

Myths and Practices of Initiation Ceremonies among the Bemba of Kasama District: Implications on Early Marriages and Quality Education in Zambia

Dr. Martin Banda¹, Mable Sitali Tembo²

¹PhD, Head of Department- Psychology and Sociology, Kwame Nkrumah University

wodwala@gmail.com

²Head of Department- Education Administration and Policy Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University

nowasita@yahoo.com

Abstract— *For many years, the quality of education has been compromised, the performance of girls has been deteriorating. The article problematizes the myths and practices during initiation ceremonies and the implications on the delivery of quality education, it was realised that myths and practices during initiation ceremonies actually help in good moral building.*

The results of the research is that a considerable amount of schools has had been recording quite a number school dropout of which the majority are girls. Among other reasons, teenage pregnancies and early marriages have been cited as the main dropout causes in Kasama.

This implies that, myths and practices during initiation ceremonies affect the girl's education positively and negatively. The positive effects such as building of good morals, taking care of oneself, working hard as a girl among others, if they are accurately acquired and implemented by the initiates, then Zambia as a country will develop as people will be skill full, vigilant and knowledgeable.

Keywords— *Education, Initiation, Marriages Myths and Quality Education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The impact of early marriages on the delivery of quality education has been of great concern ever since education gender equality was introduced. Many countries have come to realize that the education of girls is vital to the development of a country since girls are the most affected. It is important for the government of Zambia to work in conjunction with the traditional leaders so that the traditional teachings about initiation ceremonies is included and promoted in the education system.

These young people are the tools that are vital to development of the nation thus, improving the delivery of quality education. It is believed that people or human resource is the most important asset a country has. All other resources such as financial, industrial, natural and other are secondary. The *Human Capital Theory* backs this observation. The theory contends that educating and training people is productive investment with immeasurable returns in terms of national development.

Therefore, it is important that the young people are educated, this means that Zambia and other developing nations need good formulae to develop people's potential to bring out needed varied skills and competences. This can be through the eradication of vices such as early marriages because if they are not looked upon, the effects trickle on the society in terms of decay of human power in all spheres of the economy and politics. Developing nations generally has no adequate skilled people, this has been caused by factors such as early marriages.

Problem Statement

Despite the campaign against early marriages, it has been noted that it has continued to be a major concern to the Zambian society because of the rampant of the challenge. With view of the above rationale, the researchers aspired to find out the myths and practices during initiation ceremony of the Bemba of Kasama district of Northern Province. Thereafter, investigate the implications on early marriages

and the delivery of quality education in selected secondary schools in Kasama district.

Research Objectives

The research was guided by the following objectives;

1. To investigate the importance of the initiation ceremony among the Bemba people.
2. To find out what myths take place during the initiation ceremony.
3. To examine the cultural practices during the initiation ceremony.
4. To state the implications of myths and practices on early marriages and education.

Myths and practices during initiation ceremony are very important to society for they are a foundation or basis of morality. Therefore, the research will serve to inform the parents, teachers, and the government about the implications of myths and practices on early marriages. Additionally, the research will further discuss the implications of early marriages on the education system in Kasama urban district and will provide alternative solutions, strategies and measures to be taken in reducing early marriage so as to attain quality education. The project is meant to find possible solutions which can be used to improve pupil's performance in Kasama. If this vice can be given some attention (remedy), the performance of pupils shall be improved. When academic performance of pupils improve, it means that the academic performance of the schools shall also improve.

The research may be of benefit even to the community around as it shall improve girls' performance in education because education is the key to improve social economic status of girls as well as the living standards. To the greater extent, benefits in this undertaking means well to every stakeholder as the learning resources will improve and thereafter, it shall foster learning interest in the girl child. Consequently, this will bring about improved academic performance of the schools.

This research will also help in providing a health learning environment, which facilitate in the cultivation of each pupil's full educational potential. The overarching aim of school education, therefore, is to promote the full and well-rounded development of the social, affective moral status so that each can be developed into a complete person for his / her own personal fulfilment and the good of the society or community.

