability. A cause for success or failure which persists across time is stable while a cause which is momentary is unstable. Most learners who drop out of school attribute their success or failure to ability.

Assumptions on ability are usually based on past experiences of the children (Trevors et al., 2003). O’Neil (2012) speculates that when students attribute failure to lack of ability, they are likely to give up leading to school dropout. Thus an individual who views failure as due to lack of ability will hold less hope for doing better in the future. This is common among pupils from poor backgrounds who believe that they are not capable because they are poor leading to learned helplessness. In this view, students who question their own ability pose a serious challenge since their history of failure and feelings of incompetence weaken motivation and learning leading to dropout.

**Human Motivation Theory**

Maslow (1943) contends that people have tendencies towards and needs for certain things. Maslow discusses that if one was both hungry and thirsty, he would try to address the thirst first as the most immediate need. Maslow believes that human needs are arranged in a hierarchy and that higher needs emerge only after lower level needs have been somewhat satisfied. The first level of the hierarchy contains the physiological needs (hunger, sex, food, rest, and thirst). The need for safety and security (protection, stability, freedom from fear and chaos),
reside on the second level. The need for love and belonging (intimacy, attention and affiliation with group), occupy the third level. The fourth level of the hierarchy is location of self-esteem needs (consistent high view of self and respect for the esteem of others). On the highest level of the hierarch is the self-actualization needs (achieving the highest personal potential and fulfillment).

Figure 1

*Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs*

At the base of the hierarchy of need are the physiological needs essential for survival of human life. These are supposed to be socio-economic set up or rural areas tend to deprive children of these basic needs and in such a situation the girl child is more disadvantaged than the boy child (Hunt, 2008). This is because of the preferences accorded to the boy child.
The theory of human motivation may be a reasonable explanation for the female enrolment and dropout dilemma in primary schools in Malawi as people have to make choices on whether to send their children to school or not, among other social pressing needs.

**Dropout defined**

Dropout is an issue in educational systems that has aroused the interest of many professional academicians and the public in general. Dropout is often used in public schools to refer to those students that leave school without the school’s consent either to another school or “sit” at home, a number of interpretations to the term have been attached (Mawere, 2012). Loxley (1985) define dropouts as “pupils who leave school before the final year of the educational cycle in which they are enrolled, which could be primary, ordinary or advanced level, or even college or university level” (p. 12). Chivore (1986) concurs by defining dropout as “a pupil who ceases to attend school either temporarily or permanently, before completing a given educational cycle” (p. 11). It is also important to put emphasis on the fact that pupils do not only leave school before completing a given educational cycle, but leave without the school’s consent. Mawere (2012) stresses that it is the lack of consent that makes the school difficult to account for the pupil. This study therefore will refer to dropout as a pupil who leaves school before completing a given educational cycle and without the school’s consent.

**Factors Influencing Female Drop Out**

According to Hunt (2008) research suggest that a range of interrelated factors interact to influence how and why children drop out from school. There are both school related and out of school factors resulting in female drop out (Arko 2013). This study will first examine what the literature reveals regarding school related factors and out of school factors resulting in female dropout.
School Related Factors

The school also affects the survival of girls and perpetuates the gender gap in education. Some of the school related factors that influence female dropout are: poor academic performance, grade repetition, over age, poor quality of education, lack of role models and long distance to school.

**Poor academic performance.** Arko (2013) reports that poor academic performance is one of the main factors influencing girls dropping out. Mzuza et al. (2013) concur that there is a strong relationship between poor examination passing rates and dropout rates confirming that girls who fail exams eventually lose interest to continue with school and opt to quit. There is evidence that children with low achievement are more likely than those with higher achievement to drop out (Hunter & May, 2003). Juke (2006) conducted a study on the direct impact of test scores on grade progression in Africa, looking at relationship between achievement and likely school completion:

children were assessed in grade two and their progress through primary school were monitored. Each additional standard deviation (SD) scored in grade two exam resulted in children being 4.8 times as likely to reach grade seven without repeating a year of schooling. according to these estimate, an increase of 0.25 SD in exam scores in grade two would lead to children being 1.48 times as likely to complete grade seven, (Juke, 2006 p. 66).

Bacolod et al. (2005) also in their study on why children work, attend school or stay idle observed that, lower scores on measures of cognitive ability are associated with higher rates of dropout. Pupils with low ability are often the victims of grade repetition, which in most instances does not improve their performance but rather increases their chances of dropping out.

**Grade repetition.** Ampiah et al. (2010) stipulate that grade repetition is a factor associated with drop out. The study by Hunt (2008) found that repetition increased rather than decreasing the risk of dropping out. On the same vain, a study by Ampiah and Adu-Yeboah (2009) found that children who were made to repeat grades with a view of improving
performance ended up dropping out of school. Alexander (2008) adds that holding students back to repeat a grade without changing instructional strategies is ineffective. More evidence is given by the study done by Education Policy and Data Center (2009) in 35 developing countries on grade retention which reports that the achievement of retained students still lags behind that of peers after repeating a grade, making it an ineffective strategy for making students to catch up. In addition, grade repetition greatly increases the likelihood that the student will drop out of school and being held back twice makes dropping out almost certain.

According to Sabates et al. (2010) primary education repetition rates remain very high in some African countries and that many of the children repeating grades leave school before completing primary education. Most of the students who drop out of school in African are more likely to have been retained than students who graduate. Hunt (2008) adds that, grade repetition extends the age range in a particular grade making repeaters over age for that grade level hence increasing their chances of dropping out.

**Over age.** “It is clear that over age children are more likely to drop out towards the end of primary school cycle than children who are in the appropriate age for their grade” (Sabates et al., 2010, p.18). Hunt (2008) concurs that students who drop out tend to be older compared to their grade level peers. Most research evidence show that over-age pupils, above the average age for a grade level, are more likely to drop out (Dimas, 2013).

A study by Lewin (2008) of some Sub-Saharan African countries on the effects of the relationship between age and grade found that there is a correlation between age and grade attended with dropping out. Pupils who were too old for the grade they attended were more likely to drop out of school. According to Little (2008) teaching to different age groups has different requirements in terms of teaching or learning practice and curriculum, hence being over
age in a particular grade level makes the pupil feel out of place. Children tend to enroll in school considerably later than the official starting age of six, this makes them to be over age in a particular grade level putting them at a high risk of dropping out (Kadzamira & Rose, 2003; Chimombo, 2009). Wils (2004) agrees that children who begin schooling beyond the official age of entry are less likely to complete a full cycle of education than those who start at the official age. Late enrollment influence many girls to drop out due to over age (Mzuza et al., 2013). Over age in grade level may influence overcrowding in classroom which results in poor quality of education. Poor quality of education also plays a role in dropout.

**Quality of education.** The quality of education is influenced by inadequate school facilities, overcrowded classrooms and under-qualified teachers. Poor quality of education also plays a role in increasing pressure to drop out (Sabates et al., 2010). Educational quality seems to affect decision making around schooling access and retention in many contexts (Hunt, 2008). In many communities in Malawi, neither parents nor children see a reason to attend school, when pupils do attend school, generally taught in dilapidated school buildings with insufficient toilets (particularly very important as girls get older and start menstruation) or have to sit outside (under a tree) in large groups to be taught by temporary teachers without textbooks (Chimombo, 2005). When schooling experiences consists of limited learning in overcrowded classrooms with insufficient learning materials by under-qualified teachers, this may lead to boredom which eventually influences dropout rates (Alexander, 2008). Due to boredom pupils end up viewing school experience as a worst of time.

Chimombo (2005) reports that in overcrowded classrooms teaches have no time to give individual attention to pupils, let alone mark exercises or homework. This leads to students’ lack of motivation, boredom, a feeling of disengagement and failure to get the necessary foundation,
hence opting for dropping out. Sabates et al. (2010) support the notion that “overcrowded classrooms together with poor quality teaching make the supply of primary schooling less attractive and act to push children at risk of dropping out” (p. 18). He adds that another factor related to poor quality of education in schools which may also result in dropping out is lack of role models in schools.

