



**Midlands State University**

**Established 2000**

*Our Hands, Our Minds, Our Destiny*

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS,**

**MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES**

NAME	CHIKARA OWEN
REG NO	R13135F
MODULE	RESEARCH
PROGRAMME	BED IN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES.
MODULE ENTRY	BLOCK RELEASE
LEVEL	3.2
SUPERVISOR	DR MUGUWE

**TOPIC**

An investigation into the teachers' attitudes towards the performance of the girl child in upper primary grades in Gokwe South District.

***A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DEGREE IN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM STUDIES AT MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY.***

**GWERU: ZIMBABWE**

**NOVEMBER 2015**

## DECLARATION

### MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

I, Chikara Owen, do hereby declare that this project is a result of my own investigation and research, except to the extent indicated in the acknowledgements, references and comments included in the body.

Student Signature

Date

O. Chikara

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature

Date

Dr E. Muguwe

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson's signature

Date

DrMangwaya

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this research project to my wife Edeth and my kids Ropafadzo, Christian and Tatenda.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would want to express my heartfelt thanks to the following people who contributed immensely to the success of this research project.

- DrMuguwe E. my supervisor who guided and assisted me throughout the study. I would want to extend my gratitude to her for selflessly sharing with me her expertise and experience during the carrying out of the research through to the submission of the research project in time.
- My sincere gratitude to my family for encouraging me during times of hardships.
- Members of staff of St Paul's Gokwe Primary ,Mapfungautsi Primary, CZM Primary, Gokwe Primary and Sengwa Primary Schools for the assistance during data collection.

## ABSTRACT

The research was set up to investigate teacher's attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary grades in Gokwe South District in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. The research was as a result of seeing the plight of many girls who are performing poorly in academics. The poor performance of girls affect their secondary enrolment and also affect their opportunity in the job market. The research design employed was the descriptive survey and this was because of its ability to address the current issues during the time of study. The research findings were that, teachers generally linked pupils' academic performance to gender. Teachers believed that boys perform better than girls in upper primary schools which shows that teachers have negative attitudes towards girls. Those who had positive attitudes to girl's performance were as a result of teachers' in-service and some attributed this to experience. The conclusions that the researcher drew were that there was need for schools to sensitive on gender balance. There is need of awareness campaigns in schools about girl child's education.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Declaration Form	
Dedication	
Abstract	
Acknowledgement	
Table of contents	
List of contents	
<b>CHAPTER 1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM</b>	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	1
1.3 Statement of the problem	4
1.4 Research question	4
1.5 Significant of the study	5
1.6 Delimitations of the study	5
1.7 Limitations	6
1.8 Definitions of key terms	6
<b>CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Theoretical framework	7
2.3 Empirical researches	9
<b>CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	
3.1 Introduction	18
3.2 Research Design	18

3.3 Population and Sample	19
3.4 Instruments	19
3.4.1 Questionnaires	21
3.4.2 Interviews	24
<b>3.5 Data collection procedures</b>	<b>23</b>
3.6 Validity and Reliability	24
3.7 Ethical considerations	24
<b>CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION</b>	
4.1 Introduction	26
4.2 Data presentation, analysis and discussion	26
<b>CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
5.1 Introduction	43
5.2 Summary	43
5.3 Findings	45
5.4 Conclusions	46
5.5 Recommendations	47
5.6 Further study	47
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	
Appendix A	Questionnaires for Teachers
Appendix B	Questionnaires for Pupils
Appendix C	Interview Guide for School Heads
Appendix D	Special Permit to conduct research in the ministry
Appendix E	Letter for seeking Authority in the Province
Appendix F	Letter from the University Educational Department to carry research

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The performance of students in schools is of great concern to all stakeholders that is students, parents, teachers and the society at large. Although researches have been carried out, the academic performance differences between boys and girls is still existing. There is concern that girls continue to obtain lower units than boys in the developing countries. Are teacher's attitudes contribute to the differences in educational achievement between boys and girls? This has motivated the researcher to investigate into teacher's attitudes towards performance of girls in primary schools in Gokwe South District in the Midlands Province. This chapter is going to look at the background to the study, research questions, definition of terms, limitations, delimitations, significance of the study.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

Formal education improves the status of women in society; it also contributes largely to eliminating the inferior stereotyping of women. The total benefits of education to the society are multiplied when basic education is extended to girls. Females who participate in basic education not only aspire to further education, but also have smaller families, fewer of their children die in infancy, and their children are healthier and better educated than women who have never had access or have had limited exposure to basic education (UNICEF, 2006).

Johnson (2008) research contends that despite the affirmative actions taken on behalf of girls in formal education: free schooling at the primary and lower secondary level, provision of textbooks and exercise books, access has improved but as a result of the myriad of factors that

continue to plague girls' participation in schools, their participation in school is still negatively affected as they may be withdrawn or they voluntarily drop out of school before completion. In an improved policy landscape, some researchers contend that participation of girls is still fraught with a lot of problems that impede on their participation. Research from UNICEF (2010) acknowledge that there are a multiple of reasons why students do not achieve academically in schools. One of the reasons identified that negatively affect performance is teachers' attitude and support.

It is generally believed that a person's attitude towards a person or thing has a direct bearing on the person's reaction to the person or thing. One would infer from this that an individual's attitude affects his behavior or performance. In fact, findings from a number of studies indicate that attitude is one of the determinants of academic performance. Kara (2009) stated that attitudes towards learning besides opinions and beliefs have an obvious influence on students' behaviors and consequently on their performance. It is argued that those teachers who possess positive beliefs about girls have a tendency to increase more positive attitudes towards the good performance of girls.

Some psychologists have also claimed that while attitudes sometimes influence behaviour, it is our behaviour that sometimes shapes our attitudes. Johnson (2008) stated that some attitudes help students to function effectively in school while others interfere with school life and that many educational psychologists believe it is far more important to promote positive attitudes in students than to ensure that they master verbal information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, or motor skills.

According to Liddell and Davidson, (2004), when an attitude is favourable or positive, it enhances active performance that leads to success. On the other hand, when it is unfavourable or negative, it is often reflected by an individual's lack of interest and non-participation in an activity. Amoo and Rahman (2004) claimed that the relationship between attitudes and performance is the consequence of a reciprocal influence, in that attitudes affect achievement and achievement in turn affects attitudes. Attitudes provide meaningful, structured environment. In life we seek some degree of order, clarity, and stability in our personal frame of reference.

Attitudes help supply us with standards of evaluation. Via such attitudes as stereotypes, we can bring order and clarity to the complexities of human life. The attitude of teachers towards the girl child in the classroom have been claimed to be the reasons why girls perform poorly. Jones cited by Nyama in the Teachers' forum (1990) noted that in rural Zimbabwe more attention was given to boys and expectations were higher for them than girls. Spencer (1982) also suggests teachers spends more time talking to boys. This implies that boys receive significantly more assistance from teachers as a result of increased verbal communication.

Stanworth (1983) cited in Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008) reveals that, a number of attitudes displayed by teachers would impede educational progress for girls. These attitudes were not confined to male teachers but also to their female colleagues. Stanworth (1983) found out that teachers held stereotypical views of what female students would doing in future Tauber (1998) assert that one's expectations about a person can eventually lead that person to behave and achieve in ways that confirm these expectations.

Decker and Emmer (1993) note that, because children are taught in a co-educational class it is tempting to assume that they are taught in the same way. Teachers will be convinced that they

treat boys and girls alike. This implies that, girls experience lower status given to them within the classroom atmosphere and this does not create confidence and sense of personal worth. This also implies that teachers' negative attitude towards the girl child in the classroom may add to the poor performance of girls in upper primary grades. It is the duty of every teacher to display positive attitudes by availing both sexes with opportunity to show their performance and give them room to participate. Hull (1980: p120) states that, "If we can present our subjects clearly, regular exercise skills in which pupils of lesser ability become a reasonably competent and give them a structure for their work in which they can understand". This shows that teachers should have real responsibility of arousing the pupils' interests and restoring confidence and self-esteem.

It is against this background that the current research seek to investigate teacher's attitudes towards performance of girls in upper grades in Gokwe South Primary schools.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

From the researcher's experiences as a primary school teacher, girls are seen to be disadvantaged in their academic achievement. Teachers' attitudes both female and males has been found to be contributing much to the poor performance of girls. Teachers in schools treat girls and boys differently which causes girls to perform poorly.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study was guided by the research questions:

1. What attitudes do both male and female teachers hold towards the girl child in primary upper grades?

2. How do these attitudes affect the classroom performance of the girl child?
3. What strategies can be put in place so that teachers maintain positive attitudes towards the girl child's classroom performance?
4. What intervention strategies can be put in place to counter negative attitudes towards the performance of the girl child in the classroom?

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is hoped that findings from this study will help teachers to improve the interaction with pupils. Findings from this study is likely to increase the debate among academics on the performance of girls in primary schools. Findings from this study are likely to be utilized by future researchers in the same area. The findings will establish the extent to which education is valued by girls. From findings, the differences on career aspirations and value of education will be established. The findings will also determine if there is link between culture and poor performance by girls at upper grades in primary schools.

### **1.6 DELIMITATIONS**

The research was be carried out in Gokwe South District and only five primary schools was involved. The research was confined to the primary school pupils and teachers in these primary schools.

### **1.7 LIMITATIONS**

The researcher being a full time employee of the Public Service Commission as well as part time researcher there was a possibility of overload which would have affected a smooth conduct of the research. There were some financial will be constrain to visit the schools where the research had to be carried out, typing and photocopying of research materials. The researcher also faced challenges in visiting the tutor for guidance. The researcher carried out the research at nearby primary schools to cut transport cost.