Research Design

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the collection of data and information. Specifically, a descriptive survey design was used to collect comprehensive information on issues of initiation practices and education among the Bembas.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

An initiation is a process, a ritual of transmission through which a new identity of a girl is constructed. It is a process through which the basis of adult life is laid down for an individual. According to Arnold Van Gennep (1906), there are three stages, these are: first is the separation: when an individual is separated from the mother and confined to a house of initiation. Secondly, the margination stage, which demonstrates the insignificance of the initiate is taught and equipped with extensive body of societal traits that a woman is expected to have understood and used in order to know how to live with her newly attained phase of life. Thirdly, aggregation stage, it is during this stage that an initiate is incorporated into the new state of life (adulthood). This stage signifies the end of the whole initiation process and the exit in a public spectacle where the initiate is introduced to the rest of the community as an adult.

For example, in Zambia, while equal access to education seems to have received considerable attention as a significant factor in improving the education of girls, the drop out and completion rates show that equality for education has not been achieved (MOE, 2005). The surest way to keep a people down is to educate the men and neglect the women. If you educate a man you simply educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (Kwesiga, 2002). The education of women is among the chief challenges that most developing countries are confronted today because its implications go beyond education-specific issues as noted by Kwesiga (2002). Education is probably the most powerful route by which a woman can be empowered to take more control of her life and that of her children. Kofi Annan argued that: Eliminating gender discrimination and empowering women are among the paramount challenges facing the world today. When women are educated and free to take the opportunities life affords them, children thrive and countries flourish, reaping a double dividend for women and children (UNICEF, 2007).

Such claims stress the importance of educating the female population of the human race and the benefits that the children, the community and the country at large stand to

gain. Kwesiga (2002) strongly argued that: The role of education system should be to conserve and teach what is best of the Zambian tradition and do away with whatever has become insignificant. The disparities that exist between the boy and the girl in education, particularly in rural areas requires insightful investigation. Though, there has been remarkable improvement on enrolment, there is still glaring gaps in the retention rates of the female learners. This calls for analysis to ascertain the factors that could be militating against girls' education. While a number of the factors raised interact and reinforce each other, there is a need to assess the cultural traditional factor. Its potential to negate, and/or destroy the process of education should not be underestimated. The rural area should not be side-lined in any way, because most of Zambia's population lives there. Other writers who have contributed to Zambian women's education include Rasing(1995), Rude (1999), Rasing (2001), Kashiwa (2004) and Chondoka and Bota (2007). Equally, these authors have focused on cultural traditions with specific attention on initiations rites and their relevance in the current world. However, they do not point out the negative impact these traditional practices could have on the girl's aspiration for academic education. Maigenet's (1982) takes different approach from the others above. She demonstrates how cultural traditional practices could find their way into the school system and adversely affect the participation of girls. This information is important to this study because it contributes to identifying the factors that stand as a barrier to female education. Richards (1958) and Rasing (1995) attempted to show how the amalgamation of the traditional rites and the Catholic tenets is functioning despite attempts by the early Catholic missionaries to completely eradicate the indigenous people's traditional practices such as initiation rites. For example, Wright (2003) and Taylor (2006) have argued that missionaries saw European invasions as providential for the purpose of evangelism however, they considered the religious practices of the Africans as immoral; such as the lecherous dancing during traditional ceremonies. Some of the missionaries prohibited the teaching of African music because they thought it was a form of paganism (Wright, 2003; Taylor, 2006). Interestingly, Rasing (1995) despite writing in favour of the initiation rites, agrees that the initiation rites have a tendency of upholding the fundamental difference between male and female. While the difference between male and female is not an issue here, it is the oppressive gender roles

that are of concern. La Fontaine (1986) and Kelly (1998) equally maintain that the initiation rites place much emphasis on sex identity with the allocation of social roles. Despite being aware of this information these writers still insist that the traditions taught during the initiation rites are beneficial. While emphasis on the difference between male and female may not be wrong at face value, this research argues that it is important to understand the content of what is taught to the girls. This is because issues of sex identity and social roles could be taught with the intention of cementing in the women the importance of recognizing male authority in their lives and the acceptance of their roles as supplementary as opposed to complementary and equal. In line with this view, it has been argued that the socialization associated with womanliness prescribes roles and tasks for the girls that are different from the boys is beneficial (Gwaba and Namalambo, 2005). For example, Oakley (1983) maintains that women are in affective roles while the men are given the instrumental roles. It is further argued by liberal feminists that socialisation into gender roles tends to produce rigid and inflexible expectations of men and women and discrimination can easily prevent women from having equal opportunities (Walter, 1999). These gender positions disadvantage the female child and later may affect their decision-making process. Further still, cultural traditions are capable of encouraging social exclusion and discrimination, a point noted by Kelly et al (1999) and UNICEF (2006).