**Lack of role models in schools.** Munthali (2004) states that girls are discouraged to complete their education due to lack of role models in schools. Female teachers often have an important impact on schooling quality for female pupils (Oxfam, 1999). Schools without or with few female teachers are often less attractive to parents on the ground of safety of female students and also provides fewer role models to motivate towards continued attendance (Hunt, 2008). Not only is the presence of female teachers important to provide girls with role models but also to provide counselling, especially on issues related to puberty. Colclough et. al (2000) in their study found that:

> in schools where there were few or no female teachers, male teachers themselves were aware of the problems girls face when they reach puberty. They noted that they were unable to provide guidance concerning menstruation because girls were shy and they were afraid that girls might take it as sexual provocation. They were conscious however, that girls stopped coming to school when they started menstruating. (p. 21)

In addition to lack of role model, long distance traveled to school may also led to lack of interest in education to both parents and children.

**Distance traveled to school.** Distance to school is an important factor in educational access, particularly for rural populations (Boyle et al., 2002). The greater the distance from home to school, the less likely it is that a girl will attend. Parents are reluctant to send girls to schools which are far from home because girls are considered to be weaker than boys, and unable to expend the energy required to walk to and from school. Parents are also afraid that their daughter
may be subject to sexual harassment on their way to and from school (Maluwa-Banda, 2004; Colclough et al., 2000). Mzuza et al. (2013) noted that due to a long walking distance to school, most girls start school a little later than the official entry age. This makes them to reach puberty before completing their primary school cycle and many girls drop out from school after puberty.

**Out of School Factors**

Poverty, early and forced marriages, pregnancy, parents’ negative attitudes toward girl children education and house chores are some of the non-school related factors that play a significant role in decisions to withdraw girls from school and their own decisions to drop out of school.

**Poverty.** Poverty remains the most common primary and contributory reason for school dropout (Orkin et al., 2014). Hunter and May (2003) call poverty “a plausible explanation of school disruption” (p. 5). Both statistical data and empirical research suggest that children from better off households are more likely to remain in school, whilst those who are poorer are more likely to drop out (Hunt, 2008). Colclough et al. (2000) add that poor households tend to have lower demand for schooling than richer household, “whatever the benefits of schooling,” (p. 25), the costs, for them are more difficult to meet than is the case for richer households. While free primary education appears to be “free” in most African countries, the reality is that it is not free because parents are still responsible for all non-tuition school expenses, including uniforms, exercise books, pens, textbooks, and any other school supplies, which many families find difficult (Morara & Chemwei, 2013; Grant, 2013; Kadzamira & Rose, 2003; Al-Samarria & Zaman, 2000). In Malawi, in some cases boys are able to combine schooling and work by engaging in piece work (*ganyu*) (piece work is a kind of temporary work paid for according to the amount produced for example gardening) to raise money to pay for their school expenses.
making them stand a better chance to remain in school than girls (Kadzamira & Chibwana, 2000). Kadzamira and Rose (2003) stress that Free Primary Education (FPE) has not addressed the problem of poverty. When faced with increase demand of household income, poor parents continuously withdraw their female children from school.

A study by Okumu (1992) based on girl education in Nairobi, reports that poverty had the most devastating impact on girl participation in education. This is due to parents preferring to allocate their limited financial resources to boys’ education which they believe brings more returns. Also due to poverty, parents resort to send girls to do piece work such as gardening and doing small business to earn a living (Mzuza et al., 2013). In addition, in other families girls may substitute for the domestic work of adults in the household to allow them to undertake income-generating activities (Kadzamira & Rose, 2003). Hunt (2008) adds that girls from poorer backgrounds experience pressures to withdraw from school and this tends to increase as they get older, particularly as the opportunity cost of their time increases.

Due to poverty other parents opt to force their children into marriage so that they can be free from taking care of them. Therefore, early and forced marriage may also influence school dropout.

**Early and forced marriage.** Marriage has always been a prevalent cause for school dropout among female (Grant, 2013). Early and forced marriages are a common occurrence in African countries and this affect girls’ education attainment. In Malawi according to the United Nations one of two Malawian girls will be married before her 18th birthday (Human Rights Watch (HRW), 2014). Many Malawian scholars have agreed that early marriage contributes to higher rate of female school drop outs, which affects equal access to education for both male and females (HRW, 2014; Mkandawire et al., 2014; Verheijen, 2014; Archambault, 2011; Tuwor &
Sossou, 2008). Human Right Watch (2014) noted that “children marriage in Malawi stands at thirty-seven percent, which is higher than the regional Sub-Saharan African average” (p. 15).

In order to avoid pregnancy out of wedlock, parents withdraw their children soon after puberty and force them to marry (Mzuza et al., 2013; Chimombo, 2005; Kadzamira & Rose, 2003). Reporting on the study carried out on girls education in Kenya, Siringi (2002) said that girls drop out at the age of twelve-thirteen for early marriages to wealthy men, because their parents fear that if they get old they may not get husbands. On the same vain, the study by Davison (1993) reported parents’ concern that continued schooling might limit girls’ matrimonial chances and that school subjects were not seen as relevant for the skills a young woman needed for married life. In addition, an ILO/IPEC (2004) study highlights the propensity for girls to be excluded or withdrawn from school earlier than boys, “in the belief that, as a girl, she does not need to be educated or indeed should not be too educated in case it scars her marriage potential” (p. 19). Another factor related to early marriage that influence dropout is early unwanted pregnancy.

**Pregnancy.** Various research studies have clearly revealed that one of the major reasons that contribute to the dropout of girls is pregnancy (Maluwa-Banda, 2004). Human Right Watch (2014) explains that reproductive health education is often inadequately taught in Malawi’s school and does not prepare young people with the knowledge to make well-informed choices before becoming sexually active. Parents are also not willing to talk to children about how to protect themselves, often due to taboos. This puts girls at risk of getting early pregnancy due to lack of information. In some cases, some girls may choose to get pregnant and pregnancy is a planned lifestyle choice (Hunt, 2008). In addition, in some rural families in Malawi girls’
pregnancy is viewed as a source of pride especially for mothers, because it reflects the maturity of their daughters and increases their standing in the community (Samati, 2012).

Although many African countries for instance: South Africa, Malawi and Botswana, allow girls who have been pregnant to return to school after giving birth, it appears that many girls are not taking advantage of this. This is partly because parents fear that their daughters will be impregnated again, and also because they face intimidation by fellow pupils (Kadzamira & Chibwana, 2000). A UNICEF (2000) study in Malawi reports that over 50 percent of teen mothers interviewed a year after dropping out of school were not allowed by their parents to go back to school and many of them were forced instead to marry. On the other hand, there might be a reluctance at the school level to girls’ re-entry and “intimidating social context experienced by returners” (Dunne & Leach, 2005 p. 28). Similarly, while policies may allow re-entry, “this information may not be clearly conveyed throughout the system…or communities may continue to adhere to their own cultural norms preventing these girls from attending school” (Kane, 2004, p. 71).

Early pregnancy and early marriages are some of the factors that may play a role in lack of parents’ interest in educating female children. This may influence them to withdraw their female children from school.

**Parents’ negative attitudes towards the education of girls.** Most African countries neglect female education and rather encourage that of boys (Hunt, 2008; Johnson, 2006). The nature of marriage where girls move into the husband’s household, thus bringing fewer perceived benefits to their households also influence parents perceptions that educating a girl child is a waste of resources as she will ultimately leave home for marriage (Hunt, 2008; Morara & Chemwei, 2013; Mawere, 2012). This view is also supported by the findings in a study in Kenya.
where by when parents were asked what they would do if they had to make a choice about who stayed in school, fifty percent indicated that they would withdraw a daughter and twenty-seven percent said they would withdraw sons. To many parents educating boys is a better investment because they tend to see boys’ education bringing greater future economic reward, which is not to be the case with girls whose future is expected to lie in family care and marriage (Boyle et al., 2002; United Nation Development Program, 1999).

Indeed, educating a girl is often seen as a poor investment because the girl will marry and leave home, bringing the benefits of education to the husband’s family rather than to her own, Hunt (2008, p.31).

In addition, according to the study by Colclough et al (2000) in Guinea, parents mentioned that primary schooling was irrelevant to girls’ future role. Furthermore, Parents’ negative attitudes towards female education may influence them to engage their children in household chores rather than sending them to school.

**Household chores.** Household chores is also an active factor leading to female dropout (Hunt, 2008). In many contexts, girls take on a heavier workload within household settings for instance drawing water, fetching firewood, sibling caring and general domestic tasks, where by boys are more unlikely involved (Morara & Chemwei, 2013; Kane, 2004; Canagarahaj & Coulombe, 1997). Rose (2002) stipulates that girls spend approximately one hour per day more than boys working for household. A study by Brock and Cammish (1997) found that girl children frequently drop out of school to look after younger siblings. In addition, some parents send girls to work as house girls for richer African families in cities (Munthali, 2004).

