

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF  
FEMALE ADULT LEARNERS:  
A case of Kansenshi and Chifubu Secondary Schools  
G.C.E. in Ndola District.**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The research on adult female performance has produced startlingly consistent results; Variations in school expenditures are not systematically related to variations in student performance. Enormous differences in teaching materials, amount of teaching experience, or teaching in small classes, teacher's skill and how they handle female adult learners are strongly related to educational performance, These findings suggest that school decision making must move away from traditional "input directed" policies to ones providing performance incentives instead concentrate on improving the infrastructure and learning materials.*

*The result of the study showed that most of the female adult learners belong to big families. Some parents are non-professional workers thus spend most of their time in watching television when they are at home. The student has good study habit and a*

*neutral attitude towards education but the level of performance in subjects is still considered poor in all the learning spheres. There is significant correlation that exists in the level of performance of student with teacher-related factors such as the lighting system, space, period of learning (time) and what the female adult learners do for their living. Aremu (2000). It was also discovered that those women who are married and are supported by their husband do not pay much attention. From the findings it is recommended that; School career masters or counselor should be empowered to inculcate knowledge in girls so that the girls/women can know the importance of education rather than having children before completing school. Writing of GCE examination in June is recommended than having together with full time grade twelves. Finally, the periods (learning time) for G.C.E students should be increased.*

## ABBREVIATIONS

**F.A.W.E.Z.A** – Forum for African women Education in Zambia

**F.I.M.S** – First international mathematics studies.

**G.C.E** - General Certificate of Education.

**I.E.A** - International evaluation of education achievement.

**M.O.E** - Ministry of Education.

**N.A.E.P** - National assessment of education program.

**N.W.L.G** - National women's lobby Group.

**AGE** - Advancement of girl's education.

**S.I.M.S** - Second international mathematics studies.

**YALS** - Young adult literacy survey.

**YWCA** - Young women Christian association.

**ZARD** - Zambia association for research and development.

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION.

Before independence and about fifteen years after independence the standard of Teaching in Zambia was very high. This was by quality products in all areas. Today the concern by stakeholders is that the standard has fallen down at all levels. The pass rate in most schools in different places of the country is low. This especially affects adult learners in GCE centers. Examination analysis of grade twelve results indicated that there is a problem (UNESCO, 1998).

Some schools in Ndola district were constructed way back in colonial rule for instance Kansenshi Secondary school was constructed in 1953 and the school had both primary and secondary, it was called Liewlling High School and the first principal was Mr. Noel Roy and the second principal was Mr. R.J. Crawford, the school was heavily supported by British especially that the learners that time were mostly British. The numbers of pupils in classes were reasonably small the first form ones (1) were 72 students and in 1969 the first form fives (5) managed to attain a pass rate at 100%. The Zambian government by then had a full responsibility of funding schools inform of grant and provided support in terms of books, pencils and other learning materials were given for free. However, the G.C E. Centre became operational in the year 2002 and only fewer learners were enrolled. Though as at now the number is on the increase (KHS, 2000).

Chifubu secondary school was also constructed in 1962 by the World Bank and in same year it had enrolled 65 students as the first form ones (1) currently grade eight. Today the school has grown big with more than 4000 students from grade eight (8) to twelve (12). The tuition paying G.C.E. Centre became operational in the year 2006 with only a few learners. The number of learners is also on the increase. (Chifubu Sec Sch Careers Master 2017)

The research site is Ndola urban, which is the Provincial headquarters on the Copperbelt province in Zambia. Ndola urban has approximately ten secondary schools previously High schools of which two was picked in this study. These are Chifubu and Kansenshi secondary school G.C.E centers situated in the northern zone. The G.C.E centers have grades 10, 11 and 12. Learners comprise of both female and male young and adults who have either not done well at grade twelve and want to improve their results or just could not continue whilst at school because of financial or other problems. The research was based on the performance of GCE learners for the past three years. The research was also extended to the current adult learners. However, the researches interest was particularly in the female adult learners. (Mwimba .C, 2017)

Performance in this sense is referred to how people especially students fair in academic circles the description cannot be complete without mentioning the term Intelligence, it is a term usually referring to a general mental capability to reason, solve problems, think

abstractly, learn and understand new material, and profit from past experience (Cole G.A. 2006). Intelligence can be measured by many different kinds of tasks. Likewise, this ability is expressed in many aspects of a person's life. Intelligence draws on a variety of mental processes, including memory, learning, perception, decision-making, thinking, and reasoning. (Aremu, O.A. 2003).

Most people have an intuitive notion of what intelligence is, and many words in the English language distinguish between different levels of intellectual skill: bright, dull, smart, stupid, clever, slow, and so on. Yet no universally accepted definition of intelligence exists, and people continue to debate what, exactly, it is. Fundamental questions remain: Is intelligence one general ability or several independent systems of abilities? Is intelligence a property of the brain, a characteristic of behavior, or a set of knowledge and skills? (Adya, M., & Kaiser, K.M 2005).

The simplest definition proposed is that intelligence is whatever intelligence tests measure. But this definition does not characterize the ability well, and it has several problems. First, it is circular: The tests are assumed to verify the existence of intelligence, which in turn is measurable by the tests. Second, many different intelligence tests exist, and they do not all measure the same thing. In fact, the makers of the first intelligence tests did not begin with a precise idea of what they wanted to measure. Finally, the definition says very little about the

specific nature of intelligence. (Encarta, 2009).