However, although Rasing exposes how inequity is emphasised in cultural traditional teachings, her research fails to show the effect this emphasis may have on the females and their academic education aspiration. Neither does she agree with the fact that such emphasis has contributed to the outcome and perpetuation of male supremacy while relegating the woman to an inferior status. Rasing further denies that Zambian girls are submissive victims of boy's dominance insisting that the women are powerful and that through initiation rites women have considerable control over their sexual lives (Rasing, 1995). Such an argument sounds misplaced because a number of research projects and reports have been written to suggest otherwise.

The radical feminist theory affirms that patriarchy denotes the control of men (boys) over women (girls). This study assess the impact the constructed identity could have on the education of the girl. For the girls, who perform and experience the rites respectively, the rites remain relevant

and important to them; the profound meaning with which they are held in high esteem, especially in the rural areas at the expense of modern education is a matter of concern to this study. Rasing further argues against what she calls Western stereotyping of the initiation rites as expressions of internalised oppression of women and girls (Rasing, 2001), a subject that African feminists would agree with because of the assumed Western perception of the African woman.

The regulatory type of teachings transmitted through the initiation rites are all the more reason why in-depth research should be conducted in order to assess the rigid and retrogressive nature that such traditional practices may have on the girl's aspiration for academic education. Further still the institutions of initiation tend to encourage and pass on norms and values concerning gender, a state of affairs that Rasing (2001) agrees with. The liberal feminist theory explains such a situation as a cultural matter that involves manipulation and canalisation of children into gender roles. Kashiwa's (2004) research titled *Marriage and Traditions from a Christian Perspective* is similar in some aspects to both of Rasing's researches (1991; 2001), in that he also places great emphasis on the initiation rites for the Bemba tribe. His attention is however, focussed on establishing the relevance of cultural traditions and much more those surrounding the female initiation rites to the evangelical Christians. He describes each process in detail to show this and leaves it to the Christian reader, who is his target, to judge and assess the importance and relevance of the rites and whether a Christian could practise the initiation ceremony without compromising his/her Christian faith. Kashiwa conducted his research in defence of the initiation rites because the evangelical Christians were disassociating themselves from the initiation rites, perceiving them as unchristian. He further challenges the traditional counsellors whose responsibility it is to instruct the initiates in the traditional knowledge to assess the content in light of the western values and the nation's indigenous cultural traditions. However, he does not identify the impact these traditions may have in militating against the girl's aspiration for academic education.

The Bemba speaking people of the Northern part of Zambia use schematic forms of drawings during the initiation ceremonies. The common drawings of pictures and Models called the *imbusa*; an artistic array of a variety of symbols, models and drawings using the three colours can never be understood until an initiator explains the meaning.

As for the Tumbuka and many other tribes in the Eastern Province use the three colours during the initiation ceremonies to aid teaching about the menstrual cycle and about the dangers associated with menstruation (Rasing, 1995; Kashiwa, 2004; Rasing, 2001; and Taylor, 2006).

The naturalistic forms on the other hand are easily understood because the picture of the real object is clearly discernible. This form is equally used during initiations to aid teachings (Kashiwa, 2004). Rasing, (1995) Kashiwa, (2004) and Taylor, (2006) claim the practice of the traditions were discontinued by the arrival of missionaries in 1891 and this brought a conflict among the locals who valued the practices. The missionaries considered the practices as evil, obscene, barbaric, useless and uncivilised and in turn, the missionaries advocated for western ways of life thereby extirpating the indigenous culture of the local people. This resulted in the people, especially those that converted to the faith, giving up a wide range of their practices that included the initiation rites of girls, divination and worship of family and ancestral spirits (Rasing, 1995, p.18).