With the prevalent of HIV/AIDS girls are also required to look after sick relatives, and take on roles of childcare and other domestic chores following the death of parent (Kadzamira & Ndalama, 1997). In addition, parents consider engaging girls in household chores as training for
their future roles. This is supported by a study by Colclough et al. (2000) which describe how some parents in Ethiopia claimed that twelve years of schooling would mean their daughters could not perform housework and as a result may not be able to find husbands.
Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter describes the research methods which were employed in this study. The chapter constitutes the following: study area, research design, research sample, data collection procedure, validity and reliability of the study, validation and refinement of research instrument, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Study Area

Malawi, a small land locked country situated in the south-eastern part of the African continent is among the poorest nations of the world (World Bank, 20014). According to the Population Reference Bureau (2013), about ninety-one percent of the population live on less than two dollars a day. In Malawi, education is one of the most important sector often ranked second from agriculture. In fact, schooling is considered to be one of the most important levers for increasing the population living conditions in Malawi. Primary education is the most important of the education system in Malawi because it forms the foundation for knowledge gain into secondary and eventually university education. However, illiteracy levels in Malawi are at higher among women. It is reported that only 67.3 percent of women is literate versus 76.5 percent for men (World Bank Report, 2010). In fact, Malawi is ranked as one of the countries in the southern Africa region with the highest female drop-out rates (Milner et al., 2001).

Nkhata Bay south, is a lakeside district situated in the northern Malawi. Substance farming (Cassava) is the main source of income and food in the area. Fishing is also a big source of income in the area especially for males, but also for female who often dry and sell small fish named usipa. The adult literacy rate in Nkhata Bay south is 74.6 percent for women and 88.3 percent for men, which is higher than the national average of 67.3 percent for women and 76.5 percent for men (Nkhata Bay District Council, 2010). The education system in Nkhata Bay south
also suffers from the issue of high female dropout. According to observation dropout is high along the lake shore in Malawi. Therefore, Nkhata Bay south being one of the areas along the Lake Malawi, made it a suitable study area. In addition, as a former educator in Malawi the researcher have many connections with teachers in Nkhata Bay south. This made it a convenient place since the researcher used those teachers to identify participants for the study. The fact that the researcher shares the same local language used in this area also made it a suitable study area. This assisted the researcher to communicate easily with the participants in their local language.
The following pages 37-38 present tables showing Malawi primary school enrollment rate and Malawi primary school dropout rates. The tables are important in order to give insight of dropout rates among female primary pupils in Malawi.
Table 2
Malawi’s primary school gross enrollment Rate 2011/2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population 6-13 years</th>
<th>Enrolment Standard 1-8</th>
<th>GER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,472,933</td>
<td>1,526,166</td>
<td>2,999,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,524,438</td>
<td>1,575,775</td>
<td>3,100,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,575,847</td>
<td>1,624,714</td>
<td>3,200,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,625,803</td>
<td>1,672,209</td>
<td>3,298,012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Statistics, 2012

Table 2 contains gross enrollment rates which is a total enrollment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year. This rate shows the general level of participation in a given level of education. It indicates the capacity of the education system to enroll students of a particular age group (Education Statistics, 2012).

Table 3
Malawi’s primary school net enrollment Rate 2011/2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population 6-13 years</th>
<th>Enrolment Age 6-13</th>
<th>NER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,472,933</td>
<td>1,526,166</td>
<td>2,999,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,524,438</td>
<td>1,575,775</td>
<td>3,100,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,575,847</td>
<td>1,624,714</td>
<td>3,200,561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 contains net enrollment rates which is enrollment of the official age group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population. This rate shows the extent of coverage in a given level of children and youth belonging to the official age group (Education Statistics, 2012).

Table 4
Malawi’s primary school survival rates for standard 5 and standard 8 2008-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Standard 5</th>
<th></th>
<th>Standard 8</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys %</td>
<td>Girls %</td>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>Boys %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is the proportion of a cohort of pupils who reached each successive standard expressed as percentage of pupils enrolled in the first standard of a given cycle in a given school year. This indicator is used to show the extent to which the school system can retain pupils, with or without repetition, and it measures the magnitude of the dropouts.

Source: Education Statistics, 2012

Table 4 shows survival rate for standard five and eight which is a percentage of a cohort of pupils enrolled in the first grade of a given level or cycle of education in a given cycle of education in a given school year who are expected to reach successive grades. It measures the retention capacity and internal efficiency of an education system. It illustrates the situation regarding retention of pupils from grade to grade and conversely the magnitude of dropout by grade (Education statistics, 2012).
Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design. The approach was suitable for the study, because it enabled the researcher to get the experiences, attitudes, and views of female dropouts. The study involved female primary school dropouts in order to understand their experiences (Ten Have, 2004).

According to Haller and Kleine (2001) qualitative methodologies explore the feelings, understandings and knowledge of others. The aim is to gain a deeper insight into the processes shaping the social world. The emphasis in qualitative research is to understand the lived experiences and reflect on and interpret the understandings and shared meanings of the people’s worlds and social realities. It is does not aim at carrying out statistical descriptions or generalizable predictions, but to seek subjective understanding of social realities.

However qualitative research has come under criticism regarding subjectivity and positionality of the researcher. It is argued that the positioning of the researcher, by herself or himself and by the research subjects, influences what information is given and how the subjects “truths” are represented. Another critique is that some of the understandings produced in qualitative research are gained from unrepresentative samples or from carefully selected quotes. Some of these criticisms can, however, be overcome if researchers are rigorous and accountable to the subjects in the research process. It is also important for the research to be reflective and to acknowledge one’s role in the construction of knowledge (Limb & Dwyer, 2001).

Research sample

The research targeted thirteen female primary school dropouts. Purposeful and snowballing sampling were used to identify participants. Purposeful sampling was used because focus was given to female children who have dropped out of school in the previous twelve
months. Gall et al. (2005) state that the power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting participants who will provide richest information for in-depth analysis related to the central issue being studied. Snowballing was used in identifying the other dropouts. A snowballing sample is used in research when the members of population are difficult to locate and the researcher collects data on the few members of the target population she or he can locate, and then asks those individuals to provide information needed to locate other members of the population whom they know (Gordon, 2009).

**Data Collection Procedure**

The cover letter for this study stating the purpose of the study, use of results, voluntary participation, and assurance of confidentiality were sent to both parents of the participants and the participants themselves before the interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the female dropouts. Ten female dropouts were interviewed. The interviews were conducted through Skype technology since the researcher is abroad. According to Mikkelsen (1995) in semi-structured interviews, an interview protocol is used with the topics and issues to be raised specified in advance, mostly in outline form. The outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection systematic for the respondents. Logical gaps in the data can be anticipated and closed. Interviews remain fairly conversational and situational. However, in semi-structured interviews, important and topics may be accidentally omitted. Interviewer flexibility in sequencing and wording questions may result in substantially different responses from different perspectives, thus reducing the comparability of responses. In this study a digital recorder was used to record the conversation. This allow the conversation to flow smoothly without any interference which may
come with writing down the response. The transcription of a single interview took place immediately after the interview in order to ensure that the information gathered was not lost.

Since the interview was conducted through Skype technology in order to make sure that Skype was available to the participants the researcher had identified a colleague with a Skype access Laptop to coordinate the interview. The colleague lives in the study area and he made sure the laptop was available to the participants during the time of interviews.

Validity and Reliability of the Study

Haller and Kleine (2011) stipulate that all good studies whether quantitative or qualitative need to be valid and reliable. Kirk and Miller (1986) echo that “objectivity is the essential basis of all good research” (p. 20).

Kitchin and Tate (2000) state that validity is concerned with the “soundness, legitimacy and relevance of research theory and its investigations” (p. 34). They distinguish types of validity relating to theory from types of validity relating to practice. Those relating to theory concern the integrity of the theoretical constructs and ideas that support and provide foundations for empirical research. These include content validity, face validity and conceptual validity. On the other hand, validity relating to practice concern the soundness of research strategies used in the empirical investigation and the integrity of the conclusions drawn from the study. These include construct validity, analytical validity, ecological validity and internal validity. Since qualitative research studies touch on people’s subjective experiences, perfect validity is not theoretically attainable.