More than one hundred years ago, only African education existed in our country. People used to learn from oral evidence given by ancestors unlike the way it is nowadays where it involves being in a room with trained teachers and note books to write in. Around 1884, the European education system was introduced and hence the formal type of learning standard in our country. Most schools were controlled by missionaries, most teachers at every level were committed to their work i.e. teachers had to work hard & could make almost all their learners who could not do well, remain to do work under close supervision. This actually made schools to produce good results. (Arkson D.K 2000)

## 1.2. SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research was limited to two secondary schools or examination centres in Ndola District, of Zambia. This is because the researcher intends to have a thorough investigation on the performance of female adults' learners at Kansenshi and Chifubu secondary Schools examination centres. It is from these schools that the solutions to the problems was obtained.

## 1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

(Lonsdale, 2003), The general condition of school's learning environment including infrastructure helps the teacher to be effective and produces sound student's academic

performance. The facilities that are needed to facilitate effective teaching and learning in an educational institution including the classrooms, offices, libraries, laboratories and other buildings as well as furniture. According to (Kelly. 2007). Some scholars feel that there is a difference between academic achievement of yesteryear and today. (Aremu 2000) Stresses that the difference in performance of female adult does not only affect the female adult learners, its effects are equally grave on the society in terms of man power in all sphere of the economy and politics.

## 1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the performance of female adults in the GCE centers and find a way of addressing such problems.

## 1.5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

General objective: to investigating the performance of female adult learners

Specific objectives which guided the research were:

- (i) To establish the performance of female adults' learner in the selected G.C. E centres.
- (ii) To ascertain the learning time for female adults.
- (iii) To find out perception of female adult learners on the environment of learning.
- (iv) To make recommendations based on the findings.

## 1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

(is) How is the performance of female adult learners in the selected G.C.E centres.

(ii) What time is the learning programme for female adults?

(iii) What is the perception of female adult learner on the environment of learning?

(iv) What suggestions would you give to improve the performance of female adult learners?

## 1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Performance of female adult learners should be the concerns of the education system in Zambia. This research is intended to investigate the performance of female adults' learners in the two selected G.C.E centres. It is deemed relevant in order to ascertain whether the findings could be used to determine the academic attainment in basic subjects for female adult learners. The information provided by this study may help educational authorities to formulate appropriate policies aimed at improving performance of female adult learners thus fill up the gap which exist in gender equality and may also help provide information to scholars who are interested in carrying out further research on the same topic or any study related to this area.

## 1.8. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research was limited to the two Sec School examination centres in Ndola District

and this was due to the fact that all secondary schools operate almost on the same basis and it was very difficult for the researcher to study all the schools in Ndola.

Since the researcher was funding himself it was very difficult to move from point A to point B and printing of the questionnaires would have been very costly if all the secondary centers were to be studied.

The study was carried out within the busy school calendar days which made it difficult for the writer to concentrate on the research work at the expense of performing other duties as well as concentrating on studying another course work.

## 1.9. OPERATIONAL DEFINATIONS OF TERMS

**ADULT EDUCATION:** is the sub-sector for those adults who have not been able to attend any formal education or dropped out of school at an early stage. In the case of this study the term is applied to candidates who did not do well in the regular formal education.

**ATTITUDE:** A settled opinion or way of thinking. According to Webster's Universal Dictionary (2006:80), "attitude is the manner of thought or feeling."

**EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:** An education system refers to a set of programmes tailored to impart knowledge and skills, formally acquired through a framework of an established schooling system, or informally through interaction with one's society, by an

individual. The term “Education” is understood to comprise all deliberate, systematic and organized communication designed to bring about learning.

**EDUCATION:** system of formal teaching and learning as conducted through schools and other institutions. Levels of education in modern societies can go from preschools to colleges and universities.

**FEMALE ADULTS:** female adults in this research are learners who are above the age of 16

**FEMINISM:** is the study of gender with the goal of changing society to make women and men equal. Feminist Approach is one which supports of women's equal

**LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:** The learning environment also includes all other motivational factors that apply in learning – facilitator interaction with learners and physical arrangement of a learning centre.

**PERFORMANCE:** The accomplishment of a given task measured against preset known standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. In a contract, performance is deemed to be the fulfillment of an obligation, in a manner that releases the performer from all liabilities under the contract.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW.

According to Mbewe (2006) he said the importance of adult education in development cannot be overstated. Adult

education is one of the pillars for sustainable development. This is because education should be an ongoing process in one’s life. The issue of adult education is becoming more important now, especially with the reality of gender awareness. Various authors point to the importance of female education in achieving sustainable development. Economic development and gender are interrelated through the contribution of both men and women (Mabwe, 2006). The writer goes on to say educated citizens have greater employment opportunities; they earn more and tend to be better informed on most issues. Educated mothers in particular have fewer children who are also well cared for. Children of these educated mothers are more likely to go to school and stay in school than those of uneducated ones.

According to (Gallup, G. 2002) a woman plays a very important role in developing a sustainable strategy for economic development as such she should not be excluded from productive resources and certain forms of employments that enable one to earn a good standard of living. Most good earning forms of employment require good attainment in the basic subjects. However, the statistics relating to literacy in Uganda show that women lag behind men: only 57% of women are literate as compared to 74% for men. The significant proportion of the illiterate population in certain areas of the country, however, is over 50%, with women forming the greatest number. (Gallup, G. 2002)

Earlier home environment: The link between gender and educational support in the home is associated with gender-based tasks that hamper school preparation. If girls, who later become adults, have more domestic chores at the beginning and the end of each day such as walking long distances to collect water or firewood, cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the younger siblings and elderly family members, then they will have less time to complete homework and may even be forced to miss days of school in order to focus on domestic tasks (Gordon, Nkwe, & Graven, 1998; Peasgood et al., 1997). This affects their performance at school.