The approach the missionaries took to change the traditions of the locals may not have been the best; for example, expecting the local people to replace their dearly-held traditional practices with western values. Even now some individuals are quite apprehensive and doubtful about persons advocating for a transformation of some of the practices especially those practises that are considered as because of the value the society attaches to them (Chondoka, 2001). The understanding of traditional culture should not be viewed as a representation of inferiority. Rasing points out that, traditional does not denote inferiority as represented by some analysts to mean before the introduction of Christianity into Zambia (Rasing, 1995).

There is also a general sense of fear that the contemporary life styles of the educated people may threaten the continuance of the cultural traditional teachings and customs. Taylor argues that the Zambian customs, which he sees as both valuable and esoteric are under threat of loss from the "western cultural expansionism" (2006).

Findings

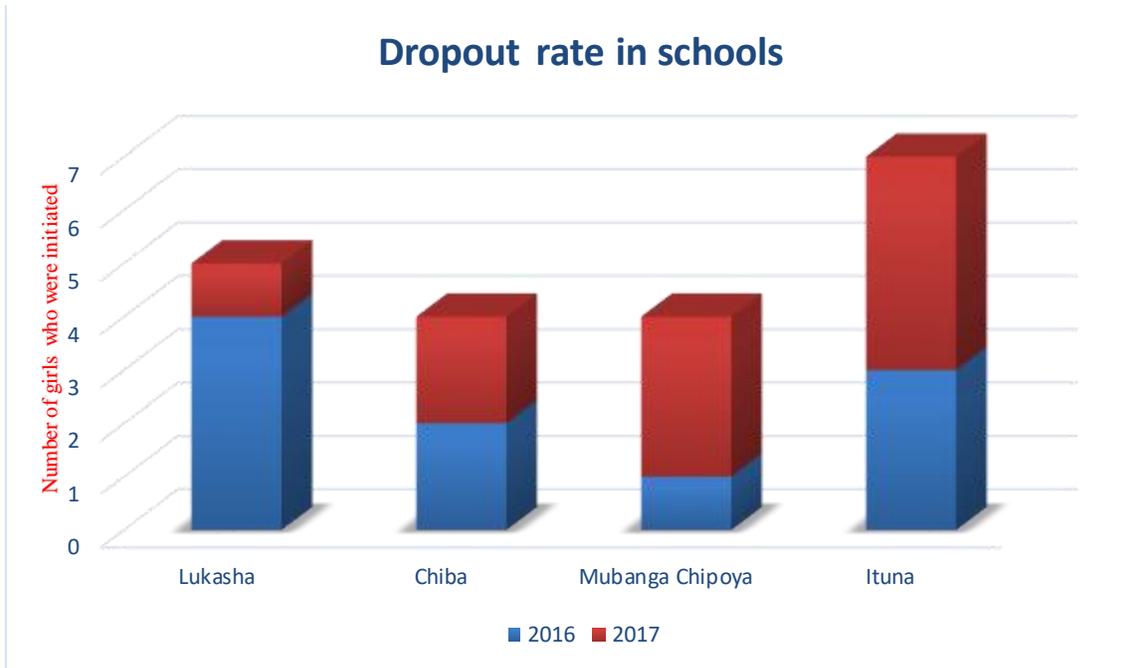
This section is a discussion of the various findings from the data collected. The main focus as noted in the main introduction is on the information related to education.

Therefore, the findings on the implication of initiation ceremonies practices among the Bemba's of Kasama District

in Northern Province in the delivery of quality education in selected secondary schools in Kasama district.

Figure 1 below indicates the number of girls who dropped out of school after undergoing an initiation ceremony.

Figure 4.1.2



As shown above, only five girls dropped out of school at Lukasha, Ituna only four, while four from Mubanga Chipoya and Chiba respectively on average between the year 2016 and 2017. The report indicated above shows that initiation ceremonies are not necessarily the cause of dropouts in schools but other factors such as poverty, curiosity, teen influence, technology such as exposure to sexual stimulating materials and stories. This was gotten after an interview with four members of the community who stretched out that, even long time ago these initiation were there but early marriages and teenage pregnancy were not very common because of some myths such as when you have sex before marriage you can get burned or 'Ukapyra'. This used to discourage girls to indulge in sexual activities.