### **1.8 DEFINATION OF TERMS**

**Teacher** refers to a person who provide education for pupils and students in a schools ([www.csur.edn/meg](http://www.csur.edn/meg)). Thus the term teacher shall be viewed as a classroom practitioner who helps learners to grasp concepts.

**Attitude** refers to a favorable or unfavorable evaluative reaction toward something or someone, exhibited in ones beliefs, feelings, or intended behavior (Kinniard 2010). It is a social orientation - an underlying inclination to respond to something either favorably or unfavorably.

### **1.9 SUMMARY**

This chapter has introduced the background to the study to investigate teachers' attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary schools in Gokwe South District. The nature of the problem was also covered. The chapter laid bare the research questions and also looked at the significance of the study. Delimitations of the study and limitations of the study were discussed. The relevant terms were also defined. The next chapter focuses on review of related literature.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter serves to review what other authors and researchers found on the teacher's attitudes towards academic performance of the child girls in upper grades primary schools. Some researches done worldwide are going to be reviewed. The theoretical framework that informed this study is going to be outlined. The literature to be reviewed will be on, theories of attitude, teacher attitude and girls academic performance. Intervention strategies to reduce teacher's attitude towards performance of girls.

#### **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In examining the effect of teacher attitude and expectation on the academic performance of girls in primary school level in Gokwe South District, the research was underpinned by psychology Attribution Theory (Weiner 1980, 1992), Theory of Reasoned Action and Theory of Planned Behavior. These theories state that teacher's attitudes has a great impact on learner's performance and achievement. Fuligni, Tseng and Lam (1999) state that, attitudes are relatively stable clusters of feelings, beliefs, and behavioral intentions toward specific objects, people, or institutions feelings, based on beliefs, that predispose people to respond in a particular way to objects, people, and events attitudes → behavior → attitude. Schmader, Johns and Forbes. (2008) argue that, Attitudes influence behavior when other influences are minimal, and when the attitude is stable, specific to the behavior, and easily recalled. Chen and Boucher (2008) state that, attitudes have a strong impact on action when one outside influence on what we say and do are minimum, attitude is specifically relevant to behavior and when we are keenly aware of our attitude.

Studies of the foot-in-the-door phenomenon and of role-playing reveal that our actions especially those we feel responsible for can also modify our attitudes. Cognitive dissonance theory proposes that behavior shapes attitudes because we feel discomfort when our actions and attitudes differ. We reduce the discomfort by bringing our attitudes more into line with what we have done (Gaertner, Sedikides, Luke, O'Mara, Iuzzini, and Jackson, Wu, 2012).

It is generally believed that a person's attitude towards a person or thing has a direct bearing on the person's reaction to the person or thing. One would infer from this that an individual's attitude affects his behavior or performance. In fact, findings from a number of studies indicate that attitude is one of the determinants of academic performance. Kara (2009) stated that attitudes towards learning besides opinions and beliefs have an obvious influence on students' behaviors and consequently on their performance. It is argued that those teachers who possess positive beliefs about girls have a tendency to increase more positive attitudes towards the good performance of girls.

Some psychologists have also claimed that while attitudes sometimes influence behaviour, it is our behaviour that sometimes shapes our attitudes. Johnson (2008) stated that some attitudes help students to function effectively in school while others interfere with school life and that many educational psychologists believe it is far more important to promote positive attitudes in students than to ensure that they master verbal information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, or motor skills.

According to Liddell and Davidson, (2004), when an attitude is favourable or positive, it enhances active performance that leads to success. On the other hand, when it is unfavourable or negative, it is often reflected by an individual's lack of interest and non-participation in an

activity. Amoo and Rahman (2004) claimed that the relationship between attitudes and performance is the consequence of a reciprocal influence, in that attitudes affect achievement and achievement in turn affects attitudes. Attitudes provide meaningful, structured environment. In life we seek some degree of order, clarity, and stability in our personal frame of reference.

Attitudes help supply us with standards of evaluation. Via such attitudes as stereotypes, we can bring order and clarity to the complexities of human life. The attitude of teachers towards the girl child in the classroom have been claimed to be the reasons why girls perform poorly.

## **2.3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCHES**

### **2.3.1 Attitudes of both males and females teachers towards the girl child in upper primary grades.**

Teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and priorities are linked closely to their classroom behavior and practices. As Richardson (1996 p102) defined them, "Attitudes and beliefs are a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions". Teachers make constant decisions in their classrooms, and their beliefs, attitudes, and priorities provide a framework for these decisions. Teacher's decisions may negatively affect students learning especially when they hold a negative attitudes.

Johnson (2008) research contends that despite the affirmative actions taken on behalf of girls in formal education: free schooling at the primary and lower secondary level, provision of textbooks and exercise books and two sets of uniforms, access has improved but as a result of the myriad of factors that continue to plague girls' participation in schools, their participation in school is still negatively affected as they may be withdrawn or they voluntarily drop out of school before completion.

In an improved policy landscape, some researchers contend that participation of girls is still fraught with a lot of problems that impede on their participation. Research from UNICEF and Statistics Sierra Leone (2010) acknowledge that there are a multiple of reasons why students do not achieve academically in schools. One of the reasons identified that negatively affect performance is teachers' attitude and support.

Smith and Polumbo (1998p28) state that, school based studies often report negative expectations and attitudes towards girls on the part of both male and female teachers. In the study carried in Togo for example, teachers disparaged their female students characterizing them as “disruptive or as lacking interest in school” whereas they describe male students as “responsible, hardworking and scholarly” (Biraimah 1980). Positive attributes for girls related mainly to their appearances. In Malawi teachers depicted girls as less serious and less capable (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992 ). And they are less interested in their school work and sometimes lazy (Hyde 1997). In Guinea, teachers described boys as able to learn lessons well , more likely to participate in class and provide good responses to teachers questions and ambitious whereas girls were typically described as well behaved, but timid and not as hard working as boys (Anderson 1998). The reasons teachers give for boys better academic performance often relate to negative attributes of girls rather than positive attributes of boys (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992). or the particular interest in these regard are the responses of Kenyan primary school teachers in Appletons (1995) study to the question “ Girls turned to do less well in the primary leaving examination , Why do you think this is?” The largest number of responses were related to the effects of adolescence on girls who became disturbed by their bodily changes, lose interest in school, become interested in boys and in their own appearance and suffer from moods swings.

Other responses were related to sexuality, immorality and pregnancy. Male and female teachers gave similar responses although female teachers mentioned adolescence whereas male teachers mentioned interest in boys.

. Jones cited by Nyama in the Teachers' forum (1990) noted that in rural Zimbabwe more attention was given to boys and expectations were higher for them than girls. Spencer (1982) also suggests teachers spends more time talking to boys. This implies that boys receive significantly more assistance from teachers as a result of increased verbal communication.

Stanworth (1983) cited in Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008) reveals that, a number of attitudes displayed by teachers would impede educational progress for girls. These attitudes were not confined to male teachers but also to their female colleagues. Stanworth (1983) found out that teachers held stereotypical views of what female students would doing in future. Tauber (1998) assert that one's expectations about a person can eventually lead that person to behave and achieve in ways that confirm these expectations.

Decker and Emmer (1993) note that, because children are taught in a co-educational class it is tempting to assume that they are taught in the same way. Teachers will be convinced that they treat boys and girls alike. As a result, girls experience the inferior status afforded to them within the intimate sphere of classroom daily and this does not constitute the kind of climate in which confidence and sense of personal worth is inspired. This implies that teachers' negative attitude towards the girl child in the classroom may contribute to the poor performance of girls at primary level. It is the duty of every teacher to show positive attitudes by providing both sexes with opportunity to show what they can do. Hull (1980: p120) states that, "If we can present our subjects clearly, regular exercise skills in which pupils of lesser ability become a reasonably

competent and give them a structure for their work in which they can understand". This shows that teachers should have real responsibility of arousing the pupils' interests and restoring confidence and self-esteem

### **2.3.2 Effects of teachers attitudes in the classroom performance of the girl child in upper primary grades.**

Liu (2006) argues that "both male and female teachers' expectations towards girls may be linked to girl student's image and achievement level. Renold (2006) argue that teachers' gendered perceptions of students' ability is reflected in the type of praise and expectations they have of their students. Both female and male teachers often give female students less meaningful and less critical praise than boys. Liu (2006) explain that this aspect of teachers' behavior is particularly detrimental to girls because it means they do not receive feedback on their work that could help to develop deeper understanding of concept. A study of eight British Schools found out that although teachers believe that they give equal treatment to girls and boys in support of their learning, focus group interviews with students and class observation of the teacher-student interactions showed a balanced treatment is rarely achieved. Boys always dominate certain classroom interactions (Young, Warrington and Williams, 1999). Boys are attended to by male teachers more than girls, receive more help from teachers on areas which they have problems academically and are called on more often to give answers in class (Becker, 1989, Fennema and Reyes 1981). In schools which group students by ability, girls are significantly less likely to be put in high ability groups than boys of equal ability and are significantly more likely to be

wrongly assigned than boys (Hallinan and Sorenson, 1987). Even in the classroom, the questions asked of girls tend to be at a lower cognitive level than the more conceptual questions asked of boys (Fennema and Reyes, 1981).

According to Cooper and Good (1983) teacher expectations are the inferences that teachers make about the future academic achievements of students. The messages conveyed by teachers affect students' aspirations for learning and achievement as well as their expectations for behavior. Teachers' expectations about how students acquire knowledge have significant implications for what students actually learn (Banburg, 1994).