Performance is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important procedures of knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. In California, the achievement of schools is measured by the Academic Performance Index

Individual differences in academic performance have been linked to differences in intelligence and personality. Students with higher mental ability as demonstrated by IQ tests are regarded as quick learners and those who are higher in conscientiousness linked to effort and achievement motivation and tend to achieve highly in academic settings. A recent meta-analysis suggested that mental curiosity is measured by typical intellectual

engagement has an important influence on academic achievement in addition to intelligence and conscientiousness. (Gordon, R. et.al 1998).

Parent's academic socialization is a term describing the way parents influence students' academic achievement by shaping student's skills, behaviors and attitudes towards school. Parents influence students through the environment and the relationship they have with their children. Academic socialization can be influenced by parents' socio-economic status. Highly educated parents tend to have more stimulating learning environments. (Gordon, R. et.al 1998).

Gordon further said that Children's' first few years of life are crucial to the development of language and social skills. School preparedness in these areas help students adjust to academic expectancies.

They further said another very important enhancer of academic achievement is the presence of physical activity. Studies have shown that physical activity can increase neurotic activity in the brain. Exercise specifically increases executive brain functions such as attention span and working memory.

How do today's public-school students compare, on average, to those of two, four, or eight decades ago? Are they academically better or worse off? That question is answered in the following sections by

drawing together the results of a broad range of national and international studies.

As far back as 1906, researchers began conducting "then and now" studies that analyzed changes in student achievement over time, particularly in reading proficiency. Several attempts have been made to piece together the results of these studies in order to obtain a coherent long-term picture. The best such effort was conducted by Professors Lawrence Stedman and Carl Kaestle in 1991. As a caveat to their conclusions, Stedman and Kaestle observed that many "then and now" comparisons were not nationally representative and failed to control for demographic changes in the test groups over time, undermining the validity of their results. These problems were especially severe in the older studies, and so the evidence for the early to mid-nineteen-hundreds is somewhat sketchy.

With that proviso in mind, Stedman and Kaestle found that average reading achievement for students in school at any given age stagnated for the first seventy years of this century. Their reference to age level was meant to account for the increasingly popular practice of social promotion. Students in the earlier part of this century were not generally promoted to the next grade unless they had mastered the previous grade's material, whereas modern students are frequently pushed through the system regardless of their level of achievement. This means that the students in any given grade today are younger, on average, than students who were in that same grade fifty or eighty

years ago. Age is thus a more reliable indicator of how long a student has been in school than grade, providing a fairer basis for comparing the effectiveness of historical and modern schools.

Though the original Stedman and Kaestle (1999)'s analysis was careful to consider many of the significant influences on student achievement such as the age factor just described they did overlook one relevant aspect of pre-nineteen-seventies schooling: the ever-lengthening school year. In 1909-10, pupils attended school for an average of 113 days. By 1969-70, the figure had jumped to 161.7 where it has remained, roughly speaking, ever since. Because classes were in session five days a week, this amounts to a difference of almost two and a half months of schooling per year. Students in the sixth grade in 1969-70 had thus attended school for fifteen more months than 1909-10 students. The difference for grade ten pupils was twenty-five months; about three additional school years. Taking these variations into account is just as important as comparing students by age rather than grade, since it provides a more accurate picture of how much time students actually spent in the classroom. Students in the late sixties received much more schooling but scored no higher on reading achievement tests, indicating a probable decline in the efficiency of public-school instruction during the first two thirds of this century.

Science knowledge was tested by the IEA (1970) in 1970-71 and 1983-84, and scored on an 800-point scale. Both ten-year-olds and



seventeen-year-olds participated, with the raw U.S. score results indicating a marginal improvement for the younger group and a more significant drop among older students. Taking the two age groups together, the raw scores pointed to a decline in U.S. science achievement over time, but this was not the whole story. The researchers conducting the tests noticed that U.S. students participating in 1983-84 were, on average, eight months older than their 1970-71 counterparts, giving them an advantage on the test. When this age advantage was statistically adjusted away, the IEA found that scores for both groups of U.S. students had dropped: by 16 points among ten-year-olds, and a whopping 47 points among seventeen-year-olds. These were by far the worst performance trends of any participating nation. In 1997, the results of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) were released, but unfortunately no effort was made by the researchers involved to allow comparisons between TIMSS results and those of earlier IEA math or science studies.

Reading tests of older students and recent high-school graduates echo the disappointing findings of the IEA. Several sophisticated investigations of literacy skills have been conducted since the mid-nineteen-eighties. Two of these studies, the National Adult Literacy Survey of 1992 and the Young Adult Literacy Survey of 1985, were designed to be directly comparable, using the same 0 to 500 score range, and the same five levels of achievement. The average score of 21 to 25-year-olds fell from 293 to 280 over the

intervening seven-year period from the middle level to the bottom. (YALS, 1992)

According to (Mark Mather and Dia Adams 2010) Adult literacy programs can be distinguished by the stages of literacy they address. Programs to counter below-functional literacy stress the development of decoding and word recognition, similar to the goals of early elementary schools, but they use materials more appropriate to an adult age. Programs that deal with development at the functional literacy level stress the use of reading to learn new information and to perform job-related tasks. Advanced literacy programs stress the development of higher-level skills needed for high school equivalency diplomas.

(Martha and Dia 2010) further said the great importance of reading ability is underscored by the growth of literacy programs in some Third World nations, as, for example, in Cuba. These programs, which generally send young people to rural areas to serve as teachers for illiterates in a national effort, often combine the teaching of reading with political instruction.