Reliability is defined as the “repeatability or consistency of a finding” (Kitchin & Tate, 2000, p. 34). It should however be acknowledged that qualitative research aims at getting
feelings, views and attitudes of a limited number of research participants (May, 2002). As a result, issues of repeatability of findings and generalizations are not of primary concern.

Mikkelsen (1995) argues that it is better to “lay open your values and your methodology” than aim for unobtainable objectivity (p. 207). Therefore, this study agrees with Kirk and Miller (1986) who define validity as the degree to which the finding is interpreted in a correct way. Reliability is similarly defined as the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research.

Several measure were taken to ensure that the study is valid and reliable. Firstly, the data was collected by the researcher individually. This allow her to probe further to elicit longer answers from participants to ensure that she understands clearly what was said. Besides that, the questions were asked in a number of ways to reduce the chances of misunderstanding. In addition, since the researcher share the same language with the participants the interviews were conducted in the participants’ local language. This assisted in reducing the likelihood of bias which comes about by filtering of information through interpreters and research assistants. Since the researcher come from the background of teaching, this helped her to use interactional skills to put participants at ease and get information that is valuable to the study. Furthermore, the use of a recorder to record the interviews assisted the conversations to flow freely and smoothly without the interruption of note taking.

**Validation and Refinement of Research Instrument**

The interview protocol was design in such a way that the interview questions were related to the research questions. Three university professors were given the interview protocol to check if the items were elicit the required responses and give suggestions. Their suggestions were used to revise the interview protocol after which was pitot-tested and then used on the main study.
Five dropouts from a different area, which shared the same characteristics with the area under study were called through Skype in order to test the interview questions. The researcher used her close colleague, who works at one of the rural primary schools in Malawi to help in identifying the five dropouts. This colleague has a laptop which was used for Skype.

**Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data has been analyzed through a thematic coding process and presented mainly as narratives. First, the interview text, which was transcribed as verbatim was screened to separate the text which was relevant to the study. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) define relevant text as the passage from the transcript that express a distinct idea related to the research concerns. The relevant text for each participant was compared in order to group related passages and get repeated ideas which were common to most participants. The repeating ideas were then placed under appropriate themes in line with the research concerns. Using the research purpose, the ideas from the participants were presented using tables and narratives. Quotes from the participants were also be used in narrative form.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues were highly considered in this study. Prior to data collection permission was sought from the parents of the dropouts and the dropouts themselves. The aim of the study was clearly explained to participants before the interviews. The participants were also informed that their involvement in the study was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any time of the interviews if they feel uncomfortable. They were assured of anonymity in the research report.
Since the interviews was done through Skype, the consent letters were emailed to the researcher’s colleague, who live in the study area in order for him to facilitate the signing. After being signed the consent forms were scanned and emailed back to the researcher.

The researcher made sure that all the rights and welfare of the subjects participating in this study were adequately protected, all the requirements set forth by the St. Cloud State University Institution Review Board were strictly adhered to. In order to achieve this, a copy of the study proposal was submitted to St Cloud State University Institution Review Board for approval.
Chapter IV: Results and Finding

This chapter presents the results of the study on factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary schools, in Nkhata-Bay South district, Malawi. The results of the study are organized according to the following themes: school related factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary school and out of school factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary school.

School Related Factors Influencing Rural Female Drop out From Primary School

This study sought to find out the school related factors influencing rural female pupils dropping out of school. To achieve this aspect, thirteen rural female primary school dropouts were interviewed on some of the school related factors that influenced them to drop out from school.

Response From School Dropouts On School Related Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Dropping Out of Primary School

Most of the participants cited poor academic performance as a school related factor that contributed to their dropping out decision. The interview with the participants revealed that many of them had trouble passing course at school. They explained how they now admire those girls who are still in school and succeeding. The participants confessed that now that they are out of school due to poor performance they have become more aware of the importance of education, only that the memories of their poor performance still hold them not to think of going back to school. Participant C described how repeating the same class for several times made her feel over aged with the grade level hence opt to drop out. She said that she dropped out in standard four because she was supposed to repeat for a third time. She narrated that it was embarrassing to see
younger pupil proceeding to the next grade without repeating. This made her consider herself us a failure forever.

Participant B;

*I liked school, but the fact that each time I wrote examinations I could fail made me feel embarrassed, sometimes I even fail the simple exercises the teacher would give. Boys use to make fun of me sometimes hence I decided just to stop going to school.*

Participant G;

*Dropping out of school is never a good decision, life is hard and I don’t see any bright future ahead. But the fact that if I go back to school my performance will never change is still holding me home.*

Participant J;

*Education is good and useful. It makes a difference in life. You can become a teacher and when you get educated you cater for yourself. But poor performance made me to stop going to school.*

Participant K;

*School is good because that’s the future. Without school we will continue being slaves. I wish I could go further with school but my performance in school was not good.*

A good number of participants also mentioned grade repetition as another school related factor that influenced their dropping out of school. Most of the participants reported repeating a class and some of them said they had to repeat the same class for several times. This made them loose interest in school because they considered themselves as incapable.
Participant D;

*I had repeated grades many times, sometimes I had to repeat the same grade for several times and this made me loose interest in school and drop out.*

Participant H;

*I had to repeat each class before proceeding to the next, this made me get bored with school. Each time I repeated a class I had to make new friends, the thing I found boring also.*

Participant I;

*I was supposed to repeat Standard 5 and I stopped going to school in standard 5. I didn’t want to repeat at the same school. Since other schools are far away I just decided to stay home and rest.*

*My parents are trying their best to encourage me to go back to school but I don’t want to go back to the same school.*

Participants also reported overcrowded classrooms as another school related factor that forced them to quit school. They said that, their class rooms were always full packed with teachers having difficulties to maintain discipline and manage the class. Participant C narrated how most of the time their teacher could let them go home earlier citing indiscipline as the cause of their early release. Participant B added that it was difficult for the teacher to identify trouble makers in class hence the whole class was most of the times being punished. Participant E reported that, there was lack of individual interaction with the teacher, the teacher could not manage giving individual attention since they were many of them.

Participant L;

*We were 125 of us in my class and we had a single teacher handling*
all the subjects. Most of the times he was not marking our exercises he could just mark the first… the first 20 note-books. He did not even care about what was happening while he was teaching. Sometimes he could not teach us for a week saying that we didn’t listen to him and that we were troublesome. I decided to drop out because I didn’t see the reason f going to school where I was not getting feed-back on what I wrote and sometimes just went to play.

Participants B;

The teacher was having problems identifying misbehaving students during his lessons, as a result most of the times the whole class could be punished. I did not see the reason why I should be paying for other peoples’ sin hence decided to stop going to school.

Participant F;

Overcrowding in class led to my passiveness in class which resulted in loss of interest in school eventually stopped going to school.

The interview with the dropouts also revealed teacher’s absenteeism as another school related factor that played a role in their dropping out. The participants reported that due to lack of teachers at the school, each class was allocated to a single teacher who was handling all the subjects hence the teacher’s absence meant no learning the whole day.

Participant A;

Most of the times our class did not have a teacher, other teachers could not come and take care of our class because they had their own classes to take care of. This
made me bored with school hence dropped out.

Participant M;

_We could stay 2 weeks without learning due to our teacher’s absence. Sometimes it was not that they were completely absentee from work but just lack of seriousness. They could come to work but not enter in class to teach. We could see them taking alcohol at the staffroom during class time._

_I was bored with this kind of behavior since it was becoming habitual, as a result I stopped going to school._

Table 5

_Summarizes participants’ response on school related factors that contributed to their drop out._

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor academic performance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade repetition</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded classroom</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s absenteeism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of female primary school dropouts 85% responded that poor academic performance is one of the school related factor that influenced school dropout. This was followed by grade repetition cited by 77% of the participants. Overcrowded classroom was cited by 38% and teacher’s absenteeism by 23% of the participants.
Out Of School Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop out From Primary School

This study also aimed at finding out the out of school factors influencing rural female pupils dropping out of primary school. Once again, thirteen rural female primary school dropouts were interviewed on some of the out of school factors that influenced them to drop out of school.