But findings from a study like that of Kinniard (2010) indicated no clear relationship between a student having a positive attitude towards his/her academic setting and achieving academic success in the classroom. Manoah, Indoshi and Othuon (2011) pointed out that there was research evidence showing that students' high performance in mathematics was not necessarily positively associated with their attitudes about mathematics and mathematics learning. They cited results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) that had been presented by Mullis (2000) as revealing that while Japanese student's over-performed students from many other countries in mathematics, their attitudes towards mathematics were relatively negative. In fact, many psychologists are of the view that there is no direct influence of attitude on behaviour devoid of other intervening variables. Although many psychologists have disputed the direct influence of attitude on behaviour, some of them have, however, argued that attitudes are useful in the sense that they give people a simplified and practical guide for appropriate behavior. Some psychologists have also claimed that while attitudes sometimes influence behaviour, it is our behaviour that sometimes shapes our attitudes. Johnson (1979) stated that

some attitudes help students to function effectively in school while others interfere with school life and that many educational psychologists believe it is far more important to promote positive attitudes in students than to ensure that they master verbal information, intellectual skills, cognitive strategies, or motor skills.

Results of many studies in the sciences as well as in mathematics have indicated a strong relationship between teacher's attitude and the academic performance of students especially girls. In his study, Tandoc (2006) found a high degree of relationship between teacher attitudes and performance of students in a mathematics diagnostic test. He went further to reason that an improvement in the teacher's positive attitude on girls in mathematics which means strengthening their positive attitude towards girls performance in mathematics lead to an improvement in their performance in mathematics. In African schools, as a rule, boys and girls tend to participate equally in classroom activities in the lower grades. However in the upper grades, boys tend to be more active than girls. Studies of the test results reveal equal academic achievement up to grade four and an achievement advantage for boys by the sixth grade. (Colclough, 2008) Liddell and Davidson (2004) found that students performed better on those skills they valued and those valued by their teachers and this motivate them to master the skills. Amoo (2002) was of the opinion that attitudes play a major role in the comprehensibility of mathematical concepts. According to him, when an attitude is favorable or positive, it enhances active performance that leads to success. On the other hand, when it is unfavorable or negative, it is often reflected by an individual's lack of interest and non-participation in an activity.

Kimmel and O'Shea (2012) state that teacher's attitudes on the performance of girls in science may be considered as both input and outcome variables because their perceptions towards the subject can be related to educational achievement in ways that reinforce higher or lower

performance. This means that when teachers have a positive attitude towards the performance of students, the student is likely to do well in a subject and have more positive attitudes towards that subject and when teachers have negative attitudes students tend to perform poorly in such subjects. Concerns over the influence of attitude on students' performance have in recent times shifted and inspired research into the forces behind attitude in itself. The general assumption is that an understanding of the foundational influencers of attitude will on the one hand give more understanding to just how attitude influences performance and on the other hand explain the observed discrepancies in the outcomes of researches on attitude and performance in literature.

### **2.3.3 Intervention strategies to reduce teacher attitudes towards girls' performances.**

Fuller (1994) states that, in Western countries they introduced teaching practices such as more open ended questioning and discussion and the use of programmed teaching and instructional materials which accentuate gender differences. Fuller (1994) found that teachers use open ended questioning reduced boy's advantage in learning mathematics. Similarly the introduction of a programmed teaching approach in Liberia resulted in improve performance on average for both boys and girls.

The evidence from three countries Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi shows that boys and girls are enrolled almost at parity at primary school as a whole and yet educational outcomes for girls are relatively poor. Even in Zimbabwe where educational provision has expanded dramatically since independence girls have been unable to fulfil their potential (CAMFED 1995). Gordon's study of teachers and pupils in Zimbabwe primary schools found that whilst there was a general awareness among teaching personal about poor performance among girls the causes were not perceived as the responsibility of the school (Gordon, 1993). Zvobgo (2004) argues that despite Zimbabwe having received what is purported to be one of best education system on the

continent, the stereotyping interferes with girl type of school subject's occupational choices and general life chances.

After realization of all factors that militate against academic performance of girls some intervention strategies were put in place in an attempt to address the continued poor performance of girls in schools.

The plan for action was developed with framework of the United Nations Girl's Education Initiative, the Leadership of the Ministry of Education, Non-Governmental Organizations such as FAWZ, CAMFED, The Girl Child Network and The Women and AIDS Support Network. UNICEF provided the background analysis and draft working document for the Girls Education Conference from which the first draft of the plan was derived at the end of 2004.

The plan was guided by the overall principles of The Convention of the Rights of the Child, Zimbabwe Education Act and The National Gender Policy. The Girl Education Strategic Plan aimed to accelerate Zimbabwe's progress towards universal primary education. Government has put in place various legal and administrative measures to prevent sexual abuse from happening in schools. There is a legal desk in the Ministry of Education that deals with cases of sexual abuse and other forms of improper association. Government through the help of donor community have embarked in an awareness campaign for the rights of a girl child. IGATE is funding some programmes which promote changing of attitudes towards girl child. This program emphasize the participation of girls in various activities of the education system.

Counselling especially by responsible female role models give girls more confidence in their own abilities and helps them through academic and emotional difficulties especially during

puberty. Reform strategies have targeted attitude change, curriculum development and more effective teacher education.

## **2.6 SUMMARY.**

The chapter mainly focused on reviewing literature in the impact of teacher attitudes and expectations on the academic performance of girls. The intervention strategies were highlighted and some implications for the literature review were also given.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outline the research design used in the study. The composition of the population and the sample are discussed. The chapter also highlighted on the sampling techniques and the research instruments used and therationalization for their use. The data gathering procedure was also discussed. Finally, the chapter looks at the validity and reliability as well as the ethical considerations in the study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

In this study the researcher employed descriptive survey. Fink and Kosecoff (1985p15) define survey as “A method of collecting information directly from people about their feelings, motivations, plans and personal education and financial background”. The descriptive survey gathered information through questionnaires where respondents are required to supply information on their perceptions, beliefs or attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary grades. The survey research utilizes a variety of instruments in order to study relationships, effects of treatments, changes and comparisons between groups. The descriptive survey design helpedthe researcher to see over and beyond the horizon (Chiromo, 2006). The researcher was able tointermingle with the respondents face to face. Eaton (1982) points out that a descriptive survey design helps the researcher to classify, organize and analyze information from questionnaires, interviews and documents. This method was appropriate to the study because it gave room for the use of instruments such as interview guides and questionnaires. This

helped the researcher to analyze the available information and draw conclusions and implications from the facts provided.

Borg and Gall (1992) postulate that descriptive surveys are useful for exploratory studies and are the best for producing information about particular characteristics in a limited population. Therefore this design was helpful since the study focused on a specific population of pupils and teachers in Gokwe South District. Borg and Gall (1992) also noted that the method is flexible and allows reflectivity in the learning of how the subjects think.

### **3.3 Population**

Population refers to “all the members of a real and hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which we wish to generalize the results of our research” (Borg and Gall 1992:p213). Haralambos and Holborn (1991:p83) define population as “a group of people to which the researcher wishes to generalize the findings of the research”. The population usually has one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to a particular study. In this study, the characteristics of the subjects in the study are that, they are all primary upper grade teachers and pupils.

In this study, the population was five schools out of 9 schools in the cluster. These five schools were taken as representatives of the cluster population.

#### **3.3.1 Sample**

A sample refers to that small group which is actually studied. A sample is defined by Best and Khan (1993) as a representation of the population with approximately the same characteristics as

the population to be studied and since the whole population is too big to be studied, only some of the members were studied and the information gained was used to infer the whole population. Five schools were selected to make up the sample. The sample drawn from the population had 70 respondents comprising of 50 pupils, 15 teachers and 5 school heads drawn from five schools.

### **3.3.2 Sampling technique**

Simple random sampling was used to come up with a sample of schools because time and cost constraints made it difficult for the researcher to study the whole population. The researcher employed simple random sampling to come up with a sample of schools which was a true representation of the population. The researcher used simple random sampling because it is free from bias as each person has an equal and independent opportunity of being selected (Chiromo, 2009). Simple random sampling is simple and economical in terms of cost and time. The schools are close together and the researcher could access them easily with minimum transport costs incurred.

In coming up with the sample of pupils, 12 pupils were randomly selected from each school, that is, upper grades girls in primary schools. The researcher used simple random sampling to select pupils to be interviewed. Goddard and Melville (2001) describe simple random sampling as when each element in the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected. Simple random sampling is free from bias and is a true representation of the population (Chiromo, 2009).

### **3.4 Research instruments**

Chiromo (2009) states that the researcher must design data gathering instruments that get the kind of data or information from which the researcher can draw valid conclusions. Research

instruments are tools for collecting information and data needed to find solutions to the problem under study. The researcher used the questionnaires, and interview instruments for gathering data. The use of these instruments was a deliberate way of triangulating the data collection instruments and also a way used to identify consistencies in the manner in which the respondents answered research questions. Triangulation helps to improve the validity and reliability of the findings under study. Triangulation is defined as the use of two or more methods of data gathering in the study of some aspect of human behavior (Cohen and Manion, 1980).

### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

According to Deuscombe (1998:p87) a questionnaire "...consists of a written list of questions...and each person who answers the particular questionnaire reads one identical set of questions." Best and Khan (1993) postulate a questionnaire as a form of inquiry used when factual information is required. As such, questionnaires were used in this research to obtain factual information on the teachers' attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary grades in Gokwe South District.

The advantage of using the questionnaires was that, it allowed for consistency and precision in terms of the wording of the questions thereby standardizing the answers. Data analysis was easier as the researcher could easily classify and quantify the responses of the subject on each variable. The respondents indicated their opinion on a given construct.

Tuckman (1994) asserts that, questionnaires reveal opinions, feelings and attitudes of the respondents and thus making it possible to measure what a person knows, likes or thinks.