### 3.0. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory talks about how the creator shift their analytical lens, assumptions and topical focused away from the male viewpoint and experience. In doing so feminist theory shine light on social problem, trend and issues that otherwise overlooked or misidentified by historian. The characterization of education as a form of female empowerment

programme is based on the economic principles of the feminist theory. In this research therefore, the study discussed the performance of female, a case study of Chifubu and Kansenshi secondary schools in Ndola.

### 3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to provide an accurate account as regarding to the performance of female adult learners in the secondary G. C. E Centres. The researcher has followed qualitative and quantitative design that is aimed at in-depth understanding of the phenomenon from point of view of the research. The design was exploration which allowed the researcher to find out more about a problem, to collect information and present data systematically in order to give a clear a picture of the situation. For the collection of the data the researcher relied on interview guides and mainly on questionnaires.

### 3.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2. TARGET POPULATION: 60 respondents were targeted the reason for targeting this population was because candidates were increasing every year and the performances of female adults still remain undesirable. The number of students and teachers for the past three years was 891 and questionnaires were to be distributed to 60 respondent who better represented the all population.

The target of the research was for the grade twelve female adult learners of Chifubu and

Kansenshi secondary school G.C.E. with the concentration of results for the past three years. The total number of female adult learners are eight hundred and ninety-one (891) of which 470 were female. This population is for the last three years that is 2014 to 2016. The numbers of teachers involved are as follow: Chifubu nine (9), Kansenshi nine (9). The total number of teachers was eighteen (18).

### 3.3. RESEARCH SETTING

The study was conducted at Kansenshi and Chifubu secondary school GCE centres where questionnaires and interviews were conducted and the schools are situated in Ndola district and comprise of both male and female adult learners for grades ten (10) to twelve (12). However, the focus was on the female adult learners.

### 3.4. SAMPLE SIZE POPULATION

The researcher made the sample as  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 891 + 189 which was enrolled for next year gives 540.  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 540 which gives 180. The research period was from 2014, 2015 and 2016, thus the average of 180 give 60. That is how the researcher arrived at the sample size.

### 3.5. SAMPLING PROCEDURE

This was purposive sampling of the present and former adult learners and the teachers too. The number 60 was better representing the total population.

### 3.6. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS INSTRUMENTS

The instruments used for data collection were the questionnaires. Also interview guides designed for the instructors and female adult learners were developed. The questionnaire consisted of structured questions which the respondents were required to answer. The reason for using the questionnaire was that the researcher wanted the respondents to be free and respond as freely as possible.

### 3.7. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data collection technique was an according to how questionnaire was distributed. It is a method used to collect data needed to answer a research question or problem. In this research, the researcher opted to use the questionnaire. But before distribution to respondents the questionnaires were checked for validity, reliability, consistence and competency to ensure proper collection of data. The researcher distributed the questionnaire to the respondents and ensured that the following procedure was done.

### 3.8. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis and interpretations were done using the qualitative and quantitative method, that is the collected data was grouped and form the bar graph or bar chat to show the strength of each respondent and this was drawn as close to the solution as possible. The other criterion that was used for the data analysis involved the creation of

categories of that data manually using windows 7. The advantages of these methods were;

### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATIONS F FINDINGS

The analysis attempted to use the quantitative and qualitative information. The quantitative and qualitative has been analyzed by creating numbers which are entered on manual master sheet. The responses are then aggregated and percentages calculated.

The data from questionnaires was analyzed using tables and graphs. This helps readers and people concerned to easily interpret the information and be able to understand easily.

**TABLE 1** **TEACHERS**  
**EXPERIENCES.**

YEARS	FREQ	%
Less than one year	0	00%
One to three year	2	16.7%
Four to six years	2	16.7%
Seven to ten years	3	25.%
Ten and above	5	41.6%
TOTAL	12	100%

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

This simply shows that teachers are very experienced except a potion of 5.5% who have less than a year in teaching but most of them are good teacher who know the syllabus very well. 11% is showing teachers who have more than two years in service while the rest

are very experienced. Looking at these findings one could wonder whether it could be the teachers contributing to poor performance of adult learners in mathematics or could it be the students themselves. Could it be poor presentation of data or lack of seriousness on both parties? Because teachers are highly educated and 94.5% experienced as shown by the table above. The other question was to find out whether teachers enjoy teaching female adult learners or not. The responses are as follow.

**TABLE 4: IS TEACHING ENJOYABLE**

RESPONDENT	FREQUENCY	%
Enjoyable	2	16.6%
Not enjoyable	3	25%
Not sure	7	58.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>99.9%</b>

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

16.6% are the teachers who enjoy teaching female adult learners while 25% do not enjoy teaching them for various reasons for instance some reasons cited here are that it is not challenging to teach the female adult learners and that makes the teacher to find mean of making them understand most concepts. Some respondents said the performance is not good therefore it makes the teachers off and bored of repeating the concepts. 58.3% are respondents who are not

sure whether they enjoy the lessons or not but one thing they are sure of is that female adult learners do not participate in most of the subject activity's lessons. The researcher has discovered that 58.3% plus 16.6% which adds up to 74.9% a bigger percentage of teachers do not enjoy teaching female adult learners. If teachers are not enjoying teaching then, they teach for the sake of something else rather than the students affairs. The other question was to find out the whether the environment for learning was conducive for learning.