As shown above, only five girls dropped out of school at Lukasha, Ituna only four, while four from Mubanga Chipoya and Chiba respectively on average between the year 2016 and 2017. The report indicated above shows that initiation ceremonies are not necessarily the cause of dropouts in schools but other factors such as poverty, curiosity, teen influence, technology such as exposure to sexual stimulating materials and stories. This was gotten after an interview with four members of the community who stretched out that, even long time ago these initiation were there but early marriages and teenage pregnancy were not very common because of some myths such as when you have sex before marriage you can get burned or 'Ukapyra'. This used to discourage girls to indulge in sexual activities.

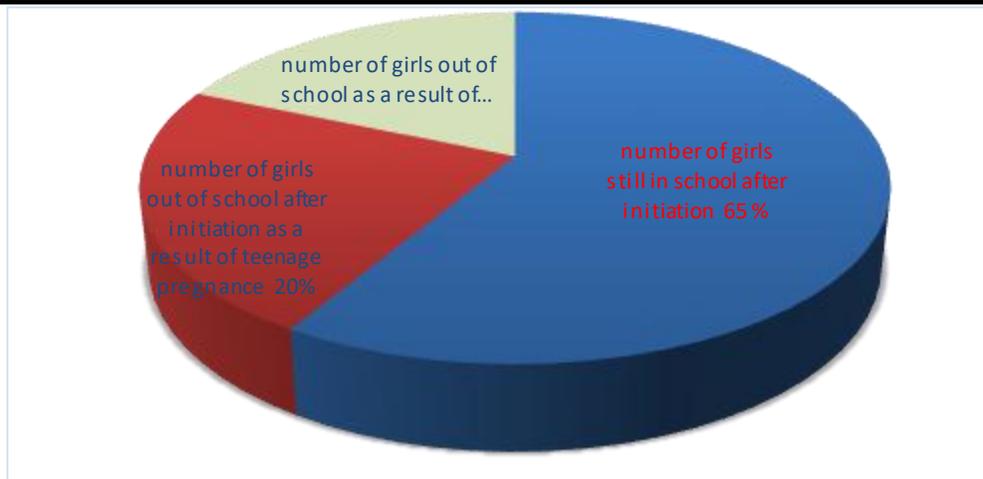


Figure 2 shows the percentage girls who are still in school even after initiation and percentage out of school as a result of teenage pregnancies and early marriages. In other words it can be seen from the above presentation that these initiation ceremonies do not actually affect girl education precisely.

4.2 Importance of education to a girl child

The researchers also found out that education is important to girls as it enables them acquire education to their satisfaction and it will also enable pupils to prepare for their future knowing very well that their lives hold that as a pillar and they can fit in the community. Respondents also echoed the fact that it broadens learner’s minds and perception, bringing out what they termed civilisation because it will bring in a well-deserved and appreciated pupils who will eventually fit in the society

III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study aimed at finding out the myths and practices during initiation ceremony on early marriage and the implications in the delivery of quality education. For the Bemba’s like any other tribe in Zambia, the onset of a menarche is a significant symbol in the life of a young girl and that of the family. The first drops of the flow are considered as how that the girls are firmly instructed to look out for. The other signs of puberty such as pimples, development of pubic hair, enlargement of breasts, and change in complexion will enable the grandmother or the aunts to know the right time to alert the girl of this one important sign. The girl is further instructed to notify either of the two or any elderly women recognised as responsible

by the aunt; the father’s sister or the grandmother (Tamale, 2005; Chondoka and Bota, 2007).

When the show occurs, the girl would notify any identified elderly woman who after confirming the occurrence would confine the girl to the house of confinement. It then become the duty of the grandmother or aunt to find a reliable traditional teacher called *Imbusa*. The *Imbusa* is in charge of the girl and will give special instructions expected of the initiate throughout the initiation rite. These women are cautiously selected; they should be women whose way of life effectively lives up to and broadcasts the rules of womanhood as demanded by the traditions. The *imbusa* are responsible for teaching the young girl, they have considerable knowledge of the customs and beliefs relating to the initiation ceremony. They have a responsibility of passing on to the girls their internalised traditions and characteristics of female modesty and male supremacy and are considered to be custodians of these traditions. Further still, the *imbusa* ensure that the correct and morally right pattern and procedure of the ritual is followed throughout the initiation ceremony correcting and checking each other during the process of teaching (Rasing, 1995).