Questionnaires enable subjects to remain anonymous hence they are more likely to give accurate information. The researcher found it less expensive and easier to produce and administer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed and completed in the presence of the researcher. This enabled the researcher to explain the importance, relevance and purpose of the investigation. The researcher also got a high response rate.

The questionnaires were semi structured, that means the questionnaires contained systematically compiled and organized ideas. The content of the questions was derived from the research questions and each question was a theme. Questionnaires were administered to 15 teachers and 50 pupils from the five sampled schools.

### **3.4.2 Interviews**

An interview allows the researcher to interact facially with the interviewee and asking questions personally (Chiromo, 2009). According to Borg and Gall (1989) respondents are not constrained by fixed answers and data can be analysed easily as responses can be easily compared.

A higher response rate is generally achieved. The researcher can clarify some questions when necessary. Moreover data collection is immediate and non-verbal responses could be observed and noted. The researcher used open ended questions in the semi-structured interview where a predetermined set of questions are used as specified by the interview guide. To allow for collection of as much relevant information as possible the interviews were not tightly structured. Therefore, relevant issues which were not included in the interview guide arose during the process of conducting personal interviews and were explored and noted down in

thesupplementary questions. Probing questions were also asked for elaboration and in order to seek clarification on issues raised. The contents of the interview guide were derived from the research questions.

However the researcher suffered from limited time since interviews are time consuming and also some respondents were not free to express their feelings due to different reasons.

### **3.5 Data collection procedures**

The researcher obtained permission from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to carry out research in Gokwe South District. The researcher made appointments with the school heads and informed them about the intended research on their school teachers and pupils.

The researcher administered the questionnaires to the subjects under study, gave them enough time to fill in the questionnaires and collected them on the same day. This was done in order to improve the low response rate associated with posted questionnaires. Administering questionnaires personally gave the researcher the opportunity to explain the purpose of the study and to the respondents. The researcher also explained how the subjects were selected and emphasized the confidentiality of the information obtained.

The researcher personally carried out the interviews. He interviewed the school heads. He prepared questions for the semi-structured interview. The researcher had direct contact with the subjects under investigation and was able to explain the purposes of the research.

### **3.6 Data analysis plan**

The researcher, after gathering information,organised, described and presented data in the form of tables, graphs and pie charts, focusing on each research question. Graphs enabled the researcher to make comparisons among responses. Inferences will be made from the quantified data. In this study, data collected through interviews was presented through verbatim. The quantitative data was shown through tables, whereas the qualitative data was presented by discussions arising from themes derived from the research questions.

### **3.7 Validity and reliability**

The researcher used triangulation to improve the validity and reliability of the findings. Reliability is the degree to which an instrument consistently measures what it is supposed to measure (Chiromo, 2009). Raimond (1993) states that reliability is concerned with the findings of the research and relates it to the credibility of the findings. Therefore, to ensure the findings from questionnaires were reliable, the questionnaires had the same questions which were answered by all the people who responded. Interviews were transcribed soon after being conducted.

Validity is considered as the extent to which the research findings represent accurately what is happening in the situation (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Coolican (1992) argues that a test is valid if it demonstrates or measures what the researcher thinks or claims it does. Validation of the interviews was done by interpreting the actions and experiences of the interviewees without any bias.

### **3.8 Ethical considerations**

Permission was obtained from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education through the DEO of Gokwe South District to conduct research in some of the schools in the district. Following this, the researcher visited the schools under study and was granted permission to interview school heads and distribute questionnaires to class teachers and pupils under study. Interviews were conducted in the classrooms with pupils and in the offices with teachers so as to engage them in their own comfortable space. All respondents were assured of anonymity. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the research procedures to be followed. The researcher did this so as to obtain informed consent to participants in the study.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter has described the research design that guided the study which was the Descriptive Survey Method. The population, its characteristics and quantity were also discussed while the sample and sampling methods used to come up with the sample were also explained. Random selection techniques were made use of in order to come up with the sample of pupils and schools. The data collection methods employed by the researcher were also dealt with. The last section addressed the reliability, validity and ethical concerns as they applied to the study. Presentation and analysis of data collected is done in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents and analyses the findings concerning the study on the effects of teachers' attitudes towards the performance of girls in primary schools. All the relevant information from questionnaires is presented in the form of tables, graphs and verbal accounts. Responses to interview questions are presented verbatim because it is qualitative data. The findings are presented in accordance with the research questions raised in chapter one.

#### Demographic Data Gender.

**Table 4.1 Gender of teacher participants (n=15)**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Males</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

The data in the table above show that 67% of the teachers in the sample were males and 33% were females. The reasons for gender imbalance for teachers taking upper class can be an attribute of female teachers' attitude towards teaching upper classes in primary schools. This implies that, females teachers are looked down to teach upper grades in schools which also affect the girls since there will be no role models to imitate.

## 4.2. DATA FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

**Table 4.2 shows the gender of school administrators. (n=5)**

Sex	Number of respondents	Percentage
Males	4	80%
Females	1	20%
Total	5	100

The table above shows the gender composition of school administrators at five schools. Eighty percent of the administrators were males and only twenty percent were females. This distribution shows gender disparities in leadership position and this may have some negative impact on the girls' academic as it may suggest that females are not capable of taking leadership roles in organisations. Sheehan (2012) argues that those who are in school system with high inequality in leadership positions might view themselves as not capable of leading. This may subsequently decrease their motivation and performance in schools.

**Table 4.3 Professional qualification of teachers.(n=15)**

SEX	C.E	%	DIP.ED	%	B.E.D	%	M.E.D	%	OTHER	%
MALES	1	7	7	47	2	13	0	0	0	0
FEMALES	0	0	4	27	1	7	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1	7	11	73	3	20	0	0	0	0

The data in table 4. 2 reveal that 80% are holders of diploma in education while 20% is a holder of a Bachelor of education degree. 70% of the male are holders of diploma in education, 20% of males are holders of Bachelor of education degree only10% is the holder of a certificate in education. This implies that .most teachers who participated in the study are qualified teachers. Generally the respondents were suitably qualified. Capturing such information was imperative in this study because the topic is exploring the attitudes of teachers hence requires adequately qualified educators to solicit reliable information.

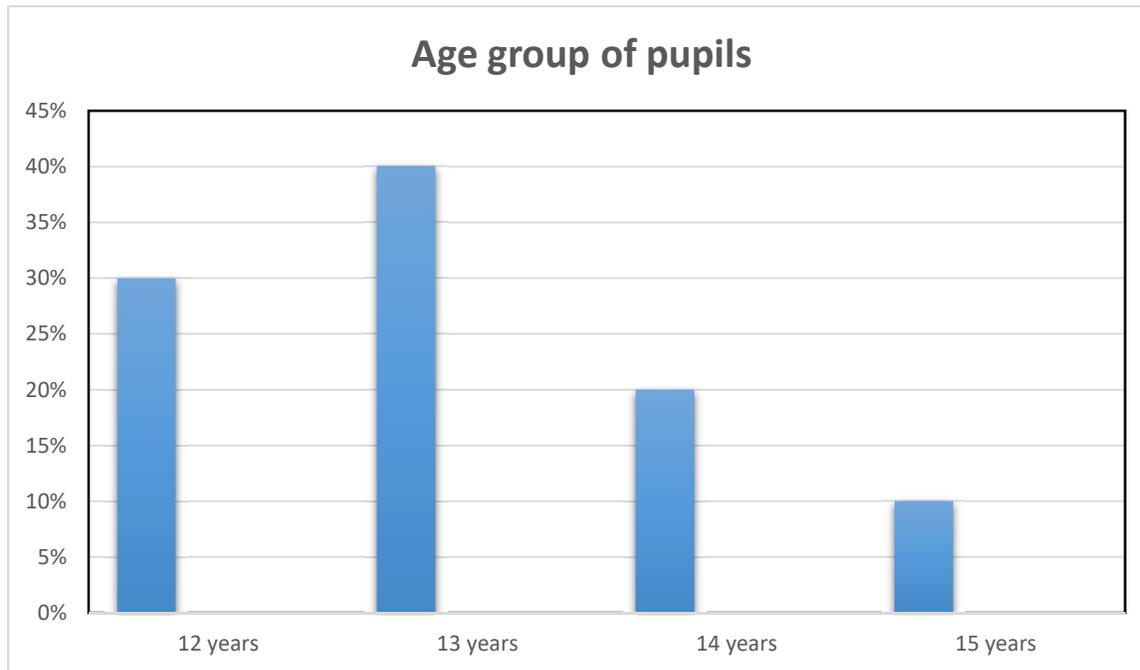
### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS**

**Table 4.4 shows teaching experience. (n=15)**

Class	Males	Percentage	Females	Percentage
0-10	4	40%	2	40%
11-20	4	40%	2	40%
21-30	2	20%	1	20%

Data in table 4.3 reveals that, 40% of the respondents taught for a period less than ten years. 40% of the respondents had a teaching experience ranging from eleven to twenty years. 20% of the respondents had taught for a period more than twenty years. The basic assumption is that respondents fully utilized their experience in giving responses to questions in the questionnaires. The data in the table reveal a fair representation and distribution of teacher's experiences and that state of affairs is valuable in assessing impact of teachers' attitudes and expectations on the academic performance of girl in upper grades in primary schools in Gokwe South District.

Figure 4. 1 shows the age of students.



The data in the figure show that 30% were aged 12years, 40% were aged 13 years, 20% were aged 14 years and 10% were aged 15 years. This implies that all the girls who participated in the research have reached adolescence stage and were mature enough to respond to questionnaires. The researcher believed that they were reliable informants in this study.