**TABLE 5. HOW CONDUCTIVE IS THE ENVIRONMENT OF LEARNING?**

	1.VERY GOOD	2.GOOD
Lighting system	21	5
Chalk board vision	4	2
Arrangement of desk	3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>

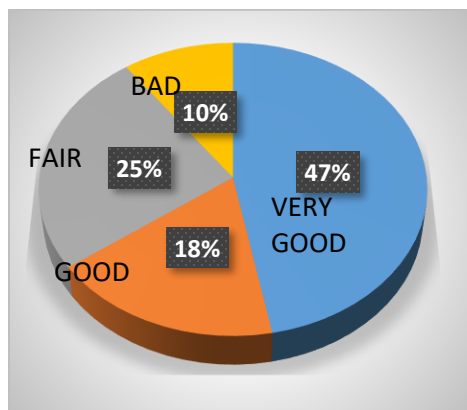
Table continues:

3. FAIR	4. BAD	TOTAL
6	3	35
7	1	14
2	2	11
<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>60</b>

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

The total target population was 60 and the responses were 60. Respondents who said lighting system was very good were 21, the other 4 respondents said GOOD while the rest didn't support, they said lighting system wasn't good. The information is now presented in percentages on the pie chart, Total number of respondents who said very good on lighting system, visibility on the chalk board and arrangement of desk add up to 27 those who said good adds up to 11 while those who said fair are 15 and those who said bad are 5. Therefore,  $27/60 \times 100 = 47\%$  very good 18% good 25% fair and 10% bad.

**FIGURE B**



(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

The percentages to this effect shows that lighting system on these centers was very good as evidenced by 47% and 25% has added on the same voice this add up to 72% of the respondents who supported that the lighting, arrangement of desk and visibility on the chalk board was very good only 10% of the respondents said that the lighting, visibility and arrangements of desks were bad. These can be factors but not the major

contributing factor to poor academic performance on adult female learners in these two secondary school centers.

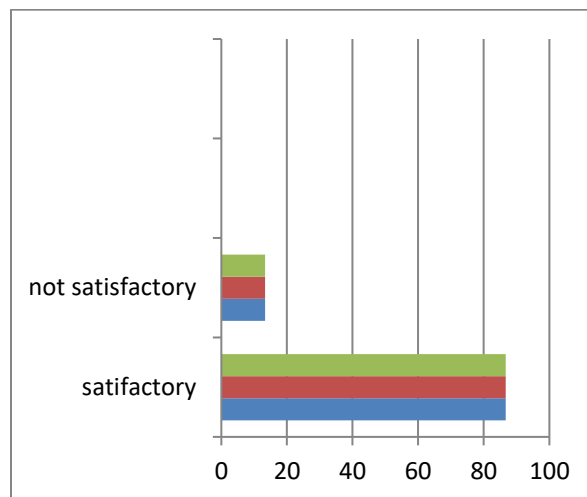
The other question was to find out teacher students' treatment and the question was phrased as are you satisfied with the way you are treated by teachers? The responses are as shown below.

**TABLE 6 TREATMENT OF STUDENTS BY TEACHERS**

RESPONDE NT	FREQUEN CY	VALID PERCE NT
Yes	52	86.7
No	8	13.3
Total	60	100.0

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

**FIGURE C**



(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

86.7% of the respondents said that they are treated very well and teachers co-operate and provide a lot of help to them, such as helping them to answer challenging questions and provide extra lessons to them. 13% of the respondents said that teachers do not treat them very well some respondents said that teachers are harsh to them and they do not tolerate asking them questions. This makes it difficult for some women to coup up with learning in that manner.

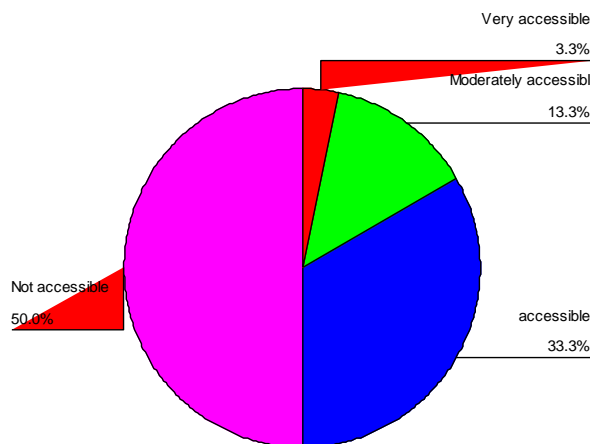
**TABLE 7**

RESPONDENT	VERY ACCESSIBLE	MODERATELY ACCESSIBLE	ACCESSIBLE	NOT ACCESSIBLE
30	1	4	10	15

(Source: Author’s Field Survey, 2017)

The figures are translated into percentage on the pie chart or figure D below

**FIGURE D.**



(Source: Author’s Field Survey, 2017)

A teacher pointed out that most GCE students do not have access to the school libraries and other stakeholders who were interviewed on this point said that more than three quarters have no access to education information from the school libraries. According to the 9 (nine) teachers interviewed orally, the data collected came out as 50% of the female GCE students do not have access to the school libraries while 33.3% can access the libraries but they don’t use them due to studying space and chairs. 13.3% they manage to borrow books from this library but they are given only one day in which to return the books. 3.3% are the female GCE students who find their way to this libraries study from their mingled freely with the 15 pupils to exchange ideas and knowledge. These have courage simply because they are either related to some teachers or they are teachers themselves or they are married to teachers.

Is the learning time enough to make the learners grasp most concepts?