Rasing confirms that African women have at times appeared as the custodians of traditions and thus agents of their own subordination (Rasing, 2001). The aunt, who is the father’s sister, is an important individual in the life of the girl especially during this period of time: she has more authority over the girl than the mother (Tamale, 2005) and an initiation rite could be organised and performed individually for each girl or for a group. Exclusion is a common feature during the period of the ceremony and could last for week or a number of days, during which period the initiate receives many teachings and instructions. Previously, as observed by

Tew, along time ago, the girl would be excluded for a month (Tew, 1950, p.59). For the Bemba, excluding the initiate is intended to separate them from the social environment due to the general beliefs and fears with which the menstruation flow is associated; that is life, death, and fertility. This view is shared by the Tumbukas of the Eastern Province of Zambia (Richards, 1956; Turner, 1969; Rasing 1995; and Kashiwa, 2004). Bota, 2007).

Importance of initiation ceremonies

These initiation ceremonies benefits a girl in a way that the girl has knowledge on how to cook. The girl learns how to cook, preparation of dishes, how to serve the elders washing of plates, thus this skill may help a girl to apply her cooking skill to generate income through setting up of businesses like Restaurants, being chefs and the like.

What is taught in these initiation ceremonies?

Some of the practices taught during initiation ceremonies include the need to know how to dress. Girls are taught how to dress. The type of clothes to be worn when one is with elders, when going out and when one is just at home. This implies that morality is taught and emphasised.

Apart from dressing, they are also taught on how to conduct themselves when they are in public or when they are with elders. This helps in moulding these girls with good morals that will help them to be socially accepted. The teaching also help them to live in harmony with others promoting peace and unity in the country.

Skill such as cooking, fetching of firewood and water are also taught. These skill mentor or helps girls to take care of their own homes when they grow up. They also help them support and care for their families.

The training during initiation ceremony also includes lessons on hygiene during the subsequent menstrual flows and the associated taboos. For example, they are told not to add salt to any food during menstruation as it is believed to affect men in a mysterious way and social conduct is taught and emphasised.

Respect for elders is also taught. The respect for elders and men, how to be hospitable to strangers calls for the girl to know how to address them and have in mind that anyone elderly is their parent and they have to treat such elders as they would do to their own parents.

Initiation ceremonies also bring families together, relatives and friends together thus helps in strengthening kinship ties. As a wedding may attract a variety of families as these initiation ceremonies may do. For example the Bemba tribe

of Northern Province are matrilineal unlike the Tumbuka, who are patrilineal and yet many of aspects about the initiation are similar. Rasing insists that the people of Eastern Province, the Tumbuka inclusive, are more elaborate with the initiate being taught about sexuality and married life while the Bemba postpone such instructions until the wedding day (Rasing, 1995). This was also highlighted by most of Ifumbusa who were interviewed. In light of the current state of the education of girls in the country, factors that militate against their school education should be dealt with seriously no matter how insignificant.

The report on the *State of the World's Children 2004* claimed that traditional culture is often used as an excuse to explain why expected results in girl's education have not been achieved (UNICEF, 2004). Such a claim cannot go without comment. Deeply embedded cultural beliefs cannot be easily put aside. Chitsike rightly put it by stating that removing the deeply rooted teachings would require a multifaceted, explosive force that can shake individuals to change their attitude (Chitsike, 1995, p.22).

The deterrent of girl child education

The cultural context in which the girls receive their formal education sometimes has an impact on their ability to make use of the knowledge acquired. The former executive director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, argues that a better future is achievable for all if every girl is given the right as well as the means to get school education in order to realise her aspiration (UNICEF 2001; UNICEF 2006). Further still, Jump claimed that a properly educated woman was capable of contributing in fundamental ways to her children's physical and mental wellbeing from the very onset of their life (Jump, 1994, p.6). The education of women is one important tool that could liberate the women and instil in them a sense of agency to better their state of affairs. This could enable them to develop a noble, mentally and morally independent personality, as argued by Dollard (2004). Educating women may further instil in them an awareness of their oppression, suppression and the many other restrictions that some of the traditions have and hence empower them with authority to say No when they have to. Chitsike (1995) suggests that it would take women themselves to challenge these injustices. Much more, Carson cites Eleanor Roosevelt who claims that no one can make women feel inferior without their permission (Carson, 1992). Sticking too hard to those cultural traditions in this time and age may not help much. Therefore, instead of ensuring that the girls are

traditionally well taught, why not prepare them for formal education? Why not imprint on their tender minds (the tabular rasa) the importance of academic education and its benefits rather than emphasising the girl's subordinate and inferior status.