**4.3 Attitudes of both male and female teachers towards the performance of girl child in upper primary schools.**

**Table 4.5 shows the responses of teachers on performance of girls and boys in the classroom.**

QUESTION	AGREE	%	STRONGLY AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	STRONGLY DISAGREE	%
Girls perform the same as boys in academic	1	7	3	20	3	20	8	53
Support given to a girl child by schools	2	13	3	20	3	20	7	47
Puberty stage affect the performance of girls	5	33	7	47	1	7	2	13

The table indicate that 53% strongly disagree that boys perform the same while 20% disagree, another 20 % strongly agree that boys perform the same as boys, only 7% agree that boys perform the same as boys. This implies that, 73% of the respondents have a negative attitude towards the performance of girls in upper grades in primary schools. Only 27% of the respondents have a positive attitudes towards the girl child. The results are in tandem with the following findings:

Smith and Polumbo (1998) state that, school based studies often report negative expectations and attitudes towards girls on the part of both male and female teachers. In the study carried in Togo for example, teachers disparaged their female students characterizing them as “disruptive or as lacking interest in school” whereas they describe male students as “responsible, hardworking and scholarly” (Biraimah 1980). Positive attributes for girls related mainly to their appearances. In Malawi teachers depicted girls as less serious and less capable (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992). And they are less interested in their school work and sometimes lazy (Hyde 1997). In Guinea, teachers described boys as able to learn lessons well , more likely to participate in class and provide good responses to teachers questions and ambitious whereas girls were typically described as well behaved, but timid and not as hard working as boys (Anderson 1998). The reasons teachers give for boys better academic performance often relate to negative attributes of girls rather than positive attributes of boys (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992)

The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question which enquired on support given to a girl child by schools. For example toiletry and sanitary materials.

The table also shows that, 13% of the respondents agree with the statement and 20% strongly agree with the statement. On the other hand about 47% strongly disagree with the statements and 20% agree with the statement. If combined only 33% of the respondents agreed with the statements. On the other hand 67% of the respondents disagree with the statement that girls are receiving necessary support from schools. This implies that both male and female teachers including the administrators are gender blind, since most of them indicated that they do not support issues about gender in schools. The results are related to finding in Kenyan where primary school teachers in Appleton’s (1995) study were asked to respond to the question “Girls turned to do less well in the primary leaving examination, why do you think this is?” The

largest number of responses were related to the effects of adolescence on girls who became disturbed by their bodily changes, lose interest in school, become interested in boys and in their own appearance and suffer from moods swings. Other responses were related to sexuality, immorality and pregnancy. Male and female teachers gave similar responses although female teachers mentioned adolescence whereas male teachers mentioned interest in boys. The findings point to a negative attitudes of teachers towards the learning of girl child.

The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question which enquired on puberty stage affecting girls' performance in academics.

The table also indicate that, 47% strongly agree with the statement, 33% agree with the statement, about 13% strongly disagree with the statement and 7% only disagree with the statement. This means that, a large number of respondents agreed with the statement that, puberty stage affect girls' academic performance. This implies that teachers have a negative attitudes towards girls at puberty stag. This funding is agreement with the finding of Kenyan primary school teachers in Appletons (1995) study to the question "Girls tend to do less well in the primary leaving examination, why do you think this is?" The largest number of responses were related to the effects of adolescence on girls who became disturbed by their bodily changes, lose interest in school, become interested in boys and in their own appearance and suffer from moods swings. Other responses were related to sexuality, immorality and pregnancy.

The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question six which enquired on teachers' attendance on issues dealing with girls. For example workshops about empowerment of girl child.

#### 4.4 Effects of teachers' attitudes in the classroom performance of the girl child in upper primary schools.

The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question two which enquired on school support on the academic achievements of girls

**Table 4.6 shows support given to girls in upper grades by schools. (n=15)**

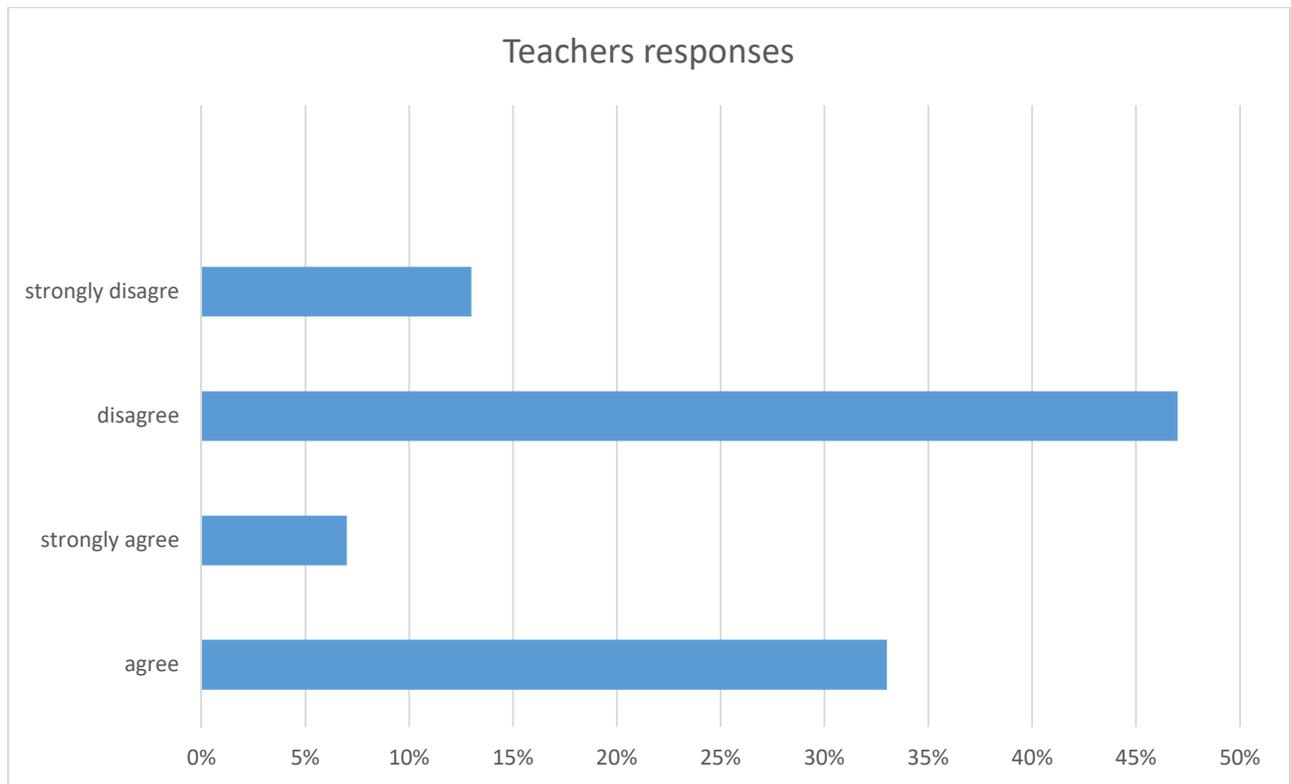
QUESTION	AGREE	%	STRONGLY AGREE	%	DISAGREE	%	STRONGLY DISAGREE	%
Does the school support academic achievement of girls	1	7	2	13	4	27	8	53

The table above indicate that 53% of the respondents strongly disagree that girls are accorded the same support as boys. 27% also disagree with the idea that girls are receiving the same support as boys. Only 13% which is less than a quarter strongly agree that girls are given the same support as boys while 7% agreed. This means more than the half of teachers strongly disagree that girls are getting the same support as boys. The negative attitudes of teachers influence their expectations towards the girl child. This result is in agreement with the findings of the following authors: Liu (2006) argues that "both male and female teachers' expectations towards girls may be linked to girl student's image and achievement level. Renold (2006) argue that teachers' gendered perceptions of students' ability is reflected in the type of praise and expectations they have of their students. Both female and male teachers often give female students less meaningful and less critical praise than boys. Liu (2006) explain that this aspect of teachers' behavior is

particularly detrimental to girls because it means they do not receive feedback on their work that could help to develop deeper understanding of concept. Boys are attended to by male teachers more than girls, receive more help from teachers on areas which they have problems academically and are called on more often to give answers in class (Becker, 1989, Fennema and Reyes 1981). In schools which group students by ability, girls are significantly less likely to be put in high ability groups than boys of equal ability and are significantly more likely to be wrongly assigned than boys (Hallinan and Sorenson, 1987). Even in the classroom, the questions asked of girls tend to be at a lower cognitive level than the more conceptual questions asked of boys (Fennema and Reyes, 1981).