The responses were as follow:

**TABLE 7: IS LEARNING TIME ENOUGH**

RESPONDENT	FREQUENCY	VALID PERCENT
Yes	5	8.3
No	55	91.6
Total	60	99.9

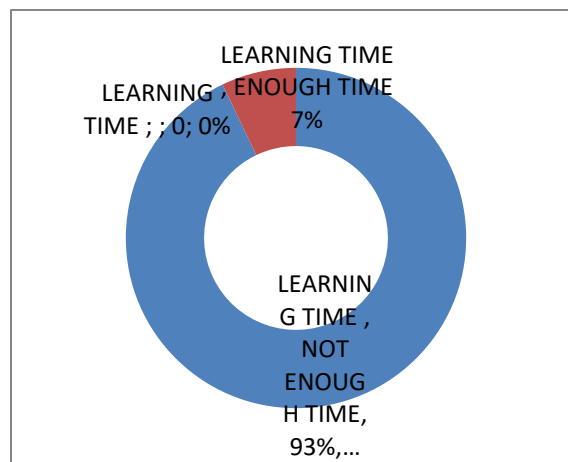
(Source: Author’s Field Survey, 2017)

8.3% of the respondents said that, they did have enough learning time they said so

because they have been practicing mathematics since they left formal education and this category of people is of the young ones in their early 20s. They have done well almost in all the subjects except in mathematics where they have either a bare pass or very satisfactory, thus they need to improve the grade in mathematics and mostly they do not go for work. To them an hour is enough to learn mathematics and make them pass. 91.6% of the respondents said that time is not enough to learn mathematics concepts, some said that they only learn math in an hour once a week while some twice in a week. They only do one or two example of a broader syllabus and the period is finished, this time according to the learners is not enough to make them pass moreover, respondents in this category are workers they have little time to revise and practice mathematics and other subjects, in addition during this one hour the female adult learners are tired and in most cases doze in class.

This category of people further went on to say that they are just as good as any other female student in any institution of learning but the time they allocated to books is very little, they further said that science and mathematics are practical subject which needs constant practice if one is to get better. Sometimes we knock of let from work and find our colleague half way into the topic thus end up struggling to catch the first grip of the lesson and eventually get lost in the process.

FIGURE E.



(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

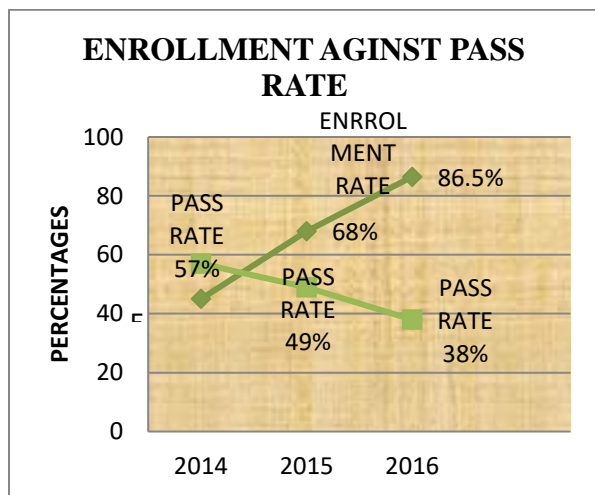
**Figure E** has emphasizes the response of the stakeholders 93% said that the learning time is not enough at all. While 7% of the respondents said that they had enough time. When we compare the two figure it is indeed believed that time for the GCE students is not enough for them to capture and assimilate the concepts in most of the subjects.

## INFORMATION FROM THE GCE COORDINATORS.

According to the GCE coordinator Mr. Mutala and Ms. Mulenga 2016 The gross percentage value for Secondary School enrollment in GCE section, should be 200 female students. However, the average enrolment percentage for the two school were 45%, 68% and 86.5%. As the graph below shows, over the past 3 years. The pass rate was 57%, 49% and 38% respectively in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Gross enrollment ratio is the ratio of total enrollment of female adult learners regardless of race, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of GCE education shown. Secondary education completes the provision of basic education that began at the primary level, and aims at laying the foundations for lifelong learning and human development, by offering more subject or skill-oriented instruction using more specialized teachers.

**FIGURE F.**



(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

This simply implies that more female adult learners are enrolling into GCE as shown by the graph arrow which is going upwards while a pass rate arrow is going downward, this is contrary to (students) female adult learner's expectations. Female adult learners expect good result in most subjects as they register for GCE but the outcome is opposite. As you have seen from the two arrows on the graph, truly the results in mathematics,

science, geography, etc. are getting worse every year more and more female students are failing these subjects and are registering for GCE at the same time performance is getting worse.

From the data collected these female adult learners (students) have well trained teachers and very well experienced to make them pass, therefore the problem here is not directly in the hands of the teacher but the students themselves or other factors.

### 4.3.1 Quantitative Results

#### Females' enrollment rate for 3 years

YEAR	2014	2015	2016
Enrollment	90	136	180
percentage	45%	68%	90%

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

Pass rate of female		
2014	2015	2016
51/90	67/136	68/180
57%	49%	38%

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

**Table 8:** Showing performance female former adult learners of Chifubu and Kansenshi. Here the researcher had also got information from Masala GCE Centre although not included on this part. The reason was to broaden the scope.