IV. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The study has examined the influence of myths and practices during initiation ceremony on early marriage and the implications on quality education provision. Education is widely accepted as a tool to alleviate poverty in the country and the world at large. However, its achievement has been affected by young girls who fall pregnant and married off at a tender age of which they are supposed to be in school. The provision of quality education is the key to the wellbeing of the society and the development of the country. So a well-motivated and learned girl means well for the country as they will be well positioned individuals in the field of academics and a well-equipped individuals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We hope that the recommendations given in this research report will have a positive impact on the education of girls.

- The role of the school in educating the girls should be to equip them with an analytical mind that questions and challenges the out-dated, restrictive and debasing traditions. It should promote individual development and not encourage an acquiescent cultural mind set. This is the heart of this investigation.
- It is of great knowledge that some recommendations may require resources and as a result may take a long time to implement. However, there are some that are applicable in the short term and should be implemented such as: Stiffening punishment for offenders. Early marriages and teenage pregnancies can be reduced and prevented if offenders are given stiff punishment. Reprimand for those found in the vice of impregnating the vulnerable girls should be practical and not theoretical as to set a warning to all those who would be offenders.
- It is also important to prevent issues of early marriages and pregnancies because if you educate a girl child you educate the whole nation. The contribution of girls and women both at home and national level is highly credited. Therefore, if rapid development is to happen, there is need for the education of girls be protected, supported, emphasised and promoted. The need for motivating the

girls, Programs such as guidance and counselling should be drawn and utilised in order to implement their programs efficiently and effectively.

- If girl child education was to be entirely accomplished then there is need for both the private sector (individuals, investors, societies) and the government to work hand in hand for the better future of these girls and the country as a whole. Emerging from the data was the concern the locals had on schools focusing on western values that were alien to their own. This research recommends reviewing the curriculum in order to meet the needs of the learners (male and female) and to reflect the local needs more than the global context. If the current curriculum is unadjusted to suit the locals, and non-inclusive of Zambian cultural values, then yes, there is a danger the inherent culture can be diluted altogether. Curriculum priorities should not be on the global context. It should focus more on the local environment and how to develop it. This will not encourage a dependence syndrome but will allow attainment of skills that allow students to not depend heavily on employment opportunities. This will enable the school leavers to gain employment or self-employment. We strongly recommend that the review of the curriculum should involve all the parents (from a rural and urban settings) inclusive. This could be applicable in the long term because of resources. This research recommends the production of motivating indigenous instructional and reading materials that depict local cultural customs that can be used in schools. The expertise of tradition teachers could be used here by getting them involved in the writing of the teaching materials. In line with the theories of gender inequalities, the reading material should be able to depict the inequality and patriarchy tendencies, how they impact on the education of girls and how to eradicate such inequality tendencies and improve the status of girls and women in the home and community. The books should be easy to read, in the form of supplementary readers written in both English and the local languages to enable even those that don't go to school to read them. These books can be effective tools that will communicate the impact of some social cultural attitudes in the area. Coupled with an analytic pedagogy, this will enable the students to appreciate and assess their cultural traditions. Further still, this will encourage Zambian writers, many of whom may not have the means of publishing their

work to write about their culture. This is applicable in the short and long term.