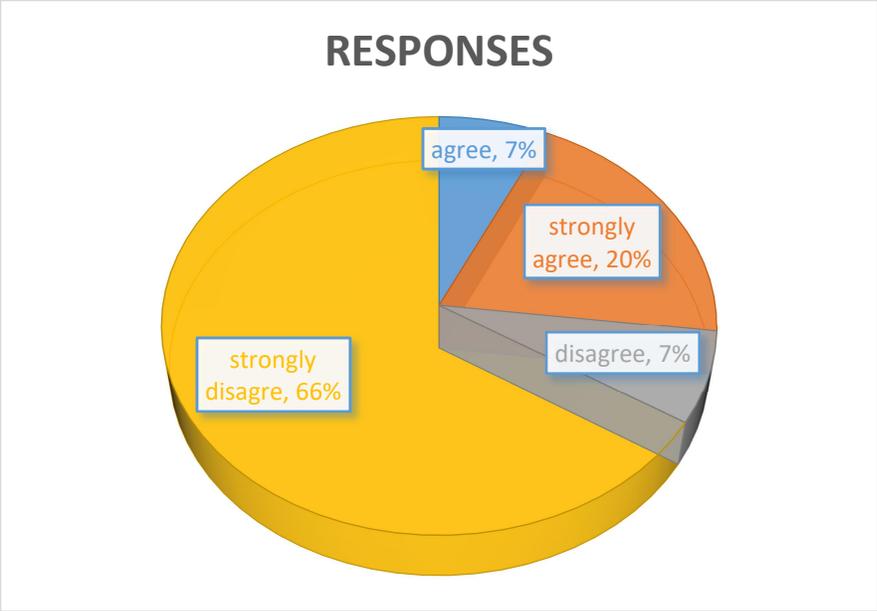
The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question three which enquired on treatment of boys and girls equally in the classroom

Figure: 4. 2 **shows teachers' responses on the treatment of boys and girls in the classroom.**



The table above indicate that, 13% of the respondents strongly disagree that teacher’s treaty boys and girls the same, 45% of the respondents disagree with the statements. On the other hand 7% strongly agree and 33% of the respondents agree. This means more than half of the respondents disagree with the statement that teachers treat boys and girls the same in their classrooms. The finding is in tandem with finding of study of eight British Schools which found out that, although teachers believe that they give equal treatment to girls and boys in support of their learning, focus group interviews with students and class observation of the teacher-student interactions showed a balanced treatment is rarely achieved. Boys always dominate certain classroom interactions (Young, Warrington and Williams, 1999).

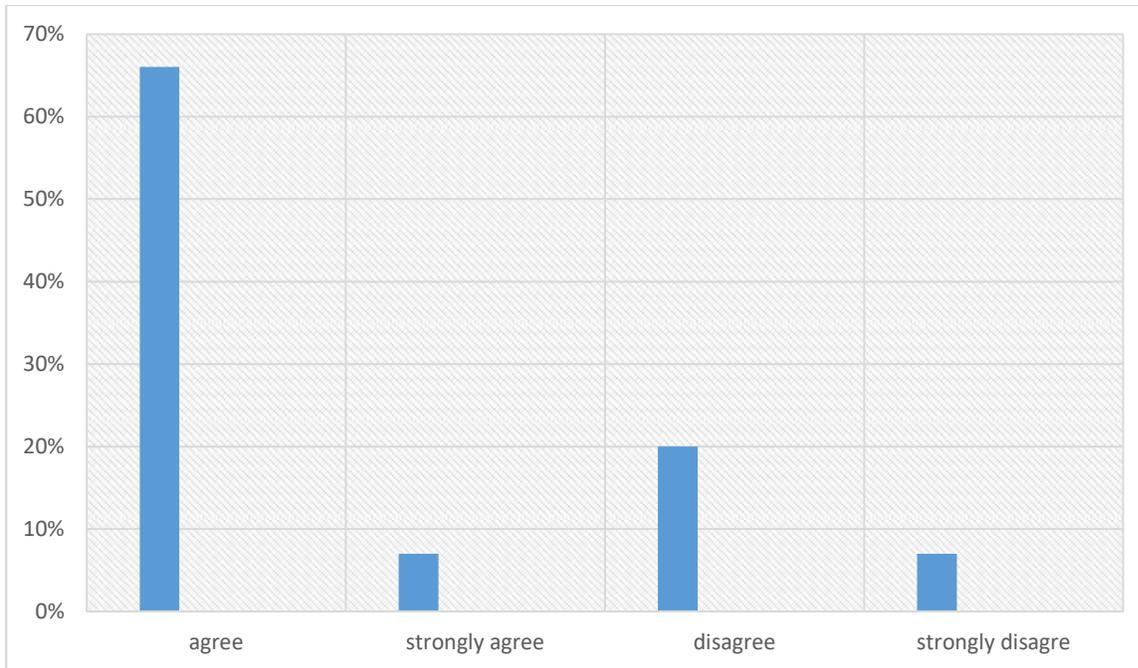
**Pie chart 4.1 Participation of teachers in issues related to girls.**



The pie chart above indicate that, 66% of the respondents strongly disagree that teachers always attend to issues of girls. 7% disagree with the statement. Only 27% of the respondents agree with the statements. This means most of the respondents view teachers participating less in issues of girls especially workshops. This means that teachers have negative attitude towards girls in schools.

The questionnaire for teachers indicate the following on question seven which enquired on the concentration of girls in their physical appearance more than school work at adolescence.

Figure: 4.3 shows responses by teachers on the concentration of girls on school work.



The bar graph above shows that, about 73% of the respondents agree that girls concentrate more on their physical appearance more than school work at adolescence. While only 27% disagree with the statement. Positive attributes for girls related mainly to their appearances. In Malawi teachers depicted girls as less serious and less capable (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992 ). And they are less interested in their school work and sometimes lazy (Hyde 1997). In Guinea, teachers described boys as able to learn lessons well , more likely to participate in class and provide good responses to teachers questions and ambitious whereas girls were typically described as well behaved, but timid and not as hard working as boys (Anderson 1998). The reasons teachers give for boys better academic performance often relate to negative attributes of girls rather than positive attributes of boys (Davidson and Kanyuka 1992).

**Table: 4.7 shows responses by teachers on the attitudes towards girls in upper primary grades. (n=15)**

QUESTION	YES	PERCENTAGE	NO	PERCENTAGE
Do teachers view girls as low performers	35	70%	15	30%
Teachers usually pass negative comments to girls	40	80%	10	20%
Teachers talk to boys more than they do to girls	30	60%	20	40%
Teachers assign different activities to boys and girls	33	66%	17	34%

The table above indicate that, 70% of school pupils which is more than a half agree that teachers view girls as low performers. Only 30% of the school pupils disagree with the notion that teachers view girls as low performers. This implies that teachers view girl as poor performers in academics as compared to their counterparts. The results are similar to the findings in the study carried in Togo where, teachers disparaged their female students characterizing them as “disruptive or as lacking interest in school” whereas they describe male students as “responsible, hardworking and scholarly” (Biraimah 1980).

The table also indicate that, about 80% of the respondents agree that teachers usually pass negative comments to girls and only 20% of the pupils disagree with the statement. This implies that, most girls receive negative comments from teachers which is a clear indication that teachers have negative attitudes towards girls. Only few girls who said no, about 20% of the respondents sometimes are better performers who usually receive some motivation from their teachers. The view of pupils strongly support the idea that teachers have negative attitudes towards girls as one

of the teachers commented that, *boys have self-confident on school work...* The results are in tandem with those found by Renold (2006) who argues that, “teachers gendered perceptions of students’ ability is reflected in the type of praise and expectations they have on their students.” Both female and male teachers often give female students less meaningful and less critical praise than boys.

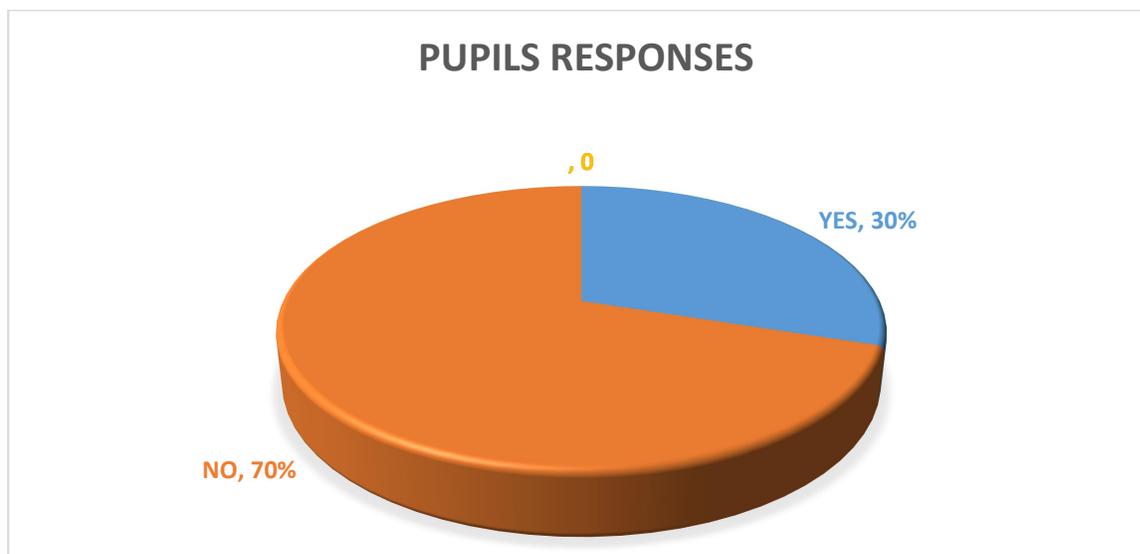
The table show that, 60% of the respondents agreed that teachers interact more frequently with boys than with girls, only 40% which is less than a half see teachers interacting with both of them the same. This implies that teachers, assist boys more frequently than girls which is a clear indication that teachers have negative attitudes towards the girl child. This view is also supported by the teachers as one teachers commented when he was asked “ if you were given option to choose a single sex class, which class do you prefer to teacher” *I prefer boys because they have self- confidence on school work and they value their school work.* The teacher comment indicate that in the classroom he render most of his assistance to boys than to girls which is a clear indication of negative attitude toward the girl child. The finding are in agreement with those of Liu (2006) who said that, “this aspect of teachers’ behaviour is particularly detrimental to girls because it means they do not receive feedback on their work that could help to develop deeper understanding of the concepts.”