## 4.3.2 Result analysis for two schools GCE.

### CHIFUBU SECONDARY SCHOOL GCE

YEAR	STUDENT SAT	PASS RATE
2014	101	52
2015	163	51
2016	176	39

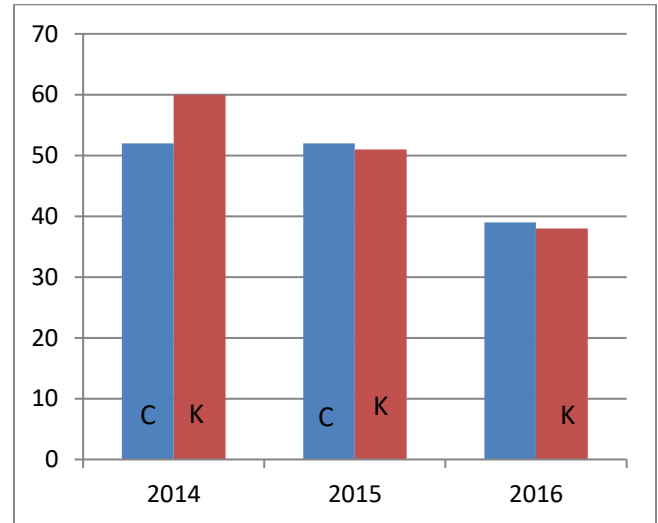
(Source: school data bank, 2017)

YEAR	STUDENT SAT	PASS RATE
2014	90	57
2015	136	49
2016	180	38

(Source: school data bank, 2017)

The table above shows the results of female adult learners at the two institutions. The two schools were comprehensively studied. It has been observed that the results are dwindling from 2014 to date. The first school had 52% in 2014 and 39% pass last year still a lot needs to be done in order to improve the performance of female adult learners. Second school has almost the same range. Generally, the performance is not good. (Girls 27% while Males 76.9% in 2014, in 2015 females 26% while males were at 72% and in 2016 females were at 19% while males were at 68%)

**FIGURE G** showing the graph of performance.



(Source: Author field survey, 2017)

The graph has demonstrated clearly that results are dropping from average of 52% in 2014 to 38% in 2016. The averages are for the two GCE centres including the third one acting as a control in this research shown above shows that the results are low.

The next question was to find out the factors that have affected the provision of GCE education at these schools by asking a question as. How long do the female adult learners take in class, is the time enough or fair?

Instead of the 60 the research has been done several times such the number of respondents to this question has gone up to 229 respondents.

**TABLE 9**

VARIABLES	RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE
Fair	68	29.7%
Enough	40	17.5%
Not enough	121	52.8%
Total	229	100

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

GCE lessons are conducted in the evening and the Evening Course Programme was designed to teach participants how to read, write, listen and speak i.e. communicating effectively in a foreign language. Whether for professional or personal reasons and the time allocated to it was one hour, but today the lessons are done to improve one's grades to help with career advancement, or open up new horizons, for academic purposes, Others are testing out grade 12-level work before making decisions about further study or personal development for college or university entry and the Class size doesn't matter at all. The time still remains the same as an hour which is not enough as cited by 121 respondents who said that time is not enough this translates to 52.8%.

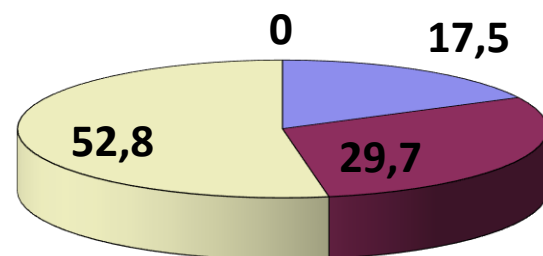
The other group of respondents who said that time is enough is 40 people which translate to 17.5% it appears that these people are those who came out of school a year or two years ago their minds are still fresh. These people went on to say that Adult Learning Programme is an exciting portfolio of classes offered on an evening when we are already

tired with work so we don't need to be in class for a long time, a topic or half a topic is enough for an adult.

68 respondents are another group of young ones who are very free and in most cases are kept by guardians to them this time is fair enough because they have all the time to go through the material after the evening classes. The further said that "Our tutors are specialists in their subject and experienced teachers of adults. The exciting Strategies combination of an interesting subject, an excellent tutor and a supportive group of fellow students makes the experience of learning enjoyable and worthwhile within that one hour". This translates to 29.7% of the respondents who said that time is fair. This information appears as shown on the pie chart.

**FIGURE.H**

**IS TIME FOR LEARNING ENOUGH OR NOT**



(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

As the figure H shows a bigger part is for people who said that time is not enough for learning while the smaller part said time is enough for learning and another smaller portion shows the number and percentage of people who said that time is fair for lessons to be effective. The other question which was tackled was: How is the lighting and ventilation system in your class?

RESPONDENT	VARIABLE	PERCENTAGE
Good	5	8
<b>Fair</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Bad</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>72</b>

(Source: Author's Field Survey, 2017)

60 people/ respondents said lighting system is very bad. This simply entails that most people interviewed were against the lighting system in this class rooms used for GCE students, and this figure translates into 72% while 12 respondents which translates into 20. % of the respondents said that lighting system is fair and they can see fairly. And finally, 5 respondents pronounced the word good which is 8. % of the respondents said that they are able to see clearly and write without difficulties.

The researcher also wanted to find out the perception of female adult learners through a question as "What is your perception on female learners do they have the capacity or they just waist their precious time."

Women are perceived that all they talked about were relationships with their children and partners, and the difficulties they were

having juggling the combined work load of home and school. This was particularly true for single parents, most of who were Ndola based women.

These results were similar to those in Horsman's (1990) research, where women were seen as responsible for all work in the household. The disorganization she identified in women's lives from the demands of family members was clearly evident in the lives of many of the women in this study. Also, as in Horsman's study, some of the women in this study were discouraged from participating in literacy programs.

Barriers to participation in postsecondary education often occur when higher educational practices are poorly adapted to the needs of the adult learner (Nesbit, 2001). Many adults who had previously performed poorly in high school are often fearful about returning to formal education and fitting in with other students. With the passing of time away from the formal learning environment, thus female adult learners are perceived that they worry that they have lost many valuable learning skills.