- The parents should be involved in the education of the children as much as possible. The reading materials noted above could be one means through which parents can be included. If parents read with their children and report back the progress to the school, this will motivate the participation of the girls in schools. There should be a monitoring system in place to ensure the effectiveness of this strategy. Parents will read about the negative impact gender inequalities and patriarchy tendencies could have on the children. The parents and children will also read about the importance of investing education in both children whether female or male. This can be an avenue for communication between teachers and parents. The need for parent teacher partnership, parent involvement and community involvement is vital in the smooth eradication of teenage pregnancy, forced and early marriages.
- In line with Freire's recommendations, through active dialogical, critical stimulating methods, the traditional teachers could be targeted for change by awakening their conscious. (Freire, 1974, p40). Critical understanding would lead to critical action. This is a harder one to tackle but seems to be particularly problematic and hence needs attention. This can be applicable in the long term.
- The unprofessional conduct of male teachers requires stringent measures. Dealing with issues that surround the education of girls should assume a radical stance in line with the recommendation of the radical feminists. While legislative reform, recommended by liberal feminists is important and should be carried out, dealing with those that are found wanting should be dealt with radically. By this we refer to the tendency of the government to transfer abusive teachers to a different school as a solution to misconduct. While the laws and policies are in place, implementation and monitoring strategies leaves much to be desired. This research recommends that offending and abusive teachers should be suspended without pay pending investigation. If proven guilty, such teachers should not be allowed to work as teachers again. This recommendation is applicable in the short term.
- Education For All (EFA), should not be defined as a mere easy entrance to education. It should be holistic; from basic education to higher education. The notion of universal, free, and compulsory academic education has

never been a reality in Zambia in its practical terms since its pronouncement in the early 1960s except on paper. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that every child, male or female should access school, remain in school, access quality education and complete their academic education.

- It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child attends school. In line with the liberal feminists, this research recommends a law be put in place to ensure parents whose children are not in school should be prosecuted accordingly. Parents should know that they are committing an offence if they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Parents should be aware that choosing one child over another to attend school is an offence.
- The monitoring strategies should be evaluated as often as possible to ensure implementation such as ensuring that there are no children in the streets during school times. This should be implemented in the rural areas as well. This can be applicable in the short and long term.
- Sensitising parents and the society as a whole on the importance of the education of the female child should be an on-going activity. This is in line with the liberal feminist's mode of correcting the problem of inequality in the society. This will gradually change the cultural mind set and see a new generation of parents that value the education of girls. In view of theories of gender inequalities, the sensitisation programmes should as much as possible educate people about the negative influences of cultural traditions, by demonstrating the impact of male domination, the status of women and gendered roles and how these affect the education of women. The value of educating a girl is another important aspect that should be included due to the cultural mind-set that assumes investment in a girl as valueless. Such programmes should not be confined to the urban areas. There is more work in the rural areas. Advocacy and sensitisation programmes can be through the school, the church, and families.
- Ignoring the reality of the social cultural implications and choosing to focus on other factors will not help the education of girls. In the light of Zambia being multi ethnic with a variety of cultures this research recommends more research into cultural issues that directly affect the education of girls. This will provide a

better understanding of the traditions that may deprive many girls the benefits of academic education.

REFERENCES

- [1] Acker, S. (1984), **Women in higher education: what is the problem?** In: Acker, S. Piper, D. W. eds. Is higher education fair to women? Pp.25-48. Guildford: SRHE and NFER-Nelson.
- [2] Anderson, G. & Arsenault, N. (1998), **Fundamentals of Educational Research**. 2nd ed. London: Routledge Falmer.
- [3] Ashton, F. & Whitting, G. (1987), **Feminist theory and practical policies: shifting the agenda in the 1980s**.
- [4] Barker, C. (2003), **Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice**.
- [5] Bernard, H. R. (2000), **Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches**.
- [6] Bruess, C. & Greenberg, J. (2009), **Sexuality Education: Theory and Practice**. Canada: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- [7] Chondoka, A. Y. (2001), **Tradition Marriages in Zambia: A study in Cultural History**. 2nd ed. Ndola, Zambia: Mission Press
- [8] Cullingford, C. (1996), **The role of parents in the education system**. In: Cullingford, C. ed. Parents, Education and the state Aldershot: Arena
- [9] FAWE (2004), **Re-entry for Adolescent School Girls Mothers: Best Practices in Girls' Education in Africa**. Kenya: Nairobi
- [10] FAWE (2005), **The Education of girls and Women in Africa**. Kenya: Nairobi.
- [11] FAWE (2006), **Girls and Africa Education: Research and Action to keep Girls in School**. Kenya: Nairobi.
- [12] MOE (1996), **Educating our future**. Lusaka: GRZ
- [13] Morrisons, A. & McIntyre, D., (1971) **Schools and Socialisation**. Penguin Book.
- [14] Mwale, H. F. (2002). **Women Movement in Zambia**. Ethiopia: DPMF.