Response from School Dropouts on Out School Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Dropping Out Of Primary School

The interview with the dropouts on out of school factors influencing rural female pupils dropping out of primary school indicated pupils’ own lack of interest in school as a major factor. The participants revealed how most of the girls in the community do not care about school, despite parents encouragements. Participant B mentioned that she was just lazy hence she could not continue with school. She added that the fact that most of her friends also dropped out triggered lack of interest in school in her. She did not see the reason of going to school while she had a lot of company of fellow female dropouts at home. Participant E, expressed that lack of pupils’ own interest was a big problems that was keeping girls out of school. She revealed that gone were the days when their parents use to encourage them to just stay at home. She pointed out that these days even that culture which a girl was not allowed to go out of the house, for one week when she experience her first and second menstruation is becoming rare, because parents want their girl children to be in school. Participants I, described how some parents are doing all their efforts to keep their female children in school but due to lack of interest they do not continue. She said that she was an example of such kind of girls, her parents were doing everything possible to keep her in school but due to lack of interest in school she opted to drop out.
Participant I;

*I was not pregnant the time I stopped going to school, either didn’t*

*my parents provide me with all the required school needs. My*

*mother is working in South Africa so she was able to send me*

*everything I needed but due to lack of interest in school I dropped*

*out. The time I was dropping out I did not even have anything to*

*do at home and now timangolima (am just farming).*

Participant K;

*I shouldn’t lie about the out school factors that influenced me and*

*even other girls in this community to stop going to school, even thou*

*there are many factors that played a role for me to drop out but the major factor*

*is lack of interest in school. Atsikana ambiri mudzi muno kukonda amuna*

*chidwi pa sukulu tilibe (Many girls in this community we love men*

*we don’t have interest in school).*

Participant H;

*I stopped going to school so that I can rest a little bit. In this*

*community these days many girls we love boys so much,*

*we are carried away by the money they make from fishing*

*that we don’t care about school. We compete about having*

*boyfriends and babies so dropping out of school is not an*

*issue among girls in this community, it’s fashionable.*

Another most cited out of school factor that contributed to rural female pupils dropping out of primary school is lack of financial support. The participants reported that they were forced
to quit school because they could not afford to pay examination fees and developmental fee.

Most of them also mentioned that they were from low income and large families hence their parents could not afford to pay for the required education needs for all of them. The participants pointed out that they were being chased from school whenever they did not pay developmental fund and the best option was just to stop going to school. They said that girls were the most affected compared to boys, because boys learn fishing at an early age so they are able to provide for themselves through the money they get from selling fish.

Participant B;

*I stopped school because my parents could not afford the money required at school. Yes primary school is “free” but in actual sense it is not totally free, there are a lot of financial requirements at primary school these days. There are nine of us in my family so my parents could not afford to pay for all of us.*

Participant G;

*I did not drop out of school as such, I was chased away from school because of developmental fee. I am failing to return back because my parent cannot afford to pay for me.*

Participant J;

*My biological parents are both dead, I live with my aunt. Life is a little difficult, she doesn’t work, so it was hard for Her to pay for my developmental fee and examination fee. But if I can find someone to assist me, am ready to go back to school.*
The participants revealed that pregnancy was another out of school factor that influenced female pupils dropping out of school. The findings showed that four out of thirteen dropouts interviewed indicated that they left school because they got pregnant. The girls reported that girls in the community choose to get pregnant because it was fashionable. They added that if you do not get pregnant early people mock you that you are infertile more especially boys.

Participant A;

_I dropped out of school because I was pregnant, now am regretting because the boy who cheated me was from another tribe and now he is gone to his district. Am now struggling alone taking care of the baby, life is hard now compared to when I was in school. My parents no longer care about me because I did not listen to them._

Participant M;

_I stopped going to school because I was pregnant. Amuna amatipengetsa mudzi muno (men drive us crazy in this village). They promise to marry us, but when they make us pregnant they run away. Am now struggling taking care of two kids but am not married. I stay with my parents who also struggle taking care of us. I wish things were better than this._

The participants also pointed out early marriage as the out of school factor that contributed to their dropping out. The participants revealed that they felt mature and ready for marriage when they reached puberty. They did not care about school but just to find a husband to marry them. They said that they were cheated by some married friends that when the get more
educated they will have problems finding a husband because men will be afraid of them. They expressed that they thought there is enjoyment in marriage than in education, without knowing they were cheating themselves. Both of the participants who reported dropping school due to marriage are now back to their parents’ house saying they are tired of marriage.

Participant L;

*I dropped school because I got married, now am back home because I am tired of it. What I can tell you is that the marriage was not the way I thought it would be.*

The interview with the participants also revealed taking care of relatives as an out of school factor that influenced dropping out of school. Participant D explained that she had to drop out of school because her mother was sick and as a female child, she was supposed to take care of her. She said that her mother had something in her stomach and she was admitted at the hospital, she did not have any option but to leave school in standard eight at the middle of the second term in order to be a hospital guardian for her mother.

Table 6

*Summarizes participants’ response on out of school factors influencing dropping out of school.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils’ own lack of interest in school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial support due to poverty</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early marriage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It emerged that 92% of the participants reported pupils’ own lack of interest in school as the influencing factor for them to drop out of school. This was followed by lack of financial support due to poverty which was cited as a factor of dropping out by 85% of the participants. Early pregnancy was cited as a factor by 31%, early marriage by 15% and taking care of a sick relatives (mother) by 8% of the participants.
Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions, Discussion, Limitations and Recommendations

The main purpose of the study was to identify factors influencing rural female pupils drop out from primary schools, in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi. The research objectives sought to establish the school related factors and out of school factors influencing rural female drop out. This chapter presents summary, conclusions, discussion, limitations and recommendations of the study.

Summary Of The Study

To generate and refine the study ideas literature review was essential. The study was based on two theories of motivation: Bernard Weiner’s attribution theory and Abraham Maslow’s theory on human motivation. The study adopted qualitative research design with some basic descriptive results in the form of frequency counts. The target population was rural female primary school dropouts and the study involved thirteen participants. Purposeful sampling and snowballing sampling were used to select the participants for the study. The instrument used to collect data was semi-structured interviews which was done through Skype technology. For refinement and validation the interview protocol was piloted on five rural primary school dropouts from a different area with similar characteristics as the study area. The study data was analyzed by coding and grouping the emerging themes. The researcher translated all data into English from Chichewa, which was used during the data collection. Due to the different nature of English and Chichewa translations were not precise.

Conclusions

This study was undertaken to establish factors influencing rural female pupils dropping out of primary school. The study was directed by the following questions:
1. What school related factors result in girls drop out in rural primary school in Nkhata-Bay south, Malawi?

2. What out of school factors result in girls drop out in rural primary school in Nkhata-Bay south, Malawi?

The study revealed the following school related factors that influenced dropping out; poor academic performance, grade repetition, overcrowded classroom and teacher’s absenteeism. Pupils’ own lack of interest in school, lack of financial support due to poverty, pregnancy, early marriage and taking care of sick relatives were out of school factors that the study established.

The study also established that female school dropout is still a huge problem for rural primary schools in Malawi. It is there for essential that in order for Malawi to attain education for all through universal primary education, efforts to fight female dropout need to be doubled. Sabates, et al (2010) stipulate that the problem of school dropout must not just be viewed as an educational problem but also as an economic problem in terms of a huge wastage of national resources that are spending on pupils who do not complete school represents. Both school related and out of school factors influencing drop out should be given the same attention to avoid female pupils dropping out.

The study found that the school dropouts attributed their dropping out to several different challenges they have experienced. This supported Bernard Weiner’s’ attribution theory that examines individual’s beliefs about why certain events occur and correlates those beliefs to subsequent motivation. In addition, Abraham Maslow’s theory on human motivation provides reasonable explanation for the female enrolment and dropout dilemma in rural primary schools as families have to make choice on whether to send their children to school or not, among other social pressing needs. Such kind of dilemma has led to rural female dropping out of primary
school due to lack of financial support as found by this study. Therefore, Bernard Weiner’s attribution theory and Abraham Maslow’s theory on human motivation provide important theoretical framework for examining and understanding motivation and reasons for dropping out in this study.

**Discussion Of Results**

This section discusses the findings of the study, which was aimed at identifying school related factors and out of school factors, influencing rural female pupils dropping out of primary school in Nkhata-Bay south district, Malawi. The findings are discussed under the themes derived from the study objectives. According to Hunt (2008) mentioning a single factor as a cause for dropping out of school is not easy because several factors influence dropping out such that a factor mentioned as the cause for dropping out may not even be the major cause because identifying the cause of dropout is not easy since there is usually a combination of factors at play prior to drop out. This was reflected in this study as all the participants had more than a single factor for dropping out.