They are also perceived that participation in class as learners due to the fact that many returning female adult learners enter school with multiple non-school related commitments and responsibilities. They frequently have families, and fulltime jobs.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section discusses the findings of the study which was to determine academic performance of female adult learners in addition to other factors some scholars have

come up with. Indeed, the performance is bad (poor), the causes or reason to the poor academic performance are attributed to a number of factors: such as insufficient learning time. The actual words spoken by the respondents were “*we do not have enough learning time. For example, we only learn mathematics once a week that is every Tuesdays 17:30 to 18:30Hour. This is not enough in that we learn mathematics four times in a month.*” female adult learners find it difficult to revise at home hence they just depend on the teacher they meet once a week as the result this affects their performance drastically.

Poor academic performance is also as the result of various factors ranging from lack of seriousness by female adult learners as they have the tendency of missing lessons despite the fact that they only meet once per week for a specific subject. The other contributing factor to poor performance is the lack of seriousness by teacher and bad presentation of material. The actual words spoken by the respondents were “*we do not usually have experiments in sciences and biology. Like this year we only had two experiments from January to date and we are almost coming to the end of May.*”

The other contributing factor is that women have too many roles. Although many wife-husband relationships are moving toward equality, men continue to exercise greater power within the family. A cycle of power relations connects work and family. The higher the husband's occupational status, the greater his power and resources they provide for their family this make women's

opportunities to acquire these resources much more limited because they know that the husband would provide as the result it affects their performance. As evidenced by the result analysis of 2014, 2015 and 2016 women performance are still going down from 57% to 41% in these GCE centre. The major problem in female poor achievement in schools is that mostly due to lack of striving spirit because they have someone on their side to support them and finance their activities. These make their back ground very poor to do well in most subjects like mathematics, science etc.

Secondly the enrollment pattern has also contributed to poor academic performance of female adult learners; most classes are overcrowded for example 139 female plus males in two classes. The actual words spoken by the respondents were “*we are just too many in class such that the teacher does not have enough time to check the progress of each learner within the space of one hour.*” These populations make it difficult for the female to concentrate in science, mathematics and other women subjects need one on one or face to face lessons when it comes to some subject that seem challenging to them.

## 5.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY POPULATION

This study population comprised of female adult learners who have passed through normal education system and they have failed to obtained full grade twelve results thus they would wish to have six o levels and perhaps go to college or university.

The purpose of conducting this study was to try to isolate the performance of female adult learners and characteristics of schools that explained why gender gaps in academic achievement were still unacceptably wide among Zambian secondary school GCE centres. Many of the results found remind us of the importance of local context in improving gender equity. We found some evidence of negative effects on academic achievement that were related to insufficient learning time, poor attendance and behavioral problems in these schools and positive effects associated with community inputs such as making them go back to school to improve their result for entry into college or university. Some of the respondent raised concern that female adult learners find themselves entangled with a number of roles, such as looking after their children, taking care of the home and other house hold chores. Some students GCE ignore teacher's advice on how to go about education and do not apply what they are taught therefore I feel it is up to students to change their attitude towards teachers.

Can the way teachers organize learning actually make a difference? The evidence from this research shows that those teachers who test their students regularly are more effective. The success of this method of organizing learning suggests a level of involvement and commitment among teachers that makes learning of various subjects more successful. It also points to wider organizational support within the school that has been associated with improved learning outcomes in other leading research.

## 5.3 CONCLUSION

The result of the study shows that the performance of female adult learners in GCE centres are poor. The reasons attributed to insufficient learning time, lack of seriousness on the part of female adults and bad presentation of material by some teachers and the negative attitude by the instructors towards the female adult learners.

It is envisaged that at the end of the research, very good tools for boosting female performance in academic circles would be developed in the institutions of learning without a technical bias. With the support and goodwill of the stakeholders, is hoped that the developed tools can be used to implement female sensitive curriculum and activities in the education sector and entrepreneurship sector. It is also envisaged that at the end of the research, the role of women's organizations would include involvement in the stages of planning, content selection; monitoring teachers in some cases do not perform to their expectation because of frustration which is pervasive among teachers industrious enough to desire a higher educational degree. "Teachers need to improve the quality of teaching by acquiring more knowledge and the government has come in and help them out by providing fast track training only that the number is too small.

The problem is exacerbated because there are no government educational loans available for teachers. All these make teachers to concentrate on looking for money to pay for

their tuition fees and other school requirement thus neglecting the students. The other issues prospect of waiting for a new salary scale or posting after complex exercises are extremely disheartening.

It is a well-documented fact that classes are crowded and student/teacher ratios are very high therefore GCE students should be in small numbers. In spite of these glaring needs, teachers usually wait two or three years until they are posted because there are insufficient funds in the education budget to hire the necessary number of teachers each year. Teachers must use teaching aid in every lesson so as to make the female adult learners to grasp the concept.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The government should open up provincial centers specifically for GCE learners so that they can have ample time for lessons.

The Government should develop a political will to allow private to open up specifically GCE Centres and monitors them.

Stakeholders should produce materials in module form for evening class so that candidate can have enough preparatory time for the examination.

Schools should increase the number of teachers for the evening classes and pay them special incentive for participating in GCE classes.

Women should be educated, that they are core sponsors in their families rather than depending on men, this can help women to take up GCE studies seriously.

Teachers handling senior classes must be very experienced and well trained, while as seconded teachers must be on fast track program so that they may acquire that knowledge.

Running of GCE Centres in basic schools and unrecognized institutions must be stopped, unless all the conditions are fulfilled.

GCE independent examination is the welcome move than having it together with full time grade twelves (12s).

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