The table also indicate that about 66% which is more than a half of respondents says girls and boys are given different assignment by teachers. While only 34% says teachers give both boys and girls equally and same assignment. This implies that when giving assignment teachers give gender based assignment. Allocation of assignment by gender can led to a bias towards one sex group and disadvantage the other. The results are in tandem with the findings of Fennema and Reyes (1981) who say, “The questions asked of girls turned to be of a lower cognitive level than

the more conceptual questions asked to the boys.” This shows that teachers have negative attitude towards girls. The view is also supported by Smith and Polumbo (1998) who state that, school based studies often report negative expectations and attitudes towards girls on the part of both male and female teachers. In carried in Togo for example, teachers disparaged their female students characterising them as disruptive or as lacking interest in school, whereas they describe male students as responsible hard working and scholarly (Biraimah 1980).

The questionnaire for pupils indicate the following on question eight that enquired on the participation of girls in the classroom.

**Pie chart: 4.2 shows responses by pupils on the opportunity to participate in classroom.**



The pie chart above show that, 70% of the respondents which is more than a half say teachers do not accord students the same opportunity in classroom. Only 30% agreed that teachers give same opportunity to boy and girls in the classroom. This implies that, teachers give boys more opportunity in class than girls. The result is in tandem with the finding of Becker (1989) who argues that, boys are attended to by teachers more than girls, receive more help from teachers on

areas which they have problems academically and are called on more often to give answer in class.

Interviews with school heads on the question one enquired on students' performance indicates the following.

Table: 4.8 shows responses by school heads on the performance of boys and girls in the classroom.

Sex	Boys	Percentage	Girls	Percentage
Responses	4	80%	1	20%

The table above shows that 80% of the respondents indicated that boys perform better than girls while only 20% of the respondents indicate that girls are better than boys. This implies that most of the school heads view girls as low performers which is a clear indication of a strong negative attitudes among school heads which can also influence their teachers. The results agree with a study carried in Guinea, where teachers described boys as able to learn lesson well, more likely to participate in class and provide good responses to teachers' questions and ambitious, whereas girls were typically described as well behaved, but timid and not as hard working as boys (Anderson 1998).

Interviews with the school administrators indicate the following on school support on girl's academic achievements. Most of the school heads agree that school provide support to girls but they differ in the support rendered to girls since questions on questionnaires for pupils on question which enquired on provision of sanitary materials, many respondent indicated that

school do not provide these sanitary materials. This implies that school heads are gender blind since they ignore issues of gender in their schools.

#### **4.5 Interventions to reduce teachers' attitudes towards girls' performance.**

##### **4.5.1 Teachers views on reducing gender discriminations in schools.**

In the open ended questionnaires question 18 with teachers which enquired on interventions to reduce negative attitudes. Most of the teachers indicated that, there is a need of teachers to be educated through workshops about issues of girls and how to handle them. Like one teachers wrote “sometimes *teachers do not know how to handle girls especially during their puberty stage, therefore there is a need of some workshops on issues of girls like what IGATE is doing*”. The statement above implies that, workshops and seminars about issues of girl child in schools can held to reduce negative attitudes of teachers.

##### **4.5.2 School administrators view on reducing gender discrimination in schools.**

The interview with school administrators on challengers faced by teachers in supporting the girl child indicated that most of the head teacher agreed that teachers face challenges when supporting the girl child as one of the head teacher commented “*male teachers cannot go into depth pertaining to sensitive matters*”. This implies that, teachers especially males teachers do not support girls. The heads gave the solutions to the challenging faced by teachers as one head commented that, to quote “*schools should make use of female teachers as well as providing friendly units at schools*” This implies that schools should create a gender sensitive environment which promote academic achievement of both girls and boys.

The finding above are in tandem with the finding of Fuller (1994) who states that, in Western countries they introduced teaching practices such as more open ended questioning and

discussion and the use of programmed teaching and instructional materials which accentuate gender differences. Fuller (1994) found that teachers use open ended questioning reduced boy's advantage in learning mathematics. Similarly the introduction of a programmed teaching approach in Liberia resulted in improve performance on average for both boys and girls.

#### **4.6 SUMMARY.**

The information which was gathered from primary school pupils, teachers and administrators was presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. The data gathered revealed that teachers and administrators view girls as performing lower than boys in academic work. Teachers' expectations generally influence girls' performance. It also revealed that teachers believe girls have a negative attitude towards school work when they reach puberty stage. From the information analysed, schools have been found to facilitate effective learning for both boys and girls. However it was found that there are no role models for girls at school to inspire them academically. A number of strategies to reduce gender discrimination in schools were given. The next chapter will deal with summary, conclusion and recommendations.





## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter seeks to give a summary of the procedures, summary of the findings and conclusions of the whole study.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS.**

The researcher has introduced the background to the teacher's attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper grades in primary schools. The nature of the problem was also covered. The researcher laid bare the research questions and also looked at the significance of the study. Delimitations of the study and limitations of the study were discussed. The relevant terms were also defined.

The researcher mainly focused on reviewing literature in the teachers attitudes and expectations on the academic performance of girls. The intervention strategies were highlighted and some implications for the literature review were also given.

The researcher used a descriptive survey method in this study. Research questions which sought to find whether teacher attitudes have effects on the performance of girls in upper primary level, how do these attitudes affect the classroom performance of the girl child, strategies that can be put in place so that teachers maintain positive attitudes towards the girl child's performance and what intervention strategies can be put in place to counter negative attitudes towards the performance of the girl child in the classroom.

The researcher employed questionnaires and interviews as data gathering instruments. The sample comprised of 50 grade seven girls selected using simple random sampling technique, 15 upper grades teachers and 5 administrators who were purposively sampled. This method of data collection helped the researcher to understand the effects of teacher attitudes on the academic performance of girls in upper primary schools.

The data collected were presented in tables, pie charts and graphs. The researcher made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of presenting data. The analysis and interpretation of data was done under different subheadings.

The researcher focused on giving the summary of the entire project procedures. It spelt out how the project was carried out. Findings of the study were outlined using some themes related to the research questions. The conclusions from the findings were given and some recommendations for further studies were suggested.

### **5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY**

The study found out that teachers generally linked pupils' academic performance to gender. Teachers believed that boys perform better than girls in upper primary level. The study also found that teachers had preset reasons why girls perform lower than boys in upper grades at primary level. The same results and views were obtained from the school administrators and upper grades girls.

The study also found that teachers' expectations towards girls have a great impact on their performance. Teachers often give female students less meaningful and less critical praise than males. This behavior of teachers is detrimental to girls because it means they do not receive feedback on their work that could help to develop deeper understanding of the concepts

The study has found some strategies that can be implemented to reduce teachers' attitudes in class.

These include: open ended questions and discussion methods to both boys and girls, motivating girls to participate in the classroom, implementing gender equity and equality in education and active involvement of girls into academic activities.

## **5.4 CONCLUSIONS**

### **5.4.1 Teachers attitudes and academic performance of the girl child.**

The researcher concluded that teachers generally linked pupils' performance to gender. Teachers believe that boys perform better than girls in upper primary grades. The largest number of responses were related to the effects of adolescence on girls who become disturbed by their bodily changes and most schools especially in rural setup do not have resources to help the girl child. Teachers end up preferring boys who are not disturbed as girls.

### **5.4.2 Effects of teachers attitudes in the classroom performance of the girl child in upper primary grades.**

The researcher concluded that teachers' attitudes on girls have a great bearing on their performance. The messages conveyed by teachers affect girls' aspirations for learning and achievement because generally teachers pass less meaningful and less critical comments to girls.

### **5.4.3 Interventions to reduce teachers' attitudes towards girls' performance.**

The researcher concludes that some strategies should be implemented to reduce teachers' attitudes towards the performance of the girl child in upper grades. These include questions and

discussion methods to both boys and girls, motivating girls to participate in the classroom activities, implementing gender equity and equality in education and active involvement of girls into academic activities.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The negative impact of teacher attitudes on the academic performance of girls in upper grades, the researcher recommends that:

- In service can enable teachers to become more aware of their biases and different treatment of pupils and help them to make positive changes in their thinking and behavior.
- Use of mixed grouping and learning activities whenever possible. These methods strengthens students and reduce weaknesses.
- Teachers can be helped to view intelligence as a multi-faceted and continuously changing quality and improve participation in the classroom.
- More female teachers should be encouraged to teach upper grades in primary schools and to take some leadership roles,
- Some workshops should be organized so as to reduce negative attitudes in teachers.

## **5.6 FURTHER STUDY**

Although the study has achieved its aim and objectives of investigating the effects of teacher attitudes on the poor academic performance of girls in upper primary level, it is necessary to verify the accuracy of grade seven results. It would also be important to find out why other girls succeed academically despite the negative attitudes from their teachers. Further research

could be carried to find out if suggested interventions to reduce gender bias in the class could improve girls' academic performance. An investigation could be carried to find out if provision of female teachers in upper grades could improve performance of girls.

## **REFERENCES**

Amoo, S.A. (2002). *Analysis of problems encountered in teaching and learning of mathematics in secondary schools*. ABACUS: The Journal of Mathematics of Nigeria.

Amoo, S.R. and Rahman, M.A. (2004). *Secondary School Students' attitudes to learning mathematics in the world of Information and Technology: Implications for Mathematics teachers and teacher preparation*.

Baker, C. (1992). *Attitudes and Language*. England. Cleveton.

Becker, H. (1998). *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York. Press of Glencoe.

Best, J.W. and Khan, J.V. (1993). *Research in Education*. Allyn and Bacon. Chicago.

Bolaji, C. (2005). *A Study of factors influencing attitudes towards mathematics in the junior secondary schools*. *Mathematics Teaching in Nigeria*. 2(9)

Borg, W.R. and Gall, M.D. (1992). *Educational Research: An Introduction*. New York. Longman.

Chen, S. and Boucher, H.C. (2008). *Personality and Social Psychology*. Journal of Research in Personality.