**School Related Factors Influencing Rural Female Drop out From Primary School**

The study data collected from the interview with the rural female dropouts revealed that there were several school related factors that influenced female pupils dropping out of primary school. Majority of them cited poor performance as a school related factor influencing their drop out. This finding confirms the assertion by Arko (2013) that poor academic performance is one of the main factors influencing girls dropping out. Most pupils in rural schools come to school without prerequisite skills for learning due to lack of pre-primary education facilities in rural areas (Holt, 1995). According to Divine (1996) good performance is a key to pupil retention. Mzuza et al. (2013) state that there is a strong relationship between poor academic performance
and dropout rates confirming that girls who fail examinations eventually lose interest to continue with school and opt to quit. This was reflected in the participants of the study. This study found that most of the female dropouts had a history of poor performance which did not result to dropping out only but also grade repetition.

However, repeating grades should not be encouraged because several studies have found grade repetition positively correlates with dropping out of school. Studies by Hunt (2008); Lewin, (2008) and Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah (2009) found that grade repetition increased rather than decreasing the risk of dropping out. Grade repetition extends the age range in particular grade making repeater over-age for that grade level hence increasing their chance of dropping out. According to Alexander (2008) grade repetition does not improve the performance of the pupils as long as methods of instruction remain the same. Grade repetition greatly increase the likelihood that the pupil will drop out of school and being held back twice makes dropping out almost certain. Grade repetition was found in this study to be highly practiced in schools in Nkhata-Bay south district. Most of the participants reported that they had repeated a grade. Sabates et al. (2010) also reported that primary education repetition rates remain very high in some African countries and that many of the children repeating grades leave school before completing primary education. Most of the students who drop out of school in Africa are more likely to have been retained than students who graduate. From observations, I think grade repetition is common in most schools in Malawi because schools have no programs for underachievers, apart from making them repeat grades which has been cited by several studies as a factor contributing to drop out. There is need for teachers to analyze the cause of the failure rather than just making a pupil to repeat grade. According to Buxton (2010) poor performance is also attributed to malnutrition hence making pupils repeat grades does not improve pupils’
performance but only increases the risk of dropping out of school. The situation only improves when teachers take a more proactive approach to the problem of school dropouts by identifying pupils at risk and attending to the factor that contributed to their chances of dropping out.

Overcrowding in classrooms was also cited by the participants as one of the school related factors influencing rural female drop out of primary school. This finding is supported by Colclough, et al. (2000) who found overcrowding as one of the school related contributing to pupils drop out. Chimombo (2005) reported that in overcrowded classroom teachers have no time to give individual attention to pupils, let alone mark exercise or home work. This leads to pupils’ lack of motivation, boredom, a feeling of disengagement and failure to get necessary foundation, hence opting for dropping out. Overcrowding in classes leads to deprivation of individual attention that pupils may require leading to pupils being disengaged from school activities and ultimately dropping out of school because school has nothing for them (Munsaka, 2009). This study established that not only does overcrowding classroom lead to lack of individualized attention but also that the class is difficult in identifying and monitoring discipline problems among pupils and that there is competition of time between classroom preparations and handling discipline issues among the pupils. It was observed that, there is overcrowding in many rural primary schools in Nkhat-Bay south district due to lack of infrastructure and teachers. Due to poor living conditions in rural areas most teachers prefer teaching in urban areas. However, the problem of overcrowding in classrooms goes beyond the boundaries of the school, both political will or government commitment by budgeting for Universal Primary Education to expand infrastructure as well as a community approach to education as in the case of Tanzania. Tanzania recorded a decline in dropout rate due to political will and government commitment by budgeting for UPE (MoEVT, 2009).
Teacher’s absenteeism was also mentioned as a school related factors influencing rural female dropping out of primary school. This agreed with the finding of Colcough, et al. (2000) who found teacher absenteeism as one of the school related factors of drop out. According to Hunt (2008) teacher absenteeism affect more rural and remote schools and needs to be tackled to prevent pupils dropping due to boredom resulting from teacher absence. Modisaotsile (2012) in his study in South Africa identified teacher’s absenteeism as one of the teachers behavior associated with pupil drop out. I believe, teacher’s absenteeism is common in rural primary schools in Malawi due to lack of education inspectors’ inspection, most teachers are relax and handle their personal business during work days.

Out Of School Factors Influencing Rural Female Drop out From Primary School

The interview with the rural female dropouts revealed the following out of school factors that influence dropping out: pupils own lack of interest in school, lack of financial support due to poverty, pregnancy, early marriage and taking care of sick relative.

Many of the participants cited their own lack of interest in school as one of the main out of school factor influencing their dropping out. This supported Arko (2013) claim that students who are not very much interested in teaching and learning process in school tend to find the school very boring and unattractive and can easily drop out of school. A study by Lewin (2007) also stressed that potential dropouts might have behavioral problems as a result of lack of interest in school arising from poor academic performance thereby increasing their risk of dropping out.

Based on observations, pupils’ lack of interest in school is partly due to non-existence of supporting structures like guidance and counselling, that can be responsible in helping pupils establish future clear goals early in life and connect what they learn to their lives. Making school matter in the life of pupils is vital to ensure their continued stay in school. Most pupils drop out
because they do not see the significance of school in their lives which result in lack of interest in school (Munsaka, 2009). Alexander (1992) stipulates that establishing a connection between school and life is important to pupils’ continued stay in school.

Participants reported that they were being forced to quit school because, due to poverty they could not afford to pay developmental fee and examination fee. This is in line with Bacolod et al. (2005) who found that lack of finance to be significant constraint on education. Kadzamira and Rose (2003) also asserted that when cost of schooling is too high for households in Malawi, it is often girls from poorest households who are less likely to attend. Hunt (2008) stipulates that schooling cost may link with gendered patterns of access, with households in some cases less willing to provide finance support for girls’ education. This study found that most of the participants were from larger and lower income family hence the parents could not afford to provide financial support to all of them. Schools charging of examination fees and developmental fund is a clear indication that the government is not providing all the necessary requirements in school for instance stationary, hence the schools are putting the direct cost on the poor parents. It is therefore important for the government to have strategy on how to help pupils from poor families meet their direct education cost rather than simply provision of tuition free education. While free primary education appears to be “free” in most African countries, the reality is that it is not free because parents are still responsible for all non-tuition school expenses, including uniforms, exercise books, pens, textbooks and any other school supplies, which many families find difficult (Morara & Chemwei, 2013). A study by Okumu (1992) based on girls education in Nairobi reported that poverty had the most devastating impact on girls participation in education. This is due to parents preferring to allocate their limited financial resources to boys’ education which they believe brings more return.
Pregnancy was also reported as one of the out of school factors that influenced rural female pupils dropping out of primary school. This finding is supported by Maluwa-Banda (2004) who stipulates that various research studies have clearly revealed that one of the major reasons that contribute to the dropout of girls is pregnancy. Human Right Watch (2014) explains that reproductive health education is inadequately taught in Malawi’s school and does not provide pupils with the knowledge to make well-informed choices before becoming sexually active. Parents are also not willing to talk to children about how to protect themselves, often due to taboos. This put girls at a risk of getting early pregnancy due to lack of information. This study found that girls choose to get pregnant and pregnancy is fashionable in the community and the participants who reported pregnancy as the cause of their dropping out were also victims of peer pressure. Samati (2012) asserts that in some rural families in Malawi girls’ pregnancy is viewed as a source of pride especially for mothers, because it reflects maturity of their daughters and increases their standing in the community. This finding is upsetting, because such cases as those of pregnancies have a policy in place, known as the readmission policy, which allows pupils to go back to school after delivery. It appears that many girls are not taking advantage of this.

The participants also cited early marriage as one of the out of school factor that triggered to dropping out. Many Malawian scholars have agreed that early marriage contributes to higher rate of female school dropouts, which affect equal access to education for both male and female (Mkandawire et al., 2014, Verheijen, 2014 & Archambault, 2011). Grant (2013) found that early marriages are a common occurrence in African countries and this affect girls’ education attainment. The study found that girls rush in marriage soon after puberty. In order to avoid pregnancy out of wedlock parents encourage children to marry soon after puberty (Mzuza et al.,
(2013). Davison (1993) reported parents’ concern that continued schooling might limit girls’ matrimonial chances and that school subject were not seen as relevant for the skills a young woman needed for married life.

The participants mentioned taking care of sick relatives as one of the out of school factors contributing to female pupils drop out. According to the study by Kadzamira and Ndalama (1997) found caring for sick relatives as a factor for drop out. This study found that girls are still considered as caregivers for sick relatives. Parents consider engaging girls in caring for the sick as training for future roles. Girls whose parents or siblings fall ill might be expected to be caregivers for these sick relatives, at times causing them to drop out of school (Case & Ardington, 2004). A study by Batbaatar, et al. (2006) indicated that caring for relatives had led to some dropouts to leave school. One child spoke about returning to school afterwards and being told to leave as they had not completed the curriculum for that year. Another had to move with their mother when she entered hospital and in the new area they were unable to enter school and as a result had to drop out. Children still attending school in times of household illness might be affected by the situation at home. In a study by Akunga et al. (2000) in Kenya, pupils living with people infected with HIV/AIDS reported low concentration levels in schools as they tried to cope with home or school lives. The trauma caused by illness can also have longer term implications. This is reflected in one of the participant in the study, even though the mother is well now she has not returned to school.

**Limitations of the Study**

Every research study is bound to have some limitations and the limitations of this study are the following:
1. The major limitation of this study is the use of a small sample size hence making it only able to generalize the results back to the research population not the whole, country or other African nations.

2. Since the study was conducted through Skype sometimes there were problems with internet connections which disrupted the interviews and forced a reschedule.

**Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommendations are made:

1. There must be a strong school and community relationship in the sense that:
   
   i. School and the community must collaborate in making early interventions aimed at helping female pupils who show behaviors consistent with dropping out be prevented from dropping out.
   
   ii. Community must become part of the many institutions charged with provision of information on why female children should also be in school.

2. Government must provide all the necessary resources like teaching and learning materials, this will help schools to stop charging development fund and examination fee. It must also continue training more qualified teachers to reduce the teacher pupil ratio and the government must send more teachers in rural primary schools.

3. The government must also be sending primary school education supervisors in the rural primary school regularly, this will help to reduce the problem of teacher absenteeism in schools.

4. Teachers and parents must be sensitized on the need to actively participate in educating pupils about sexuality in order to control early pregnancy.
5. There is need for strong career guidance, pupils must be shown videos depicting various careers and follow-up with a career talk in order to help pupils link school attendance to career which is necessary for their continued stay in school and also help to motivate them.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Future study should focus on:

1. A similar study using;
   i. A larger sample size.
   ii. Quantitative techniques to gather data.
   iii. Longitudinal design.
   iv. Additional countries

2. A similar study by comparing and contrasting with other schools and nations.
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www.worldbank.org/en/country/Malawi/overview

APPENDIX A
Cover Letters Accompanying Survey

Parental/Guardian Consent Form

My name is Grace Gondwe and I am a graduate student at St. Cloud State University. This form is being sent to ask your permission to allow your child to participate in a study being conducted for my Master’s Degree at St. Cloud State University. Two consent forms—one for you, the parents/guardians, and the other for your child—are included with this memo. If your child is unable to read the child consent form, please take a few moments to read it to her and explain it as needed.

Background Information and Purpose

The purpose for this study is to understand factors influencing female pupils dropping out from primary school in rural areas. The study will focus on both school-related factors and out of school factors resulting in female pupils drop out.

Procedures

Data will be gathered in the form of interview, the interview protocol consists of seven open-ended questions. The estimated time for the interview is 1 hour and the interview will be done through Skype. A recording devise will be used to collect and verify interview data; all recordings will be destroyed upon conclusion of the study. Direct quotes may be used in reporting of research results; therefore, participants will be asked: if the feel there is any comment they feel uncomfortable to be quote.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.

Benefits

The study hopes to shed more light on the factors influencing female pupils dropping out from primary school in rural areas. The results from this study will help in making recommendations on how to reduce the problem of female dropout in primary schools.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of the information gathered during your daughter’s participation in this study will be maintained. Your daughter’s personal identity will remain confidential. At no time during the study or reporting the findings will your child’s name be used in any manner. All data will be kept on a password-protected computer.

Research Results

The data collected will be used for the final paper that will remain on permanent file at the St. Cloud State University Miller Learning Resource Center (library).
Contact Information

If you have questions or concerns involving this study and if you are interested in learning the results of the study, feel free to contact me at (320)266-2485 or email at ggondwe@stcloudstate.edu. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Frances Kayona at (320)-308-3170 or fakayona@stcloudstate.edu.

Voluntary Participation/ Withdrawal

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. Your child may decide not to participate or withdraw in this study at any time, for any reason, without penalty. Your child decision whether or not to participate will not affect her current or future relations with St. Cloud State University, the Educational Administration program, or the researcher.

The study investigator may stop your child participation at any time without your consent for the following reasons: if it appears to be harmful to her in any way, if the study is canceled, or for reasons deemed appropriate by the research coordinator to maintain subject safety and the integrity of the study.

Acceptance to Participate

Your signature indicates that you and your child have read the information provided here and have decided to participate. You or your children may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty after signing this form.

I look forward to having your children participate in this study and I thank-you in advance for your cooperation as I continue to complete my graduate study at St. Cloud State University.

Female Primary School Dropouts Consent Form: G.GONDWE Study

Please return to Ms. G.Gondwe as soon as possible.

- I grant permission to have my child participate in the master’s study conducted by Ms. Grace Gondwe.
- I understand that the study involves giving reasons for my daughter’s drop out from school.
- I give permission to have audio recording made of my child.
- I realize that data collected may be directly quoted.
- I realize that the results will be used for final paper which will be public information.
- I understand that confidentiality will be maintained and that my child’s name will not be used in any manner while conducting the study or reporting the results of the study.
- I further understand that my child can withdraw from the study at any time if she so desires without any harm in regards to her relationship with the researcher and St. Cloud State University.

St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 12.30.2015
Daughter’s Name (Printed)

Parent(s’)/Guardian(s’) Name (Printed)

X

Parent(s’)/Guardian(s’) Signature Date

St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 12.30.2015
Kalata Yepepha Chirezo Kwa Makolo


Chiyambi ndi Cholinda Chakafukufuku

Cholinda chakafukufuku ameneyu ndikupeza zifukwa zomwe zimapangitsa ana a sungwana kuti asiyire maphunziro awo apulayimare panjira ku mumadera akumudzi. Cholinda cheni ndikupeza zochilika kusukulu ndi kunyumba zomwe zimapangitsa anawa kusiyira maphunziro awo panjira.

Ndomeko


Chiopsyeko

Palibe chooposya chilichonse chokhuzana ndikafukufuku yu.

Kufunika Kwa Kafukufuku

Kafukufuku yu athandiza kubweretsa poyera zifukwa zomwe atskana ambiri amasiyira maphunziro awo apulayimare panjira ndipo izi zithandiza kupeza njira zochepetsa vu tuli mumadera akumudzi.

Chinsinsi

Chilichonse pakafukufuku yu chizipangidwa mosunga chinsinsi. Chilichonse chapanitsa kuti mwana wu aziwe kuti anatenga nayo mbali mukafukufuku yu, kapena dzina lake, sizizepeka palipone ngakhare muzotsatira zotsileza zakafulukufuku yu. Ndipo fundo zonse zizasungidwa mumakina mukupwuta wotetezedwa bwino.

Zotsatira Zakafulukufuku

Fundo zakafulukufuku zizagwiritsidwa nthtito kulemba zotsatira zotsileza, zomwe buku lake lizikapeza munyumba yowerengera ya pa suku lu yaukachenjede ya St. Cloud State.

Ndondomeko Yolumikizirana

Ngati pali mafunso ndizovuta zina kapena kufuna kuziwa zotsatira zakafulukufukuyi mutha kundiyimbira thenifolo pa numbara iyi: (320)266-2485 kapena kundilembera kalata ku: ggondwe@stcloudstate.edu. Muthuso kulumikizana ndi aphunzitsi anga womwe akundiyang’anira a Frances Kayona pa (320)-308-3170 kapena fakayona@stcloudstate.edu.

Kuzipeleka Kutenganawo Mbalu

Mweniwake wakafukufukuyu ali ndi ufulu womusiyitsa mwana wanu kutenga nako mbali thawi yiliyonse ngati pali zovuta zina kapena ngati kafukufuku walephereka.

Kuvomereza Mwana Kutenga Nako Mbali

Mukalembe dzina lanu kumapeto kwa kalatayi ndiye kuti mwatsimikidza kuti mwana wanu atenge nako mbali mukafukufukuyi. Mwana wanu ali ndi ufulu kusiya kutenga nako mbali mukafukufukuyi olo mutatsimikiza kale.

zikomo kwambiri povomeredza mwana wanu kutenga nako mbali mukafukufukuyi ameneyu.