Chiromo, A.S. (2009). *Research Methods and Statistics in Education. A Student Guide*. Midlands State University. Gweru.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education*. London. Routledge.

- Cooper, H. and Good, T. (1983). *Pygmalion Grows up*. New York. Longman.
- Davidson, J. and Kanyuka, M. (1992). *Women's Education in Sub Saharan Africa*.
- Denscombe, M. (1998). *The Good Research Guide*. Buckingham. Open University Press.
- Firk, A. and Kosecoff, J. (1985). *Gender Stereotyping and Female Pupils' Perception*. Los Angeles. University of California.
- Goddard, R.D. and Sweetland, S.R. (2001). *Academic Emphasis for Urban Elementary Schools and Students Achievement in Reading Mathematics. A Multi-level Analysis*. New York. McGraw Hill Book Company.
- Gordon, M. (1993). *Educational policy and gender in Zimbabwe*. Journal of Educational Research.
- Haralambos, M. and Holborn, M. (2004). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. London. Collins Education.
- Hyde, J.S. (1997). *Gender Similarities Characterise Mathematics Performance*. Science 321.
- Johnson, A.O. (2008). *A Profile of Girls' Education in Kenema District in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone*. J. Soc. Sci. Humanity.
- Johnson, A.O. (2013). *Attitude to Education and academic performance for in-school adolescent girls in the eastern province of Sierra Leone*. Sierra Leone. Njala University.
- Kara, A. (2009). *The Effect of a "Learning Theories" Unit on Students' Attitude towards Learning*. Australian Journal of Teacher Education.

- Kinniard, J. (2010). *Does Attitude impact academic achievement? Unpublished Masters' Research Project*. Ohio University. College of Education.
- Liddell, M.J. and Davison, S.K. (2004). *Students attitudes and their academic performance. Is there any relationship?* Med Teach 26 (1).
- Liu, L. (2006). *Computer Attitude and Achievement: Is Time an Intermediate Variable*. Technol. Teach. Educ.
- Manoah, S.A, Indoshi, F.C, and Othuon, L.O.A. (2011). *Influence of attitude and performance of students in mathematics curriculum Educational Research*. 2 (3) 965-981
- Mullis, L.V.S. (2000). *TIMSS 1999 International Mathematics Report: Findings from IEA's report of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study of Eighth Grade*. MA Boston College. Chestnut Hill.
- Okoro, C. and Uwah, C.S. (2013). *Teacher Gender Attitude of Primary School Pupils to Schooling in UyoMetropolc*. Nigeria. Akwalbom State.
- Renold, E. (2001). *"Square- Girls" Femininity and Negotiation of Academic Success in Primary Schools*. British Journal of Sociology 27(5) 577-588.
- Smith, S. (2004). *Teaching and the gender imbalance: Do we need more mates?*
- Tauber, R. (1998). *Good or Bad." What Teachers Expect from Students they generally get"*. Eric Digest 1-4.
- Tandoc, N.L. (2006). *Attitudes and performance in Mathematics of University of Bargaui High School Students*. UB Research Journal. 20(8).
- Young, M, Warrington, M. and William, J. (1999). *The Gender Gap and Classroom Interactions: Reality or Rhetoric British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 25(8).

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

My name is Owen Chikara a student at Midlands State University doing a Bachelor of Education Degree in Educational Foundation. I am carrying out a research on the effects of teachers' attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary schools in Gokwe South District. This questionnaire seeks to find out your perception. Please feel free to add any relevant information that maybe pertinent to the topic. The information you shall give shall be treated in strict of confidence and shall be used for academic purposes only. No names should be written anywhere on this paper.

You are further asked to respond to all questions below by placing a tick

In the appropriate box of your chosen response.

### Section A: Personal details

1. Sex

Male  Female

2. Highest professional qualification.

C.E  Dip Ed  B Ed  M Ed  Other, specify

3. Teaching experience

1-5 years  6-10 years  11-15 years  16 -20 years

Other

### Section B: Teachers' opinions

Indicate your response by using the scale below:

No	Item	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Girls perform the same as Boys in academics.				
2.	Schools support academic achievements of boys and girls the same.				
3.	Teachers treat girls and boys equally in their classrooms.				
4.	Are girls getting the same feedback as boys concerning their academic performance				
5.	Puberty stage affect the performance of girls in primary schools.				
6.	Schools provide support to a girl child eg adequate toilets and sanitary materials.				
7.	Regular workshops (at cluster and district level) are held for teachers to improve their effectiveness.				
8.	Girls always concentrate on their physical appearance more than school work at adolescence?				

9.	Teachers have a negative attitude towards education for girl child at adolescence				
10.	Time allocated on the time-table for girls programme are equal to boys?				
11.	The school administrators give the relevant support to a girl child?				
12.	Teacher expectations have a negative impact on the achievement of girls.				
13.	The district resource centre is well equipped with learning materials for all the pupils.				

14. Girls tend to perform poorly in the grade seven examination, Why do you think so?

.....

.....

.....

15. If you were given option to choose a single sex class, which class do you prefer to teach?  
Give reasons for your answer.

.....  
.....

16 Do girls change behaviour towards school during adolescence? Yes

No

18 Girls are hardworking than boys Yes  No

17Do you give individual help to a girl child at adolescence? Yes  No

18. What strategies can be put in place so that teachers maintain positive attitudes towards the girl child's classroom performance?

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

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

My name is Owen Chikara a student at Midlands State University doing a Bachelor of Education Degree in Educational Foundations. I am carrying out a research on the effects of teachers' attitudes towards the performance of girls in upper primary schools in Gokwe South District. This questionnaire seeks to find out your perception. Please feel free to add any relevant information that maybe pertinent to the topic. The information you shall give shall be treated in strict of confidence and shall be used for academic purposes only. No names should be written anywhere on this paper.

You are further asked to respond to all questions below by placing a tick

In the appropriate box of your chosen response.

### Section A: Personal details

1. Sex

Male  Female

2 AGE (YEARS)

12  13  14  15  OTHER

### Section B: (Answer the following questions)

YES

NO

1. Teachers generally view girls as low performers
2. Teachers usually pass negative comments to girl
3. Teachers talk to boys more than they do to girls
4. Upper grades in primary schools is generally taught by males
5. Teachers assign different activities to boys and girls.
6. Are teachers free to give you individual help?
7. Do your school provide you with sanitary pads?
8. Do teachers accord you same opportunity to participate in classroom?

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL HEADS**

1. Who perform better in academics? Boys or Girls.

2 Does the school support academics achievement of boys and girls in the same way?

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

3 Do teachers treat girls and boys equally in their classroom? Justify.

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

4 What support do you give girls at adolescence?

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

5 Are there any challenges faced by teachers in supporting the girl child? .....

6 If yes what are these challenges?

.....  
.....

7 What are the possible solutions to these challenges?

.....  
.....

Thank you for your time



All communications should be addressed to  
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary  
Education"

Telephone: 799914 and 705153  
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"  
Fax: 791923



ZIMBABWE

**Reference:** C/426/3 Harare  
Ministry of Primary and  
Secondary Education  
P.O Box CY 121  
Causeway  
Harare  
**ZIMBABWE**

26 August 2015

Chikara Owen  
St Paul's Primary School  
Box 831  
Gokwe

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE  
PROVINCE: GOKWE SOUTH DISTRICT: MAPFUNGAUTSI; GOKWE  
SCHOOL; CZM PRY ST PAUL'S PRIMARY AND' SENGWA**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research at the above mentioned  
schools in Midlands Province on the research title:

**"TO INVESTIGATE ON THE EFFECTS OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS THE PERFORMANCE OF GIRLS IN UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
GOKWE SOUTH DISTRICT**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial  
Director Midlands Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in  
Education Research.

You are required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and  
Secondary Education by December 2015.

P. Muzawazi  
**Director:** Policy Planning, Research and Development  
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
cc: PED - Midlands Province



All communications should be addressed to "The Provincial Education Director"  
Telephone: 054- 222460

Fax: 054- 226482



Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education  
P.O Box 737  
GWERU

31 August 2015

Mr/Mrs/Miss: CHIKARA OWEN  
ST. PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Box 831  
GOKWE

Dear Sir/Madam

**APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE**

Permission to carry out a Research on:-

TO INVESTIGATE ON THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER'S ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS THE PERFORMANCE OF GIRLS IN UPPER PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS IN GOKWE SOUTH DISTRICT

In the Midlands Province has been granted on these conditions.

1. That in carrying out this you do not disturb the learning and teaching programmes in schools.
2. That you avail the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with a copy of your research findings.
3. That this permission can be withdrawn at anytime by the Provincial Education Director or by any higher officer.

The Education Director wishes you success in your research work and in your University College studies.



MATSVENU. V.

**Education Officer (Professional Administration And Legal Services)  
FOR PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MIDLANDS**



# MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

P. BAG 9055  
Gweru  
Zimbabwe

Telephone: (263) 54 260404/260337/260667/260450  
Fax: (263) 54 260233/260311

---

## FACULTY OF EDUCATION

### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, MANAGEMENT & CURRICULUM STUDIES

---

August, 2015

Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture  
P. O. Box 8022  
CAUSEWAY

**RE: SPECIAL PERMIT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY**

The Faculty of Education's Department of Educational Foundations, Management and Curriculum Studies at Midlands State University is seeking your permission to allow Mr. MS. CHIKARA OWEN....., A Bachelor of Education in Educational Foundations student in the department, to conduct his/her research in your ministry. The research will be conducted in GOKWE SOUTH..... District/Province.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for the cooperation you have always given this Department in this respect.

**E. P. Mangwanya, Ph.D.**

*Chair, Educational Foundations, Management & Curriculum Studies*