Kutsimikidza

Bwezani kalatayi muthawi yake kwa Grace Gondwe

• Ndapereka chiloredzo choti mwana wanga atenge nako mbali mukafukufukuyi yemwe Grace Gondwe akupanga.
• Ndauzidwa kuti chilinga cha kafukufukuyu ndikuziwa zifukwa zomwe mwana wanga anasiyira suku lu panjira.
• Ndikuvomereza kuti azitapedwe.
• Ndauzidwa kuti fundo zina zidzalembedwa ndende momwe mwana wanga wayakhulira.
• Ndizwiwa kuti bukuhla lazotsatira zakafulufukuyi likayikidwa munyumba yowerenega yapasukuluyi.
• Ndauzidwa kuti chochitika chilichonse pakafulufukuyi chizakhala cha chinsinsi ndipo dzina la mwana wanga silizatchulidwa palipone.
• Ndauzidwa kuti mwana wanga atha kusiya kutenga nako mbali mukafukufukuyi thawi yiliyonse ndipo izarizasokoneza ubale wake ndi mwini wakafukufukuyu kapena suku lu yaukachenjeleyi.

Dzina la mwana

Dzina la Makolo

X______________________________

Chitsimikizo

Tsiku

St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 12-30-2015
Expiration date: 12-24-2016
Child Assent

You are invited to be part of a study on: Factors influencing rural primary schools female pupils drop out from school. You were selected to take part in this study because you have drop out from school and you live in rural area.

Background Information and Purpose

The purpose for this study in general terms is to understand factors influencing female pupils dropping out from primary school in rural areas.

Procedures

In this study you will be interviewed on factors that influenced you to drop out from school. The interview is for about an hour and will be done through Skype. The whole interview process will be recorded. Make sure you do not say anything that you will not feel comfortable having reported in the final paper.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.

Benefits

The study hopes to shed more light on the factors influencing female pupils dropping out from primary school in rural areas. The results from this study will help in making recommendations on how to reduce the problem of female dropout in primary schools.

Confidentiality

Throughout the course of this study and in the final paper your name will be kept private and will not be shared.

Research Results

If you have any additional questions and if you are interested in learning the results of the study, please contact the researcher, at +1 (320) - 266- 2485 or egondwe@stcloudstate.edu, the advisor, Dr. Frances Kayona, at +1 (320) - 308-3170 or fakayona@stcloudstate.edu.

Contact Information

If you have any other questions or concerns you may ask Ms Gondwe at +1 (320) - 266- 2485.

Voluntary Participation/ Withdrawal

If during the study you decide that you do not want to continue to be a part of the study, you need to tell the researcher or your parents. Your decision to stop being in the study will not be held against you.

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St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 12-30-2015
Expiration date: 12-29-2016
Acceptance to Participate

When you sign your name on the line with the “X” it means you understand this information and have agreed to be a part of the study. If you do not like being in the study at any time you may withdraw.

________________________________________

Name (Printed)

X________________________________________

(Signature)
Kalata Ya Mwana
Mukupehedwa kutenga nayo mbo mukafukufuku yemwe ndikupanga ndicholinga choifuna kuziwa zifukwa zomwe zimapangitsa ana asungwana kusiyira maphunziro awo akupulayimalere panjira. Inu mwasakhidwa chifukwa ndinu modzi wa womwe adasiyira maphunziro awo panjira ndipo mumakhala kumudzi.

Chiyambi ndi Cholinda Chaakafukufuku
Cholinda chakhakukufuku amenyu ndikupeza zifukwa zomwe zimapangitsa ana a sungwana kuti asiyyire maphunziro awo apulayimare panjira kumadera akumudzi.

Ndomeko
Muzafunsidwa mafunso nkhumni ndi awiri, pazifukwa zomwe munasiyira sukulu panjira kwa ola limodzi ndipo mayakho onse azatepedwa. Mafunso azayakhidwa kuzela mu lamy.

Chiopsyeko
Palibe choopsyaya chilichonse chokhuzuana ndikafukufukuyu.

Kufunika Kwa Kafukukuyu
Kafukukuyu athandiza kubweretsa poyera zifukwa zomwe atsikana ambiri amasiyyira maphunziro awo apulayimare panjira ndipo izi zithandiza kupeza njira zocepetsa vutoli mumadera akumudzi.

Chinsinsi
Dzina lanu silizatchulidwa mwanjira yiliyonse mukafukufukuyu.

Zotsatira Zakaafukufuku
Ngati pali mafunso ndizovuta zina kapena kufuna kuziwa zotsatira zakafukufukuyu mutha kutchara lamy pa nambala iyi: (320)266-2485 kapena kundilemba kalata ku: ggondwe@stcloudstate.edu. Muthaso kulumikizana ndi aphunzitsi anga womwe akundiyang'ani a Frances Kayona pa (320)-308-3170 kapena fakayona@stcloudstate.edu.

Ndondomeko Yolumikizirana
Ngati pali vuto lilironse masukani kunditchara lamy pa G. Gondwe pa nambala iyi: +1(320)-266-2485.

Kuzipeleka Kutenganawo Mbali
Ngati mwasitha maganizo otenga nayo mbali mukafukufukuyu uzani makolo anu kapena mweni wake wakafukufukuyu. Kusitha maganinzo kwanu sikuzasokoneza ubale wanu ndi mwini wakafukufukuyu.

Chitsimikizo
Mukalemba dzina lanu musimu ndiye kuti mwatsimikiza kutenga nawa mbali mukafukufukuyu. Ngati mwasitha maganizo, thawi yiliyonse muli ndiufulu kusiya kutenga nawa mbali mukafukufukuyu.

________________________________________
Dzina

X_____________________________________
Chitsimikizo

St. Cloud State University
Institutional Review Board
Approval date: 12.30.2015
Expiration date: 12.28.2016
APPENDIX B
Research Instrument
Interview Protocol

Name of Interviewer: ____________________________ Date of Interview: ________

Name of Interviewee: ____________________________________________

Setting and location of Interview: _________________________________

Other topics discussed: ___________________________________________
  1. Introductions: Greetings
     a. Warm up
     b. Establish relationship and build trust

  2. Explain the nature of the research, purpose, and ask if they have signed the consent form sent in advanced.

Begin interview:
  3. Describe your family background?
     Probing:
     a. Whom do you stay with?
     b. What is your parents’/guardian’s occupation?
     c. What is your parents/guardian’s level of education?
     d. How many siblings do you have?
     e. Has anyone in your family reached secondary school?

  4. Describe your educational background?
     Probing:
     a. When did you start schooling?
     b. How was your performance at school?
     c. What are the things you liked most at school?
     d. What things did you not like while at school?
     e. At what level did you drop school?

  5. Explain your school dropping process?
     Probing:
     a. What factors made you drop out of school?
     b. Whose decision was it for you to leave school? Why?
     c. What role did your parents/guardians play in the process?
     d. What did your parents do, or say about you dropping out of school?
     e. Did your teachers do anything about your drop out?
     f. What were the challenges you experienced when you were going to school?

  6. What is your life like after dropping out from school?
     Probing
     a. How do you spend your time now that you are out of school?
     b. What type of work do you do at home, or outside the home?
c. Are you happy with the type of life you are living now?
d. What were your ambitions/ how else would you have liked to spend your life?
e. Where do you see yourself in one year from now?
f. What else do you plan to do in the future?
g. Do you think something could have been done to ensure that you did not drop out of school?

7. Do you have any additional comments?
APPENDIX C
Human Subjects Approval

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Name: Grace Gondwe
Address: 105 4th St. South
St. Cloud, MN 56301 USA
Email: ggodwe@stcloudstate.edu

IRB PROTOCOL DETERMINATION:
Expediting Review-2

Project Title: Factors Influencing Rural Female Pupils Drop-Out from Primary Schools in Nkhata-Bay South District, Malawi

Advisor: Frances Kayona

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: APPROVED

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:
- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).
- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.
- Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.
- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.
- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

Good luck on your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 320-308-4932 or email ldonnay@stcloudstate.edu. Use the SCSU IRB number listed on any forms submitted which relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the IRB.

Institutional Review Board:

Linda Donnay
IRB Administrator
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

St. Cloud State University:

Marilyn Hart
Interim Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies

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